THE WESTERN BALKANS

COOPERATION, GEOPOLITICS AND ECONOMIC TRANSITIONS AND RELATIONS

EDITED BY

MUHIDIN MULALIĆ
EMEL TOPCU
JAHJA MUHASILOVIĆ

A continuous association of the Western Balkans with negative metaphors reflected in the destruction, ethnic hatred, divisiveness, backwardness, and radical nationalism, significantly inhibit the future of this region. Thus, this book aims to explore the democratization process, reconciliation, regional cooperation, and integration as inevitable alternatives to nationalism, extremism, radicalism, divisiveness, and hostility. Ultimately, the idea is to change the public discourse from a predominant focus on the past wars, divisions, and hostilities to the common future, which draws inspiration from the common culture, heritage, democratic values, cooperation, and integration. The book will also prepare readers to encounter the dangers that seriously threaten the peace, order, stability, prosperity, and security in the region.

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The Western Balkans Cooperation, Geopolitics and Economic Transitions and Relations

Edited by
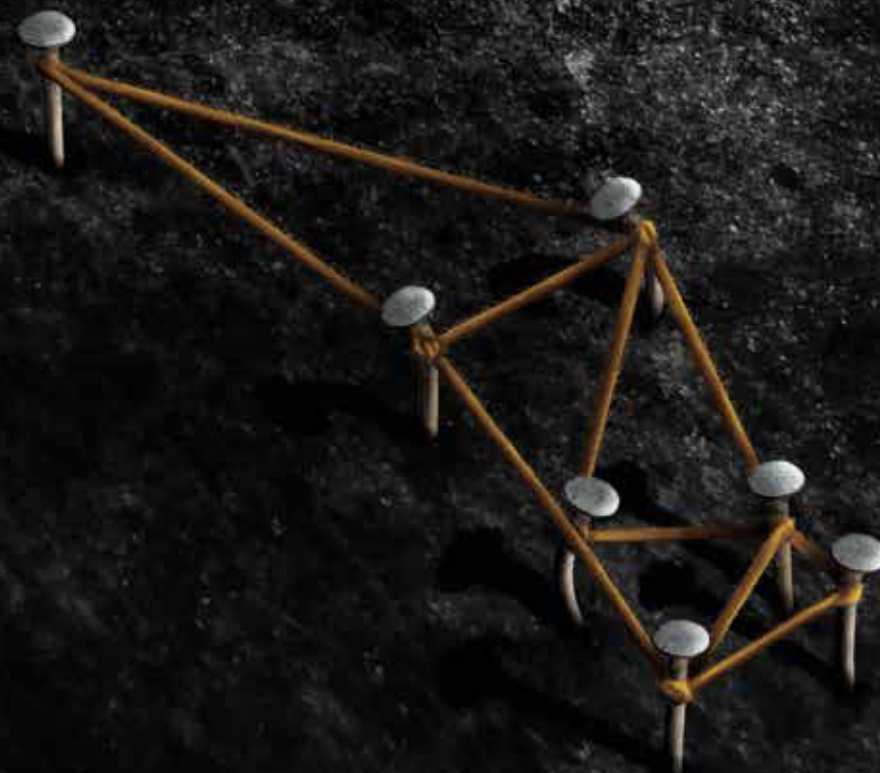**Muhidin Mulalić**
Emel Topcu
Jahja Muhasilović

Table of Contents

PART III: Economics, Trade and Commerce

PART IV: Socio-Cultural and Educational Transitions

FOREWORD

Prof. Dr. Hasan Korkut*

A continuous association of the Balkans with negative metaphors reflected in the destruction, ethnic hatred, divisiveness, backwardness, and radical nationalism, significantly inhibit the future of the region. More than a century-long construction of the Western Balkan's negative image by the local and international actors and constructivists also shape the future agenda, the local mentality and the public sphere. In this regard, most of progressive initiatives and agendas, such as the Euro-Atlantic integration process, have been framed by the Western Balkans negative image and ethno-nationalism. Instead of using the European goals and values in framing the Western Balkans socio-political and economic realities, these progressive initiatives have fallen into the ethno-nationalist trap, which in turn has corrupted these progressive initiatives. Perhaps, this could be an essential reason why the Euro-Atlantic process in the Western Balkans is being questioned. Therefore, this book explores the democratization process, reconciliation, regional cooperation, and integration, economics, trade, commerce and socio-cultural transitions as inevitable alternatives to nationalism, extremism, radicalism, divisiveness, and hostility. Ultimately, the idea is to change the public discourse from a predominant focus on the past wars, divisions, and hostilities to start constructively thinking about the common Western Balkans future, which draws inspiration from the common culture, heritage, democratic values, cooperation, and integration. Also, the book will prepare readers to encounter the constructively present-day „balkanization" and "ethno-nationalism" that seriously threaten the peace, order, stability, prosperity, and security in the region.

This book treats interdisciplinary subjects under four meaningfully interrelated and interconnected parts. Five chapters treat the subjects of peace, transnational justice and security. These chapters, written by internationally recognized scholars, treat

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the research, scholarship and scientific knowledge on transitional justice based on sociological discourse analysis. The authors skillfully assessed how the transnational justice scholarship has shaped present-day legal realities and as well as traumatized post-war victims, survivors and communities. More importantly, the works treat genocide denial and its impact on transitional justice and reconciliation. Then, the works on peace, peace-building and security have skillfully assessed the international involvement in Bosnia and Herzegovina. On one hand, the authors of chapters credited the international community for ending the war but they also challenge regional security that failed to move away from national and ethnic security to transnational security. The sustainability of peace in the Western Balkans has been questioned within the emerging crisis and insecurity. The authors rightly asked has the initial success been reversed or has the peace been a mere absence of the war in the Western Balkans?

The second part explores geopolitics, the EU enlargement and the Western Balkans cooperation. This part of the book explores the Western Balkans cooperation within the EU's strategy and policy for sustainable development, environmental protection, green economy and digitalization. The novelty of this approach is using environmental sociology and the process of Europeanization for sustainable development in the Western Balkans. Few chapters explore and assess the EU integration process and as well as the platforms for the cooperation such as the Southeast European Cooperation Process (SEECP) and Mini-Schengen. Two chapters explore foreign policy, cosmopolitanism and global risk that significantly frame the Western Balkans relations. Cosmopolitanism as a new paradigm has been presented as an alternative to the rigid emphasis on methodological nationalism in the Western Balkans. In this regard, Dr. Mulalić articulated that "international legalism, security risks, economic and energy interdependence, transnational networks, technologies, elites, and civil society shape the Western Balkan's interdependent relations."

Five chapters treat the subjects of economics, trade and commerce. Dr. Šiljak in her chapter examined the economic and political determinants of the Western Balkans path towards EU membership. She argued that the common goal and the future of the Western Balkans transition economies is in the EU. As an alternative to the regional divisiveness and political crisis, she argued for much more effective use of common regional advantages such as "macroeconomic stability, diverse economies, favorable tax rates, educated population, low labor cost, and proximity to the EU." Other chapters were complementary to Dr. Šiljak's chapter and they argued for regionalism, new trade architecture, investments, green economy, digitalization and compliance

with the EU trade strategy, which would in turn lead towards renewed engagement of the Western Balkans making it cosmopolitan, green and digital.

The last part of the book covers several chapters that explore holistic and interdisciplinary aspects of socio-cultural and educational transitions in the Western Balkans. This part of the book began with an excellent chapter written by one of the leading sociologists on the Balkans, Prof. Dr. Keith Doubt. His chapter explores "the ritual kinship in Balkan politics and how it functions within the context of nationalist politics resulting in what could be called state capture." Indeed, his work represents how postmodern and interdisciplinary approaches have become effective in treating complex research subjects. Other chapters explore sociological, ethnographic and linguistic features of the Western Balkans.

Although I have been acquainted with different political, social and economic subjects on the Western Balkans, I have realized that this book addresses these subjects from a different perspective. In addition, this book represents profound knowledge on the Western Balkans represented by twenty-five local and international authors. Their style of writing and addressing of current and different subjects, ranging from socio-cultural subjects, politics, economics and security clearly point to the necessity of the interdisciplinary study of the Western Balkans. Therefore, I strongly recommend this book to the wider reading audience, students, professors and policy-makers. This book will certainly provoke and challenge the "constructed negative image" of the Western Balkans.

PART I

PEACE, TRANSNATIONAL
JUSTICE, AND SECURITY

TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE AND INTERNATIONALLY PRODUCED 'SCIENTIFIC INJUSTICES' ABOUT POST-WAR TRAUMATIZED COMMUNITIES IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Dr. sc. Sandra Cvikić*

In this chapter, the relationship between transitional justice and internationally produced 'scientific injustices' (Cvikić, 2019) about post-war traumatized communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina are debated to show how after the violent disintegration of former socialist Yugoslavia powerful internationally sponsored research has shaped the discourse of peacebuilding and reconciliation. Namely, living in the post-conflict society traumatized communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina are faced with new mechanisms and ways of identity (re)construction through socially engineered policies of transitional justice (Cvikić and Živić, 2016). Therefore, this chapter provides an insight into how and in what way, and to what end, new identities of traumatized communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina are socially (re)constructed by international scholarship. Sociological research of internationally produced knowledge about transitional justice mechanism's influence on post-war/post-communist society and traumatized communities in the last twenty years is done through the application of Foucauldian discourse analysis methodology (Klos-Czerowinska, 2015; Keller, Hornidge and Schünemann, 2020). Also, social constructivism is used as a theory to deconstruct already established factual truths about Bosnia and Herzegovina's democratic transition (Berger and Luckmann, 1992; Detel, 2001). Chapter in its conclusion indicates new transformative causes, forms and practices that have negative effects on how traumatized post-war communities are understood and shaped in the neoliberal context of internationally produced knowledge whose transitional justice scholarship already treats people of Bosnia and

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Herzegovina as impotent observers unable to independently make decisions about their own lives and the society they are living.

Introduction

To adopt critical research agenda on knowledge production about transitional justice (TJ) process in post-war Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) requires one to overcome contemporary post-modernist epistemological determinism[1] and it's perceived limitations when it comes to ethical issues central to social sciences (Nouwen, 2014). The recent critical turn in TJ scholarship, as indicated by Bell (2009), Sharp (2013, 2014, 2019) and Jones (2020) is built on different approaches to research subjects that advocate more a holistic and comprehensive study of TJ process's impact on local communities and nations. However, as Anna Macdonald has indicated in her JSRP Paper from 2013 very little is known about local understanding and experiences of TJ in post-conflict societies such as BiH.

Therefore, this chapter explores what can be learned from internationally produced knowledge about TJ process in BiH. Surveyed TJ scholarship about BiH and Western Balkans shows that the process was shaped by institutional and normative frameworks that have helped to produce and reproduce negotiated power relations in the aftermath of Yugoslav wars of dissolution. Jelena Subotić (2009) contends that choices and decisions of those in power positions reflect established post- Dayton power relations which then shape the overall democratic transition in BiH. However, surveyed scholarship also indicates that both, scholars and experts are less inclined to engage in research that investigates how disagreements over TJ arise in estranged communities of BiH when traumatized post-conflict groups and individuals legitimately request to be included in the process of negotiation (Cvikić & Živić, 2016; Cvikić, 2019). Detected resistance on their part is often considered to be a deviant reaction to set goals of TJ process even though all scholarly efforts have been invested in giving voice to those who are already treated as delegitimized "spoilers" (Cvikić, 2019). Nonetheless, developed theoretical and methodological pragmatic compromises have so far normalized, institutionalized, and professionalized research, policy, and practice about TJ process in BiH (Rubli, 2012). Thus, in BiH's case scholars and experts alike simultaneously promote TJ and contest those who resist it because traumatized spoilers are judged to be ill-equipped for rational agency due to their trauma, emotions, and memories of war (Cvikić, 2019; Cvikić & Živić, 2016).

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[1] Here epistemological determinism refers to "self-styled European values of "dignity, liberty, democracy, equality, the rule of law, human rights, justice, solidarity and peace" promoted by post-modernist scholarly produced knowledge (Cvikić, Živić & Bendra, 2018, p. 56).

Sociological Research Framework

Therefore, considering TJ as a political process of negotiation between various actors,[2] this chapter provides an insight into the sociological analysis of discursive constructions of BiH's TJ process inside international TJ scholarship showing how practice can illuminate what power relations have been studied and depicted by scholars and experts. It also builds upon continuous sociological research about knowledge production and resistance to TJ in post-conflict Western Balkans by S. Cvikić (2016, 2019). Thereby, the subsequent sections highlight key insights and illustrate how scholarly knowledge about BiH's TJ process is produced and utilized to justify policy creation (Bernath and Rubli, 2016). Taking a post-modernist stand it is here contended that contemporary social sciences are not value-neutral (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998) and interest-free (Charmaz, 2008), thereby inherently subjective. So, the sociological standpoint follows M. Foucault's (1981, 2007) claim that a scholar should aim not to give voice but instead, to empower people with the knowledge that could help them in their efforts to overcome (as they see fit) scientifically induced subjugation, control, surveillance, and management of their lives by state authorities and regimes (Cvikić, 2019). Applied Foucauldian type of investigation (Young, 1981) challenges the mainstream evidence-based TJ scholarly knowledge production to avoid postmodernist relativization created by a multiplicity of perspectives (Ollsen & Peters, 2005; Davis 2005; Moore et al, 2011). It also questions produced TJ knowledge that has resituated facts in chronologies without historical wight thereby avoiding acknowledging cause and effect in a history of war conflict in BiH. Analyzed TJ factual truths are therefore treated "as powerful rhetorical practice" (Edwards & Nicoll, 2001, p. 105) constructed by scholars and experts.[3] Truth is a construction that is in constant change so its "contingency appropriations and misappropriations," ask from a critical researcher to take "a profound ethical standpoint" and become more reticent in prescribing certain method and/or theory (Graham, 2011, p. 667). Studied relationship however between TJ and internationally produced "scientific injustices" (Cvikić, 2019) about post-war traumatized communities in BiH provides an insight into subsets of ways how the power of knowledge could be understood, and how scientific knowledge can provide evidence to it social nature (Detel, 2001; Bowsher, 2018).

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[2] TJ defined by the UN entails a 'full range of processes and mechanisms associated with a society's attempt to come to terms with a legacy of large-scale past abuses, in order to ensure accountability, serve justice and achieve reconciliation' while simultaneously it represents the UN's 'framework for strengthening the rule of law' (UN International Centre for Transitional Justice https://www.ictj.org/about).

[3] Since this chapter will not provide an overview of TJ scholarship development (methodology and theory) readers are advised to consult seminal works of following scholars: Neil J. Kertz and Ruti G. Teitle. For legal basis of human rights approach to TJ and comprehensive guideline to TJ policy, research and practice see *The Chicago Principles on Post-Conflict Justice* (2007), and for scholarly spill-over into policy paper see a document *A Human Security Doctrine for Europe. The Barcelona Report of the Study Group on Europe's Security Capabilities* (2004).

Therefore, the Foucauldian notion of discourse (Klos-Czerwinska, 2015; Keller, Hornidge & Schünemann, 2020) streamlines critical analysis of scholarly/expert claims/statements inside TJ discourse as well as its conceptual spill-over into policy. The social constructivist frame of reference[4] however focuses on what TJ knowledge does and why certain factual truths about BiH's TJ process "emerge to the exclusion of all others and what function they serve" (Graham, 2011, p. 667). Since knowledge according to Van Dijk's definition "are the consensual beliefs of an epistemic community where the concept of truth is a property of assertion" (2003, p. 85), regardless of whether they correspond or not to reality, beliefs themselves have no truth values unless discursively asserted. If applied to BiH's case, international scholarship is studied through selected situated texts that may be true or false pending how TJ notions and beliefs are expressed and asserted to correspond to facts about TJ process in BiH. To install TJ beliefs as truth values, TJ knowledge asserts itself discursively and is hereby challenged.

Even though an extensive collection of articles and books, documents and policy papers were used as a data resource to assess TJ knowledge discourse produced by international scholars and experts; in this chapter, applied Foucauldian discourse analysis implicates a narrow work with a selection of publications, which were available to the author.[5]

International Scholarship Context and Transitional Justice Discourse
So in her *Policy Brief 05* from 2016, Martina Fisher states that "20 years after the Dayton Peace Agreement" which had "ended war in Bosnia, the states that signed the agreement continue to struggle with the legacies of the violent past".[6] In her *Brief*, she contends that there is still much to be done with respects to "the search for the missing", and investigation of crimes and human rights violations related to "the wars of the 1990s". Therefore, future "victim-centered transitional justice strategies" should benefit more from the "advancement in justice and truth recovery" mediated by civil society actors in local communities. She contends that "prosecution of crimes and fact-finding on atrocities", "the rule of law" and "functioning institutions" are evidently indispensable tools in achieving "a long-term process of reconciliation" based on complementary "restorative approach". TJ process, therefore, was able to

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[4] An extensive overview of M. Foucault's and T. Bergmann's scholarship is not presented in this chapter since it is assumed that most of contemporary readers are familiar with their methodological and theoretical work.

[5] TJ international scholarly publications used as a data resource are included in bibliography.

[6] Statements in this brief are based on the study funded by the German Foundation for Peace Research. Interpreted data relates to 150 interviws with transitional justice experts in 28 municipalities in Serbia, Croatia and BiH in the period 2010 – 2012.

restore peace and security and to some extent national reconciliation in BiH. Leaving out the scope key figures and statistics related to the ICTY's[7] caseloads, proceedings, and sentences for serious violations of international humanitarian law; it is however important to note that both, scholars, and experts, Fisher states, converge in their conclusion about the fundamental relevance of the ICTY court in the establishment of legal accountability and fact-finding procedures in the Western Balkan's post-war societies. This is important because their "local institutions" were at some point or another, "unwilling or unable to investigate war-related crimes" (Fisher, 2016, p. 4). Fisher states that scholars' and experts' findings so far have ranged from those who argued that retributive transitional justice mechanism, namely the ad hoc ICTY produces and reproduces contrary to what was expected – injustice, inequality, resistance, hostility, and nationalism. Others have, however, claimed that Tribunal's proceedings and sentences had increased denial and acceptance deficit in post-war Jugoslav societies. Denial was fueled by biased domestic political and media debates creating a false image of the ICTY. However, the underline lesson learned from such practice of retributive TJ post-war process in BiH according to Fisher is to be found in Tribunal's communication strategy that was ill-equipped to establish, manage and maintain closer contact with the media, civil society, and citizens. Thereby, she concludes that the working of such courts should be "embedded in a broader transitional justice strategy that aims at institutional reforms and involves civil society" (2016, p. 4-5). However, she warns that in a post-war context "such strategies could counter the risk of facts and verdicts" being "distorted by media and political groups that are interested in perpetuating divisions and in maintaining the conflict" (2016, p. 5). Therefore, Fisher states that "in a direct post-war period, if communities are sharply divided along ethnopolitical lines, the political discourse tends to focus on commemorating 'own' victims and heroes of war and silencing 'own' crimes and the suffering of the 'others'" (2016, p. 5). Notwithstanding the existing criticism related to the Tribunal's practice of plea bargaining, Fisher claims that the ICTY's power to legitimize TJ mechanisms in the post-war Western Balkans has substantially increased due to its ability to cross borders in prosecuting war crimes and in conducting fact-finding missions. Despite the notable limitations of legal instruments and retributive approach to justice in Western Balkans, Fisher advocates an evidence-based approach substantiated by the civil society expert's and journalist's activism whose collaboration with the Tribunal has proved to be "indispensable for implementing effective transitional justice strategies" (2016, p. 8). She also proposes "a holistic understanding of transitional justice (…) in order to address forensic, narrative

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[7] The ICTY stands for International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia.

and dialogical truth, legal accountability, material and symbolic compensations, institutional reforms and reconciliation" (2016, p. 10). Therefore, much in the manner of traditional TJ, Fisher believes that "naming the victims and giving the victims a voice, as well as acknowledgment of their suffering, is a prerequisite" while "cultures of memory need to address the suffering of the people from the different sides of the wars" (2016, p. 10). So, to achieve some level of functional reconciliation in a long run, it is necessary to invest all efforts into "pragmatic expectations" that are "free from religious notions" while the top-down and bottom-up initiatives should develop empathy and acknowledge the suffering of 'the Other' taking "political responsibility for crimes committed in the name of nations" (Fisher, 2016, p. 10). However, notions of victimhood and collective remembrance in estranged communities of Western Balkans diverge substantially becoming "a major obstacle to reconciliation" (Fisher, 2016, p. 10). She concludes her brief on Western Balkan's TJ progress with a promising note encouraged by the peace activists whose affirmative actions in reconciliation and cultures of remembrance should be supported by the international community in the framework of "textbook reform and alternative forms of history education" (Fisher, 2016, p. 10).

Martina Fisher's brief about TJ lessons learned from the post-war Western Balkans is an example of contemporary scholarly knowledge production turned into expert policy recommendations thus indicating two important facts:

- it shows how scholarly knowledge spills over into policymaking and vise-versa; and
- how the power of internationally produced knowledge turned into practice does not imply any whatsoever responsibility on part of scholars whose research findings are utilized by policymakers and local TJ experts thereby having an impact on intended populations, communities, and societies.

TJ context in which scholarly/expert discourse about post-war BiH is developed is related to transformative social processes that are constantly challenged by domestic difficult political tradeoffs, policy choices and contextual realities. However, developed discourse is constructed from a safe vantage point of an international scholar/expert who is invested with a powerful moral authority that TJ scholarship gives to an objective outsider. Responsibility on part of such intellectual authority is, however, not questioned since it is assumed that produced knowledge is good in nature and presumably right for the desolate post-war populations. Namely, rooted in human rights law, TJ is deemed to have great potential to facilitate international power politics' "desire to balance peace with needs for justice" (Cvikić & Živić, 2016,

p. 318). It is believed that TJ rebuilding mechanisms can indeed reconstruct shattered civic trust in war-torn societies thus providing workable solutions to post-conflict institutionalized restitution and reparation programs. Peacebuilding and conflict transformation as key aspects of TJ are, therefore, achieved through social learning and normative diffusion process creating preconditions for comprehensive democratic reforms and liberal market economy. However, in this way, ordinary people in BiH are forced into the sociopolitical world of TJ regardless of how political settlements reached on their behalf by their respective political elites are going to affect their lives.

Established equilibrium of distributed accountability and responsibility for committed war crimes of all warring parties has nonetheless infantilized BiH's traumatized populations on their individual and community level since the overarching notions of human rights violations, value-neutral truths, and justice, blur the line between victims and aggressors. Political elites and civil society organizations as self-interested agents in the sociopolitical world of transitional justice have not only shaped how normative diffusion of liberal democratic values was done in BiH; but more importantly how TJ values and beliefs were internalized as they put their trust in universal notions of human rights and justice.

Constructed in such a way, TJ narrative is not immune to ideology and power because its "narrative frames and motifs as semiotic structures" are capable "of organizing experience in a unified way" while "preventing different voices to emerge or to be heard" (De Fina & Georgakopolulou, 2012, p. 142). Forced into preset[8] theoretical and methodological frames of reference experiences of traumatized communities in BiH are in the context of applied ethics of human rights and justice prevented reaching out of the hegemonic discourse (Surer, 2016) constructed by TJ "meta or master narratives" (De Fina & Georgakopolulou, 2012, p. 142). So far, the interactional domination of international scholarly knowledge and institutional practice of TJ provisions have socially constructed factual truths about post-war traumatized communities in BiH and their symbolic universes[9] imposing "powerful interpretative conditions of believability" (Baynham & De Fina, 2005, p. 245).

The power interplay of TJ knowledge and institutional practice has greatly enhanced such interpretative conditions of believability, most prominently exemplified by the

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[8] TJ scholars/experts also have on their disposal already made manuals to help them conduct sensitive research in highly traumatized post-conflict populations, such as *Transitional Justice Methods Manual. An Exchange on Researching and Assessing Transitional Justice* prepared by the Swiss Peace, University of Oxford, and King's College London and published in 2013.

[9] Symbolic universes include following: beliefs, mores, mythology, religion, ideology, culture, tradition, and value systems.

work of the ICTY's prosecutor Carla Del Ponte. Close inspection of her exposition in Bern on September 1, 2005, shows how powerful is this interplay when legally and politically reappropriated to justify the moral economy (Miller, 2008) of transitional justice values (human rights, factual truths, justice, equality, and tolerance). Her discourse was premised on ICTY's rulings, and on TJ international legal framework that incorporates moral and ethical values of Western liberal democracy and universal human rights. Developed in such a way TJ discourse justifies and complements the ICTY's rulings, while at the same time, according to Del Ponte this international court of justice is invested with great power that can deter Yugoslav nations from their "natural path" of self-destruction (2005). As indicated by A. Matwijkiw (2007), TJ framework socially constructs a human right's type of norm-recognition and norm-protection preparing the moral grounding for an alternative source of post-conflict justice and law found in the Chicago principles. However, Chicago principles have not only become a guideline for the promotion of post-conflict justice, but more importantly, they have constructed a space for competing rights, attitudes, perceptions, and truths, thus enhancing rather than deflating contestations and resistance in local communities of BiH (Subotić, 2009). Thus, the power that is invested in relationships developed between the judiciary, state and international institutions on one side, and scholars and experts on the other side, indicates how difficult and challenging it is to absorb and internalize socially engineered justice and peace in the framework of TJ transformative process by local communities in BiH.

It is obvious that Carla Del Ponte was able to ascribe, judge, and recommend compartmentalized justice with authority onto nations of BiH because she was given professional freedom to enforce the law as an ICTY Prosecutor. She was empowered by this position to extend further her legal expertise beyond her professional credentials becoming an opinion maker who has actively shaped the public discourse of TJ in post-war Yugoslav states. Based on the ICTY's established factual truths about Yugoslav wars Carla Del Ponte was also able to assert her judgments in the post-conflict political discourse and activist discourse of civil society organizations.[10] However, what is important to note is that such power bares implications for TJ scholarly discourse as indicated by S. Cvikić (2016, 2019). Namely, as an expert opinion maker Carla Del Ponte has streamlined knowledge production about post-war TJ in BiH thus inadvertently redirecting social reconstruction of local communities from their emancipatory path of nation-state building process. In doing so, she has developed deep distrust towards war generations of BiH, state institutions and

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[10] See Carla Del Ponte's address at RECOM Reconciliation Network, *The First Regional Forum for Transitional Justice*, May 5, 2006, Sarajevo, BiH, available at: https://www.recom.link/en/initiatives-and-perspectives-in-western-balkan/ .

political leaders. Although there is some measure of truth related to TJ resistance in BiH; it is however questionable whether the idea that history and collective memory of post-war Yugoslav nations should be based on ICTY's established factual truths deemed beneficial for the local community's social reconstruction and reconciliation. Croatian sociologist O. Žunec (2007) warns that proponents of such an idea, most prominently Carla Del Ponte, must be aware of serious obstacles they help to create, not only for respective historical and social research but more importantly, for the local community's TJ process. He argues that history is written by the ICTY (if based on legal qualifications of certain punishable actions by the law for individual perpetrators) can indeed qualify the entire war conflict as the number of successive criminal actions, or as criminal action itself, while at the same time its social nature could remain hidden (Žunec, 2007, p. 29-31). So, what Carla Del Ponte argues is that "the perception of a given fact (…) is always relative depending on the position of observer", thereby "nations, both inside and outside of the Balkans, tend to build their national identity on the basis of history filled with myths, legends and heroes". So, she contends that BiH's nations are predisposed to manipulate factual events to justify war crimes through the just war paradigm and are therefore unfit to deal with the recent past and committed war crimes.

Leaving out of the scope scholarly debate about qualifications of the Yugoslav conflict, namely was it a civil war or full-fledged war of aggression, one is nonetheless left with a fundamental question unanswered – namely, who has attacked who, who is in principle victim and who is the perpetrator?! The conundrum called socialist multiethnic Yugoslavia is understood by numerous scholars as a grand social experiment gone wrong since its explosive nature was fueled by repressed nationalism of constitutive nations that have resulted under the pressure of economic and political crises in violence and crimes (Ingrao & Emmert, 2010; Ramet, 2005). Regardless of how one understands the reasons behind the bloody disintegration of former Yugoslavia (be it political, economic, or social) it is however obvious that the majority of international scholars have helped to develop, despite their good intentions and professionalism, a deep distrust towards nations of the Western Balkans. The synergy between legally procured factual truths and scholarly produced knowledge will become a powerful tool used by international power politics and policy makers. More importantly in this way, TJ values of human rights will be socially diffused to local experts, politicians and civil society organizations crating more obstacles than solutions.

To ensure the peaceful democratic transition, nurture reconciliation and rebuild trust in BiH, Carla Del Ponte, therefore, contends that the ICTY instruments of justice

should be horizontally extended in the society through TJ policies. In her opinion, it is mandatory to imprint newly established ICTY factual truths "on the minds and hearts of all citizens" of former Yugoslavia. It is however questionable how highly traumatized post-war communities in BiH can be delivered from "their nightmares" of war crimes, destruction, and genocide on their own terms when this type of reconciliation is imposed and closely monitored by the international institutions.[11] She claims that the "truth is at the core of justice", so accumulated evidence collected by the ICTY "must serve" as the only and accurate factual truth about Yugoslav war events leaving out of the scope any truth that is "imposed from outside". Del Ponte states that public image and discourse in respective post-war Yugoslav societies should be socially reconstructed through "scientific research or new facts", while "the process of creating collective memories" therefore "must not be left to those forces that deny the truth and create myths and heroes". She affirms that to create positive social change in such a manner, one must resort to the mechanism of control and supervision, thereby the political will to cooperate inside BiH's TJ process must also receive unconditional support from the "locals" to establish an official historical truth for all.

Conclusion

This snapshot of international scholarship/expert's context and TJ discourse about the BiH shows how powerful interpretative conditions of believability are socially constructed breeding bias perceptions about the local community's inability to cope with realities of post-conflict peacebuilding and reconciliation. Instead of becoming empowered by the TJ knowledge, traumatized communities of BiH are paradoxically atomized by its discourse despite scholar's/expert's efforts to give voice to all victims that have suffered greatly during Yugoslav wars of disintegration. More so, the interplay and subsequent synergy of scientifically produced knowledge and expert policy-making/application have thus entitled international scholars and professionals with superior moral credibility and objectivity whose strong partnership perpetuates powerful relations of subjugation and control. The superiority of their fact-finding search for the truth and evidence collected to prove or disproof detrimental historical memory – the official history about the wars and crimes in former Yugoslavia – have nonetheless created in BiH's society a dichotomy in history-making process. Therefore "didactic use of law" (Douglas, 2001, p. 5) has shaped a history-making process in the selective and restrictive manner (Žunec, 2007, p. 38-41), indicating to what extent Tribunal was ill-equipped to judge the overall circumstances and events

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[11] Not only by EU institutions such as European Council, but more importantly by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

through legal means of inquiry (Razsa & Lindstrom, 2004). Since it is still very difficult to estimate the impact and extent of TJ practice on local communities in BiH, it is, however, evident that resistance in different forms by various actors is very much present indicating how internationally produced knowledge is predominantly used as a functional exit strategy for politically negotiated TJ process in BiH rather than a comprehensive development policy. Paradoxically, one of the most difficult negative effecta of TJ process in BiH is the persistent negation of the Srebrenica Genocide.[12] Namely, almost without exceptions, scholarly and expert knowledge production reflects Tribunal's performative appropriations of factual truths to implicate rather than name and/or hold responsible the principal instigator of Yugoslav wars. This in return is in sharp opposition to what people of BiH has experienced during the war and whom they believe is the victim and who is the perpetrator (Cvikić & Živić, 2016). Therefore, the fragmented meaning of unsuccessfully delivering impartial justice to every individual that was affected by the war does reflect the asymmetry between indictments and prosecuted war crimes established by the ICTY for different nations implicated in the Yugoslav wars (Clark, 2011). Divergent outcomes of TJ efforts in BiH have entrenched diverse societal responses to social changes sponsored and supervised by international power politics predominantly in the way of resistance (Subotić, 2005). Therefore, enforced missions of fact-finding and truth telling in BiH fall empty of assumed positive change that TJ instant solutions were expected to create. Armed with scientific oversimplifications TJ experts in BiH have tried to reconstruct fragile social bonds of trust, respect and understanding between estranged communities unaware of the fact that they helped to justify politically assisted economy of justice – an economy that rationalizes costs of the criminal proceedings before the Court in line with the efforts to reconstruct social and historical processes and contexts in which crimes have been committed as it sees fit (Jacobson, 2005; Kelly, 2013). International humanitarian law has extended its power of judgement horizontally through TJ scholarship, thereby seriously debilitating BiH community's ability to independently shape their own history, national identity, and collective memory. Even though recent efforts of TJ scholars are taking the critical turn into the studies of persistent resistance to TJ mechanisms in post-war societies (Bernath et al, 2018), such as BiH, they are yet to find workable solutions to remit the unsuccessful application of the knowledge and help build resilient communities so diligently promoted by the UNDP development programs.

The complex nature of war in BiH entails a sophisticated matrix of histories, cultures, events, politics, identities, actions, emotions, memories, relationships, meanings

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[12] For more information on Srebrenica genocide's denial see: *Izveštaj o negiranju genocida u Srebrenici 2021*, Memorijalni centar Srebrenica (2021) available at: https://srebrenicamemorial.org/assets/files/1625819630-izvjestaj-o-negiranju-genocida-za-2021-godinu-bosanski-jezik.pdf

and understandings, narratives and discourses that are so far deconstructed in a post-modernist way (Nagy, 2008; Turner, 2013): they are fragmented and thereby destabilized in the name of strict social constructionism (Gibbons et al, 1994; Franzoni & Lissoni, 2009; Humes & Bryce, 2003; Sharp, 2014). Populations of BiH are therefore immobilized by the knowledge produced about them as well as by the post-war TJ process even though it is obvious that ordinary people do not resist it because they understand what TJ policies are. They resist it because the reality of their everyday living is farfetched from the socially constructed transitional mode of life – a life susceptible to globally produced human rights and justice that means well but reproduces relationships of subjugation and control.

Scholarly discourse developed by internationally negotiated debates has ascribed mostly negative traits to TJ process in BiH which then got embedded in policy solutions that are suited for not only academic but more importantly political, technocratic and media consumption (Harvey, 2003; Mooers, 2006; Fassin & Pandolfi, 2010). TJ data-driven economy with globally collected databases of practices and activities has created space for scholars/experts who are often conjured to produce knowledge conducive to the funding received for the research that develops and improves the mainstream TJ scholarship. Therefore, despite their good intentions and excellent research findings, the human condition, and society of individuals in BiH did not benefit from the knowledge collected about them. Even though evidence from the ICTY's caseloads is a welcoming addition to scholarly research projects, produced scientific injustices about BiH TJ process and epistemology behind international scholarly efforts all suffer "from the perennial identity crisis of social science as a science, given the limitations on its ability to demonstrate causality with anything like the certainty of natural sciences" (Nouwen 2014, p. 6). Therefore, the coercive nature of TJ practice in BiH was so far unable to ensure convergence based on international and domestic stakeholder's restoration and restitution efforts, while its policies with human face despite collected evidence and knowledge have repeatedly failed to restore confidence and trust in rebuilding mechanisms of TJ process.

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BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA ETHNOCRATIC NATIONAL SECURITY ARCHITECTURE AND ITS REGIONAL SECURITY COOPERATION

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A security transformation process initiated in the last decade of the 1990s in the Western Balkans, in the post-war setting, brought the region to expand security cooperation in Europe and overseas. Bosnia and Herzegovina, a country marked by one of the most destructive conflicts of the 20th century, has been progressively adhered to external security cooperation while internally the National Security Architecture remained unchanged and ethnocentric. The subject of this chapter explores how external intervention has successfully brought Bosnia and Herzegovina into regional cooperation and multilateralism while increasing ethnic polarization already institutionalized and set out in the Dayton Peace Accords (1995). In this context, the chapter examines the nexus between the liberal and constructivist approach to security and its implementation through international norms set by external actors to promote regional and international security cooperation moving from a national self-sustainable concept of security to a transnational and transborder human security concept. The chapter also focuses on the rationale of reforming to adhere to regional and security cooperation introducing global normative while strengthening ethnic governance, marking Bosnia and Herzegovina security policy on regional cooperation versus an internal security architecture institutionally divided, fragmented and ethnically led.

Introduction

In December 2020, Bosnia and Herzegovina celebrated the 25th years anniversary of

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the Dayton Peace Accord, which ended the conflict. At the session of the Security Council (SC/14511) on May 4, 2021, Valentin Inzko, the High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina, while reporting on the political status of the country stated, that Bosnia and Herzegovina "*Remains in effect 'a Frozen Conflict' as political leaders push nationalistic agendas to pursue wartime goals, generate divisions and push nationalistic agendas*".

The regionalization and multilateralism process in the 1990s had not produced the desired impact in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which remains behind the integration into the regionalization process due to the domestic ethnocratic-led politics. The ethno-nationalism in Bosnia-Herzegovina continues to impede the country's evolution towards democracy remaining in that transitory phase that characterized the passage from conflict to peace.

Dayton Peace Agreement signed in December 1995 re-designed the new state of Bosnia and Herzegovina through a Constitution, which fragmented the country's governance at different levels. The State level governance, the Entities level with the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the ten Cantons mainly dominated by Bosniak and Bosnian Croat, the centralized governance of Republika Srpska, mainly dominated by Bosnian Serbs and Brcko District. The Presidency of the country is a rotating presidency. Thus, an ethnic governed country corresponds to ethnocratic security architecture.

The ethnocratic state of Bosnia and Herzegovina has been built at the time of the peace implementation process in respect of the Dayton peace agreement through a constructivist approach. The peace process implementation adheres to the Dayton Peace Accord and re-establishes peace and security within the country. DPA aimed to ensure peace in the region promoting cooperation and multilateralism preventing Bosnia and Herzegovina to relapse into the conflict and/or to spill over the conflict in the region.

The Ethnocratic Path for the Peace Implementation Process
In 1995, the *United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1035* mandated the United Nations intervention to implement the *Dayton Peace Agreement* (DPA) by transforming the former security architecture in multi-ethnic security governance (Oliver, 2005, pp. 84-85) and a multi-ethnic security architecture to guarantee security services to all, despite ethnic, religious and political diversity. The peace process re-established peace and security under heavy international military and civilian

presence to prevent the country from relapsing into conflict. The need to re-establish peace and security was combined with the agenda to move the country from a pre-war communist regime to democracy, engaging the United Nations (UN) and later the European Union (EU) on a double front to bring Bosnia and Herzegovina out of isolation towards regional cooperation and multilateralism through a constructivist approach. However, the *United Nations Security Council Resolution 1035*, with the intent to re-establish a climate of peace and security, following the conditions set in the Dayton Peace Agreement, favoured ethnic polarization against pluralism and democracy (Donais, 2005, 50-51) and built up ethnic security architecture. Therefore, Kulanic (2011) was right in asserting

> Bosnia-Herzegovina for the first time since 1992 got a central government, which consisted of representatives of all people and citizens, from the entire territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Warring parties had to sit together in the offices of central government. These parties grabbed the opportunity to launch the process of ethnicisation instead of democratization, which had legalized their war gains (p. 172).

To implement the *Dayton Peace Agreement* (DPA), the United Nations and the European Union took a dual approach, implementing and supporting an ethnocratic polarised political and security architecture on one hand while directing their efforts investing into a road map for Bosnia and Herzegovina to promote security regionalisation and multilateral cooperation as the best deterrent for the country to relapse into the conflict and to guarantee stability in the region, fighting transnational organized crime and terrorism.

The implementation of the peace accord inevitably reinforced and established the ethnicity-based management of security from the operational level to the security policy level sacrificing, the individual beneficiaries' need for a new concept of security built on human security to ethno-constructed security architecture[1]. The ethnocratic

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[1]Bojicic-Dzelilovic, V., 2015. The Politics, Practice and Paradox of 'Ethnic Security' in Bosnia-Herzegovina. *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development,* 4(1), p.Art. 11. DOI: http://doi.org/10.5334/sta.ez: The international intervention in Bosnia-Herzegovina was intended to support conflict resolution by introducing territorial self-government and power sharing as the foundation for a governance framework that would provide for collective and individual security alignment over time. Instead, it has contributed to the ethnification of security whereby collective security in the form of an 'ethnified state' remains at the forefront of political discourse and practice. Social acceptance of this ethnified state as the guarantor of security—despite the fading reality of the ethnic threat in public perceptions of post-war insecurity—has been actively manufactured by the country's ethnic elites using the very institutional means put in place by the international intervention. The result is an 'ethnic security paradox' in which the idea of individual safety—linked to the protection of ethnic identity in the form of an ethnified state—unsettles both collective and individual security alike.

security architecture and the political nationalism polarization remain to be one of the major obstacles to the country's progress towards the renewed concept of security as human security and to multi-ethnic management of the security architecture in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Dayton Peace Agreement ethno-nationalisms, as the price of peace, weakened the process of democracy in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Donais, 2005, pp. 54-55). Therefore, Mulalic and Karic (2016) were right in arguing that

> Twenty years after the Dayton Peace Agreement an exclusive ethnic ideology, international tutelage and dependency characterize Bosnia and Herzegovina. Wrong political approaches by the international and local political actors in Bosnia and Herzegovina created permanent crisis, the status quo and a 'case' country. Conflict, furthermore, enriched with exclusive ethno-cultural paradigm and the legacy of bloody crucible of the war, shape today's political discourse in Bosnia and Herzegovina (p. 139).

The Constructivist Template

The constructivist templates in post-conflict Bosnia and Herzegovina re-established peace through a disintegrated political climate shifting from human security and collective security to ethnic security. The incongruity of the peace process is that Bosnia and Herzegovina is progressively developing regional and multilateral cooperation, however not equally successful in supporting the internal political discourse to overcome the ethnocratic security architecture. This debate on regional and multilateral security against ethnocratic security architecture animates the discussion of political scientists and intellectuals in light of modern liberal and constructivist theories.   Regional and multilateral security is increasingly becoming a priority in the international political agenda considering the numerous and long-standing conflicts in the world. In the last two decades, the international debate around the conceptualization of international security became of major interest for international and political organizations, called upon more often to intervene in the world's conflict to re-establish peace and security. These processes explain the expansion of the debate from the general international theories to specific studies on international peace and security of recent decades. The modern concept of international security influenced by constructivism and institutionalism has been interpreted by the United Nations, the European Union and NATO to overcome the traditional nationalistic and military concept of security to promote regionalization and multilateralism. Regionalization and multilateralism according to the constructivism theories shall affect internal

domestic changes according to the key global values. However, in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as for other countries, it is probably worth mentioning the case of Afghanistan and the most recent political development; the global values are not fully applicable and often remain inconsistent with the political, legislative, cultural and religious environment.

Peacebuilding after the 1990s had to shift from a dominant neo-liberal focus on freedom to the institutionalization of the state as a security provider to its community through embracing regional cooperation and multilateral agreements. However, the traditional debate has been bounced back and forth accordingly, between success and un-success of constructivism questioning the value of traditional theories without considering the possibility of balancing the two approaches as for the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina. If the liberal democracies aim to provide human and collective security the ethnocratic architecture should be challenged in favour of democracy (D'Anieri, 2011, p. 435). In the last two decades, studies have underlined the nexus between the most recent concept of human security and human rights guaranteed within regionalisation and multilateralism against ethnocratic security architecture, often among the causes of conflicts. Among the several debates, Nayef Al-Rhodan (2007) gave an interesting conception of security based on the 'multi-sum system principle', as a response to the challenges of twenty-first-century globalization and emerging security threats in which security is no longer a zero-sum game involving states based on five dimensions including human, environmental, national, transnational, and transcultural security.

In constructive and institutional theories, the alternative to a security-state based model focuses on the acceptances that elected governance must be built up reflecting the ground and not the theories (Barma, Huybens, Vinuela, 2014, pp. 115-116) therefore even accepting an ethnocratic security architecture without challenging the legitimacy of an election and the traditional concept of state security. In the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina the established ethnocratic security architecture has been fully legitimized by the Dayton peace agreement and by legitimate election held from the end of the conflict to nowadays. It is internationally agreed that there is a need to reduce the risk of transnational threats and 'spill-over' from local crisis and conflicts through promoting regionalisation and multilateralism even when the regionalization process and the multilateral accord co-exist with ethnocratic structures outcome of the legitimate election or authoritarian regime.

The often undemocratic regimes, for instance, Libya's former dictator Muammar Gaddafi, former Egyptian Dictator Muhammad Hosni El Sayed Mubarak or Bashar al Assad, were significantly supported and accepted by the Western liberal democracies to guarantee regional stability, peace and international order in their region. They were often considered as examples of a security state-based model in which all the individual freedom, social-economic, and human rights were denied in the name of peace and security, and status quo not just in their countries but in their region. The regionalization process should have an impact in Bosnia and Herzegovina influencing the transformation of domestic governance, through reforming, adapting to the global paradigm.

The constructive and institutional theories lead towards organizing the security architecture to provide accountable mechanisms to guarantee the citizens' oversight of security. However, ethnocratic security architectures in the country like Bosnia and Herzegovina have been built often discriminating against individuals and minorities and often preventing refugees and internally displaced persons to return to their places of origin.

The cases of Bosnia, on one hand, diminishes faith in the idealist perspective of constructivism founded on the principle that human beings can rationally control their motives engaging to socially contribute, even at the expense of their own benefit, but on the other, it proves that in spite the ethnocratic security structure Bosnia and Herzegovina has been able to engage constructively towards regional cooperation and multilateralism. The question arises as to whether the political idealism of constructivism is always applicable to domestic transformation or remains restrained to a theory that often seems impossible to translate in practice.

Ethnic Security vs. Human Security
In the international theories, the line of demarcation is between, realism and traditional ethnocratic security architecture, and liberal-constructivism based on people-centred security. The equation is not just nominal speculation but a political affirmation of the two models that distinguish the beneficiaries of the security. It is the ethnocratic security versus collective security, identifiable as societal or individual, regional and multilateral. The question to follow is what kind of security is desirable; military or territorial, political, economic, or societal, individual, regional and multilateral? The key shall be, aiming to develop a strategy for sustainable security management and development, maintaining a balance of interests between human and national security

(Wilson, 2004, p. 323).[2] Unfortunately, in Bosnia and Herzegovina the security architecture remains limited and challenged by ethnic-based powers and their primary interests.

The narrative of realism, liberalism, constructivism, and institutionalism focuses on theoretical and practical dimensions of security as part of the attempts to provide a feasible framework for the observation of the ethnocratic security architecture against regional and multilateral cooperation. There is a tendency for international security and peace studies to privilege liberal and constructivist theories against the realist traditional concept of security that for centuries was used to justify military interventions. Korab-Karpowicz (2010) suggested that "certain dictates of reason" (p. 25) apply even in the state of nature, affirming that it is feasible to have peaceful and cooperative relations, as sovereign states can sign treaties with one another to provide a legal basis for their relations. Bosnia and Herzegovina is the perfect example of it, whereas the sovereign state can sign regional and multilateral treaties but is unable to overcome an ethnocratic security architecture.

Bosnia and Herzegovina's ethnocratic security architecture conflicts with the two key principles of individualism and liberty (Shain, 1996, pp. 116-120). Other than, affirm the individual's rights to participate in the political aspects of society, political liberalism also involves the design of institutions that will provide some guarantee of government accountability to the people and will limit the government's power to attack or erode individual liberty (Charvet, and Kaczynska-Nay, 2008). Individual liberties are exercised through the election which in Bosnia since the end of 1995 have been dominated by ethno-political parties, except for the 2000 election, which saw the victory of the Social Democratic Party (Socijaldemokratska partija, SDP), the only multi-national political parties in Bosnia. In reference to the responsibility of the Bosnia and Herzegovina electorate it is worth mentioning Asim Mujkić: « I call a community characterized by the political priority of the ethnic group(s) over the individual that is implemented through democratic self-legislation, and a community characterized by the political priority of the ethnic group's right to self-determination over the citizen's right to self-determination where the citizen's membership in a political community is determined by

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[2] The end of the Cold War brought change to the international scene by putting in question the security architecture and concept of the last 50 years, in the name of which, in certain part of the world, individuals were denied their fundamental freedom and political and economic rights in the name of state security. As Sanyeev wrote, the end of the Cold War in Europe and elsewhere witnessed the end of many regimes and the re-birth of numerous states whereby a new concept of security was embraced due to the change of warfare, from bipolarity to multi-polarity, and the nature of conflict itself from inter-state to intra-state. Sanyeev, Gupta 2002. Governance, Corruption, and Economic Performance. International Monetary Fund, Washington DC. Aidt, Toke S., 2003.

her or his membership in ethnic community, *Ethnopolis*. And I call the political narrative and practice intended to justify this ethnically based social construct, *ethnopolitics"*[3]

In the realm of international security, liberalism is based on the principle of common identities and cultures of different nations, designed to build up international relations and cooperation. Those principles should serve to shape global politics on social factors instead of ethnic interests. Nye (2009) indicates that liberalism is opposed to realism "as an analytical approach to international relations in which states function as part of the global society that set the context for their interaction approach or as the constructivism that emphasizes the importance, of ideas, cultures, and social dimensions" (p. 9).

Thus, liberal institutionalism sees international institutions as a deterrent to avoid conflicts between nations (Brown & Ainley, 2009, pp. 176-179). Liberals accept that the anarchic system envisaged by the realists cannot disappear but consider that regionalism and multilateralism organizations of nations can positively influence the behaviour within the system and contribute to world peace. In the last 20 years, conflicts and wars could have been prevented by a global security agreement with the oversight of international organizations such as the United Nations, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Organization for Security Cooperation in Europe, or the European Union, however, it proved not always effective. The concept of security promoted by the liberal theory considered that even ethnocratic communities integrated into organized institutions are deterrents and it has proven effective politically but in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Although constructivists argue that the interaction and dialogue in a specific region ensure socialization over the years, creating conditions in post-conflict countries to adopt standards, norms, and values convergent with those of the regional organization, the success is not guaranteed and cannot transcend society's value or its cultural heritage from religion to economy and from the law to the history. Alexander Wendt[4] (1999) recognizes three distinct degrees of cultural internalization: "The actor's advancement to the next degree is highly dependent on their internalization of shared ideas, commitment to support such ideas and demonstrate ownership to those ideas (Jackson and Sorensen, 2007, p. 165). In the view of Wendt, the weak commitment

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[3]Mujkić, Asim, (2007) « We, the Citizens of the Ethnopolis », *Constellations*, 14 (1), p. 116.

[4] Alexander Wendt (1999) see constructivism as based on two fundamental elements: a) that structures of human association are determined primarily by shared ideas rather than material forces; b) identities and interests of actors are constructed by these shared ideas rather than given by nature. The constructivist position is not far from realism or liberalism as they accept the existence of the state of anarchy and the centrality of the state in the international relations system.

reflects weak cooperation and hence weak internalization of shared ideas: "As the actors move to the third degree, they demonstrate a strong commitment for cooperation and amplified internalization of shared ideas" (Wendt, 1999, p. 254).

International organizations are driven by liberal theory, dating back to the end of the Cold War and the rise of 'new wars' as a threat to international peace and security. The liberal intervention reflects two distinct ideas: (i) *security and development are inextricably linked*: one cannot be pursued without the other; (b) *democratization* of war-torn societies, regionalisation and multilateralism will enhance peace, order, and stability both at the domestic and international level. In principle, for the United Nations, the European Union, and other multilateral and regional organizations, enlarging the accession to member states regionally and worldwide promotes democracy, cultural, economic and political development, promoting peace and preventing conflict (Zwitter, 2010, pp. 116-117). It is the fundamental principle of constructivism to promote global security.

Conclusion

Dayton Peace Agreement ended the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina but its implementation contributed to a double track. The liberal constructivism approach restored sustainable peace-promoting regionalisation and multilateralism while the realism approach prevailed in the implementation of the peace agreement building up an ethnocratic and radicalise state security architecture. The liberal constructivist approach, effectively transform the security scenario in the region, restoring sustainable peace and retaining its fundamental principles heavily relying on international normative and global values at the expense of domestic security policies.

In the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, this approach presented the paradox between a people-centred approach projecting Bosnia and Herzegovina into a regional security context, funded on liberal values and a state-centric approach while establishing ethnic security architecture.

The debate on Bosnia and Herzegovina dualism and the application of external security normative and global culture confirmed that constructivism might impede the inter-policy approach to respond to the political scenario coherently and effectively due to the prevailing regional interests to prevent local conflicts spilling over from regional to transnational and international conflicts as well counter transnational organized crime and terrorism. The challenge is that constructivist theories funded on reforming, tend to reproduce models that might not fit all countries, societies, and

cultures, thus failing the beneficiary's interest and the policy itself. Often the nature of regionalization and multilateralism contribute to polarizing within-country formal and informal powers instead of re-balancing them according to the beneficiaries' interests. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the post-conflict constructivist approach did not deeply address the conflictive political climate polarized around ethnic values, although legitimized by over two decades of the election, preventing the establishment of multi-ethnic democratic governance. The shortcut to the political challenge proved it easier to adjust policy to adapt to reality than interpreting reality to fit policy.

The constructivist concept of security embraced by the United Nations, European Union, and NATO is human security-driven, although in practice it only works if the international actors are ready to respond to events that are shaped by the beneficiaries instead of their expectations. Reforming through international normative and global values as for the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the aftermath of the conflict, responded to the international actors' expectations more than those of its citizens. After the ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and Herzegovina the creation of democratic security architecture and multi-ethnic security service was among the priorities of the security transformation aiming at guaranteeing that internally displaced persons could return to their homes without fear and re-instate themselves in their home. Multi-ethnic security architecture would have served greatly to promote reconciliation in a society torn by the conflict.

The United Nations, NATO and European Union intervention provided a solid foundation for peace stabilization and to stop the bloody conflict, preventing a renewal of the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina. They attempted to establish trust between former warring factions serving as a valuable entry point to re-establish consensus among the parties and move from conflict to peace. The international intervention also enabled the Office of the High Representative to undertake essential reforms and equip Bosnia and Herzegovina with prerogatives usually exercised by states in modern democracies, however, did not succeed in preventing the establishment of an ethnocratic security architecture. The security services, the police as well as the army, remained ethnically based and ethnically driven.

The idea of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a sovereign state was and remains the wish of some citizens, and the Regionalisation and multilateral process global values remain more a necessity for development than a desire within all citizens who belong to different ethnic groups. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the state is not the only actor to provide security legitimately acquired through a free election in an ethnocratic institutional structure, but the entities and the cantons ethnic security architecture are in providing

the every day security services. The case of Bosnia and Herzegovina thus shows that promoting regionalisation and multilateralism was not the remedy for the Bosnian post-conflict state-building and did not help to overcome the radical nationalisms that in 2021 are still standing.

The pressure exercised by the United Nations, the European Union, NATO, the OSCE concentrating efforts to support the state level contributed to escalating the conflict between the three ethnic groups. Analysed interviews indicated that overcoming ethnocracy especially in the aftermath of the conflict was not feasible due to the fragile and fragmented political-institutional and societal composition agreed in the Dayton Peace Agreement revealing the limitations of the liberal constructivist approach in responding to war-torn society in transition from a conflict to liberal democracies within an ethnically divided country. The Bosnia and Herzegovina case brings to question the effectiveness of strategies anchored on constructivist theories, regionalism and multilateral cooperation in accomplishing peace and democracy while the country is organized ethnocratically through legitimate elections polarised around ethnic nationalism.

In contributing to the ethnocratic security architecture in Bosnia and Herzegovina the key international actors failed to speak with one voice and act coherently and cohesively. The divided interest of the United Nations Security Council Member's State and the fragmentation of the European Union foreign policy was evident during the state-building process and the implementation of the security architecture. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the United Nations and the European Union pursued the strategy for the democratization of a country torn by a conflict to enhance peace and security, but in practice reflected the interests of the key world actors with distinct ideas of what Bosnia and Herzegovina statehood shall or shall not be. However, they all agreed on the role Bosnia and Herzegovina could play regionally and multilaterally, including what it entails in practice, which steps are necessary and in what order to fulfill peace-building objectives neglecting the implementation of security architecture to guarantee human security.

In the realm of Bosnia and Herzegovina ethnocratic security architecture, it can be concluded that fast attempts to democratize governance in post-conflict countries, without taking cognizance of the political and social environment, the needs and rights of a multi-ethnic society and its individuals, easily endangers the reconciliation, radicalising ethnic structures at any political and security level. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement endorsed an

ethnic and partisan political criterion legitimized through the election. To refer to Kurt Bassuener, « the Dayton constitution makes leveraging fear politically profitable and politicians unaccountable. Bosnian politicians pursue their self-aggrandizing, maximalist goals at the expense of the general welfare[5].

It is certain that ethnocracy has not prevented Bosnia to undergo a regionalisation process and multilateralism and that constructivism had not positively impacted the country's domestic security structure. It proves also that regionalisation and multilateralism cooperation can fly over ethnocracy, authoritarian regimes for the supreme cause of peace and stability and regional security versus human security services and people-centred security.

The aim remains to identify models that could reconcile the interest of the beneficiaries with the necessity to become part of the regional, global and multilateral process and be part of an international community that shares the understanding for a coherent approach to global security funded on human security. In the regional and multilateral cooperation countries shall manifestly remain interdependent from political or legal subordination of one against another, but rather recognize and respect each other's diversity, values, and culture. This principle shall be reflected within Bosnia and Herzegovina domestic security architecture and overall governance, refocusing the political debate on mainstream democratic values, prioritizing the need to prevent and to protect the beneficiaries and not the ethnicity. In the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, regionalisation and multilateralism, as instruments of constructivism to establish a democratic "modus vivendi" between countries has not succeeded in overcoming the ethnocratic governance and consequently an ethnocratic security architecture and security dimension. Where regionalisation and multilateralism shall be conceived in respect of any country political, social, legislative and cultural environment, Bosnia and Herzegovina shall project its transition to overcome ethnocratic nationalism through voter's accountability and responsibility integrating and adjusting global values and norms, funders of the regionalism and multilateralism to Bosnia and Herzegovina domestic challenges and priorities.

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CHALLENGES FOR TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE IN THE WESTERN BALKANS: DENIAL OF CRIMINAL OFFENCE GENOCIDE PERPETRATED IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

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On February 26, 2007, the International Court of Justice, in the case „Bosnia and Herzegovina vs. Serbia and Montenegro" has found that the killings in Srebrenica were perpetrated with genocide intent, hence, that the criminal offence Genocide has been perpetrated in the territory of Srebrenica. That verdict confirmed the Genocide perpetration in the heart of Europe, at the end of the 20th, upon 47 years of existence of the *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide*. Although that verdict is a legal fact and as such, it has to be obeyed, the denial of the Genocide is present as a topic in everyday life in Bosnia and Herzegovina, particularly in a part of its territory – the entity Republika Srpska. This chapter aims to present the challenges that denial of Genocide produces for Bosnia and Herzegovina on its path towards the establishment of Transitional Justice. Normative, historical and comparative scientific methods will be used to portray the negative outcomes of genocide denial on its victims whose pursuit for criminal prosecution and establishment of truth are the last sources of hope for the achievement of justice, after all the suffering they went through.

Introduction

In July 1995, 8372 civilian victims lost their lives in genocide in Srebrenica, only for being members of one ethnic community. Late Hatidža Mehmedović was left all alone in this world when her husband, two sons and members of her family were killed in the Srebrenica Genocide. Similar is the destiny of many other women and children

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after this crime was perpetrated in the heart of Europe, at the end of the 20th century. The victimization that took place on genocide victims, in different ways continues with its existence for their families, as victims remains are not fully found or not found at all. Mothers, wives and children, apart from losing loved ones, are continuing their struggle for the minimum of what a human being is entitled to find their remains and by burying them to have a sacred place where they can visit them and share their grief. Instead of hearing remorse from the perpetrators of Genocide they are forced to listen or to read statements of individuals, including the ones at important official positions, that genocide never happened, just as if all their loss and destroyed lives are only in their mind, and them in some kind of parallel world.

The genocide that had been perpetrated in Srebrenica in July 1995 was legally established through the verdict of the International Court of Justice that was brought on February 26, 2007, in the case "Bosnia and Herzegovina vs. Serbia and Montenegro", by the International Court of Justice. It was established that the killings in Srebrenica were perpetrated with genocide intent. Hence, the Genocide has been perpetrated in Srebrenica.

The genocide denial didn't stop after the verdict was brought. Quite opposite, it became quite frequently used, especially as an element of political rhetoric in a part of the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. So, it is quite suitable to wonder if there is punitivity for those actions; what is the future of peace in genocide denial-wrapped countries, and what is the perspective for reconciliation?! The genocide denial as an act of "denying that an event took place, or down laying its scale or impact" (OSCE, n.d., p. 2) is not a new phenomenon, but a relic from after World War II, against which has been fought by many countries in the world. Not only for the benefit of victims but for the establishment of truth and potential reconciliation that is the ground of future peace. That is the reason why the author aims to test the impact of genocide denial on Transitional Justice in Bosnia and Herzegovina and to check its existence and the legal framework that regulates it. We will test if there is a legal framework that will help in its prevention in this state, but also give a brief overview of how it is managed in selected countries. As many genocide deniers are defending themselves with their right to freedom of expression, we will correlate those two and through a brief presentation of selected case studies, establish the reasoning of the European Court for Human Rights on this matter.

What is the Transitional Justice?
In order to examine the impact of genocide denial on Transitional Justice, it is

necessary to understand the concept itself and its grounds. One of the widest and fullest definitions of Transitional Justice is offered in the *Rule of Law and Transitional Justice in Conflict and Postconflict Societies*, a report made by the General Secretary of the United Nations. It is defined as "the full range of processes and mechanisms associated with an attempt to come to terms with a legacy of large scale past abuses in order to ensure accountability, serve justice and achieve reconciliation" (The Rule, 2004, p. 10). It is easy to understand that Transitional Justice doesn't consist of one or few actions only, instead, it is a process without a clear time frame, but with a clear aim: to assist the societies who have a "legacy of large-scale atrocities" (UNHR Report, 2014, p. 11) in achieving justice and "preventing the re-occurrence" (UNHR Report, 2014, p.11). That is why Fischer (n.d, p. 407) notes that "...Transitional Justice is a concept that has increasingly gained importance by peace-building agencies engaged in war-torn societies during the past two decades".

Mechanisms of Transitional Justice differ, and they can be both judicial and non-judicial and according to the UN Guidance Note, from 2010 (p. 2) it consists of several components:

- prosecution initiatives;
- seeking for the truth and establishment of the truth (mainly through truth commissions);
- delivering reparations;
- initiating institutional reform;
- national consultations.

All these components may result in the establishment of justice and reconciliation, which is the ultimate aim. Only when the truth is established, the responsible individuals brought before the system of justice, victims achieved their rights, and consistent and functional legislative and institutional system build in one country, it can be said that the transitional process is accomplished. In that picture, reconciliation is a piece of the puzzle that creates the foundation for long-lasting peace which is the ultimate goal of the process. Hazan (2006, p. 21), through Kriesberg (2007, p. 252-256) identifies four dimensions of reconciliation: shared truth, justice, security, and recognition of humanity and human rights of others. According to Fischer (n.d., p. 406), reconciliation "...is assuming that once a top-down political settlement has been reached, a bottom-up process should take place in which unresolved issues of the conflict will be handed in order to prevent questioning of the settlement and a return to violence".

Discourse on Genocide Denial

Based on that understanding of the concept of Transitional Justice and the importance of reconciliation, it is understandable why genocide denial brings concern among scientists. Genocide denial is older than the concept it obstacles. Namely, it existed after the Second World War in Germany, where individuals were denying the Holocaust of happening. Hutterbach (1999, p. 217) identifies potential reasons for denial of such obvious crime that was established by finalized judicial verdicts at that time. According to him, it was the fear of exposing relatives, friends who perpetrated or participated to some extent in genocide and fear of self-incrimination that induced the denial. As it will be presented in the next pages, it took some time for Germany to provide a legislative framework to fight genocide denial, and the final stage in that aspect was achieved just a decade ago.

The existence of this phenomenon was best recognized by Stanton in 1998 (Stages, 1998), who established that genocide denial is the final stage of genocide. He stated that "genocide is a process that develops in eight stages that are predictable but not inexorable. At each stage, preventive measures can stop it. It is not a linear process, but logically the latter stages must be preceded by the earlier stages".[1]

This understanding is very valuable since it offers additional argumentation in proving the genocide: with denial of genocide, the genocide is being confirmed, since it is one of its stages. Together with offering this ground-breaking understanding of genocide denial, Stanton estimated its essence. He describes it as "an indicator for further genocide" (Stanton, 1998). The close relation of genocide denial with genocide itself, as its by-effect is confirmed by Hutterbach (1999, p.2016), who equalizes failure in the identification of genocide denial as an integral part of genocide with failure in comprehension a major component of the dynamics of extermination.

Content of Denial

The genocide denial can be perpetrated in various manners, but in the criminal law theory, several actions are being recognized as the ones that genocide denial may consist of. According to Pruitt (2017, p.270), those are "ignoring facts, attempts to reduce responsibility and encourage impunity". Ignoring facts is a most notorious type of genocide denial, which may refer to both the quality and the quantity of genocide. When denying the quality of genocide, deniers are denying the existence of genocide, the existence of victims, the existence of evidence and legal verdicts. When denying

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[1] Other stages are: classification, symbolization, dehumanization, organization, polarization, perpetration, extermination (Stanton, 1998).

the quantity of genocide, they discuss the number of victims (so-called: doubting the numbers). A good example of that is the case of Ernst Zundel from Canada, who in his book "Did six million really die", challenged the number of victims that lost their lives in the Holocaust (Pruitt, 2019, p. 275). Attempts to reduce responsibility are usually visible in attempts of blaming the victims for their victimization (shifting the blame on them) or calling on self-defense (justifying). Pruitt (2017, p. 270) portrays that form of denial by paraphrasing Alverez (1997) and Staton (2016):

> If the victim deserved what happened to them, then they are not truly victims but instead instigators and agitators, When the Germans turned Jews into the enemy, the Holocaust could take on the image of self-defense. When one is striking in self-defense, violence is not abhorred but condoned. If genocide denial leads to victim denial, the process of extermination could reignite.

Finally, encouragement of impunity may be portrayed in help in hiding the perpetrators or denial of the judicial system of the state.

Bilali (2019, p. 289) offers additional qualifications of genocide denial and differs the rejection of facts (literal denial), contesting of the meaning of the enemy or the target of blame (interpretative), and acceptance of only a portion of truth (partial acknowledgment).

Motives and Consequences of Genocide Denial

Few psychological and social theories of crime provide us with an answer to why an individual or group would decide to deny a crime. One of them is Tayfel&Turner's *Theory of Social Identity*, from 1986 (McLeod, 2019), which can be summarized in the idea that one's social identity is "a person's sense of who they are based on their group membership". The world is divided into us and them. Us is the "ingroup" and them is an "out-group". Therefore, everything that "we" do is justified and permittable. McLeod simplifies this theory in "that group members of an in-group will seek to find negative aspects of an out-group, thus enhancing their self-image". Therefore, genocide deniers feel that perpetrators of genocide are members of their group (us), while victims are them. There is always a justification for the actions of the "us" group, while "them" are the ones to blame for all wrongdoings.

Another distinguished theory that may explain the ethos of this crime is the *Just World Theory*, created by Melvin Lerner in 1980. The idea of this theory is that everyone

gets what they deserve (Just-world, 2021). Good people get good, bad people bad. So, the theory teaches that people perceive that there should be no compassion since victims are victimized because, in some way, they deserve it. Therefore, genocide deniers don't see genocide as something evil that shouldn't have happened to victims, but something they deserved.

Both theories explain ethos that may be found among some perpetrators of genocide denial. However, above mentioned Hutterbach's (1999, p. 217) explanation of the motivation for denial shouldn't be neglected, as it is very reasonable.

Genocide denial may bring many individual and collective consequences. Individual ones are mostly of psychological and social nature. Denying the existence of the source of suffering and loss causes growth of anger, resentment and hatred in the victim. They feel insecure for their future and not safe in the society they live in. All these emotions may cause serious damage to the victim's mental health. Denial excludes any possibility of dialogue with the perpetrator and restoration of broken relations. Additionally, victims may feel re-victimized. At the collective level, it causes the establishment of a society full of polarization and uncertainties, which painted with resentment excludes possibilities of reconciliation.

Examples of Criminalization of Genocide Denial in Selected Countries
Since genocide denial is not a new phenomenon, many countries were challenged through time to find the best way to prevent it. Although genocide denial still exists, the legislation of many countries prescribes punitivity for it. Interestingly, some countries criminalized denial of the Holocaust only, while others criminalized denial in wider terms, as any genocide. The third option is the widest criminalization: denial of genocide and war crimes as well. In our opinion, the best approach is the widest prescription that coves both genocide and war crimes too, as they are very serious violations of international law and humanity.

Rwanda, a state where genocide has been perpetrated in the same period as in Bosnia and Herzegovina, brought the *Law on the Crime of Genocide Ideology and Other Related Offences* in 2013, which was aimed at regulating definition, criminal liability and procedures related to Genocide Ideology and other related criminal offences. This was a very important step for its society, as the law set very detailed grounds for puntivity of genocide denial in a very specific way. The criminalization of such an act is prescribed in detail, which covers most of the actions that may result in a negation of genocide and humiliation of primary or secondary victims. According to article

3 of the Code, the crime of Genocide Ideology is "any deliberate act, committed in public, whether orally, written or video means or by any other means which may show that a person is characterized by ethnic, religious, nationality or racial-based with the aim to 1° advocate for the commission of genocide; 2° support the genocide". The act is conducted to advocate or suppor the genocide. The action of characterizing an individual by ethnic, religious, nationality, or racial base can be conducted alternatively: orally, or through written or video means or any other means that can have the same outcome. Apart from this, in articles 5-11 genocide ideology-related criminal offences have been prescribed. Those are: Negation of genocide, Minimization of genocide, Justifying genocide, Concealment or destruction of evidence of genocide or of other crimes against humanity, Theft or destruction of remains of victims of genocide and Demolishing a memorial site or cemetery for the victims of genocide and Violence against a genocide survivor. Prescribed criminal offences can be divided into denial of genocide in the narrow sense and criminal offences of denial of genocide in a wider sense. Criminal offence Negation of genocide in the narrow sense is "any deliberate act, committed in public aiming at: stating or explaining that genocide is not genocide; deliberately misconstruing the facts about genocide for the purpose of misleading the public; supporting a double genocide theory for Rwanda and stating or explaining that genocide committed against the Tutsi was not planned". All other named criminal offences can be understood as a negation of genocide in a wider sense because the outcome they create is of such nature.

Croatia, as one of the countries that we shared our legal history with, regulates negation of genocide indirectly, by prescribing its action within criminal offence Incitement to violence and hatred. According to Article 325 paragraph (2) of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Croatia, imprisonment of up to three years is prescribed in case an individual "publicly endorses, denies or substantially diminishes the offense of genocide, crime of aggression, crime against humanity or war crime, directed against a group of people or a member of a group because of their racial, religious, national or ethnic origin, origin or color, in a manner appropriate to encourage violence or hatred against such a group or members of that group". The great value of this provision, together with the criminalization of genocide denial lies in the fact that denial of other heavy criminal offences against international law has been criminalized as well – such are aggression, crime against humanity or war crime, but also in the fact that the legal establishment of those criminal offences is not narrowed down as it is the case in Serbia. Namely, the Serbian Criminal Code criminalizes negation of genocide through the criminalization of criminal offence Racial and other discrimination (article 387 paragraph 5), and prescribes criminal sanction from six months to five years for an

individual who "publicly endorses, denies the existence or significantly reduces the gravity of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes committed against a group of persons or a member of a group determined on the basis of race, color, religion, origin, nationality or ethnicity, in a manner that may lead to violence or incitement to hatred against such a group of persons or a member of that group", but limits those criminal offences to be established " by a final judgment of a court in Serbia or the International Criminal Court". That narrowing would exclude punitivity of negation of genocide if it had been established by a final judgment of any other court. The same provision has been prescribed in the Montenegrin Criminal Code, within article 370 (2), whereas the second form of criminal offence Incitement of national, racial and religious hatred, absolutely same provision has been prescribed, with the same narrowing effect related to the establishment of the genocide.

Genocide denial, according to many authors, including Weiller (2009) had a long way to be prescribed in Germany the way it is now. Germany is one of those states who relates genocide denial only to the one perpetrated during the National Socialist rule. Established genocide(s) from that time on, would not fit under the provision of punitivity. More precisely, the positive Criminal Code (article 130 paragraph 4), threatens with the fine or imprisonment of up to three years to whoever " publicly or at a meeting, disturbs the public peace in a manner that violates the dignity of the victims by approving of, glorifying, or justifying National Socialist rule of arbitrary force". This provision, from the Criminal Code of 2005 is if of a "newer" date, compared with older codes who mostly prescribed punitivity for " incitement to hatred against segments of the population" (Weiller, 2009).

This review covered only a few selected countries but yet portrayed diversity in the regulation of genocide denial and lack of harmonization among states. Being aware of that, the Council of Europe brought a Decision on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia through criminal law (2008/913/JHA). It is an act that was brought to incite harmonization in the criminalization of certain actions, including genocide denial among states that are members of the Council of Europe, as it in Article 1 point 3, prescribes their obligation to penalize …"publicly condoning, denying or grossly trivializing crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes as defined in Articles 6, 7 and 8 of the Statute of the International Criminal Court, directed against a group of persons or a member of such a group defined by reference to race, color, religion, descent or national or ethnic origin when the conduct is carried out in a manner likely to incite to violence or hatred against such a group or a member of such a group". It also stipulates punitivity for incitement

and aiding in perpetrating of those actions and sets effectiveness, proportionality, and dissuasive criminal penalties as principles in prescribing punishment and in imposing the punishment (Article 3).

Genocide Denial vs. the Right to Freedom of Expression

Although genocide denial is criminalized in many countries, some of its perpetrators call on their right to freedom of expression and with it tries to justify their allegations. The Right to Freedom of Expression, within the Article 10 of the European Convention for Human Rights prescribes the right of freedom of expression to everyone (Article10 par. 1), and superficially read is understood wrongfully that that freedom doesn't have any restrictions. Those are prescribed in paragraph 2 that reads

> The exercise of these freedoms, since it carries with it duties and responsibilities, may be subject to such formalities, conditions, restrictions or penalties as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society, in the interests of national security, territorial integrity or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, for the protection of the reputation or rights of others, for preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence, or for maintaining the authority and impartiality of the judiciary.

Therefore, the democratic societies, national security, territorial integrity, public safety, prevention of crime, protection of health, moral, reputation or rights of others, prevention of disclosure of information received in confidence, or the judiciary are the values found to be of higher importance when compared with the basic right, and grounds for it to be restricted. Within the European Court for Human Rights case law, few verdicts set very important grounds related to genocide denial and its correlation to the right to freedom of expression. Here we will mention only a few to illustrate the reasoning of the Court on this regard: cases Lehideux and Isorni vs. France (v. 55/1997/839/1045), Witzch vs. Germany (V. 41448/98), and Garaudy vs. France (V.373, 7.07.2003). In many of them, the value of the interest of democratic society is the value named as argumentation of restriction of the right to freedom of expression.

While in the case Lehideux and Isorni vs. France the Court"held that the negation or revision of clearly established historical facts such as the Holocaust is entirely removed from the protection of Article 10" (Whieller, 2009), the similar understanding was found in the case Witzch vs. Germany in which the appellant was convicted by the

domestic court for Disparaging the dignity of the deceased pursuant, by negating the existence of the gas chambers. The court found "the public interest in the prevention of crime and disorder due to disparaging statements regarding the Holocaust, and the requirements of protecting the interests of the victims of the Nazi regime, outweigh, in a democratic society the applicant's freedom to impart views denying the existence of gas chambers and mass murder therein" (Wieller, 2009).

One of the most famous cases that mirror the sensitivity of the relationship between the Right to Expression vs. Genocide Denial punivitiy, is the Case Garaudy vs. France (V.373, 7.07.2003). Roger Garaudy, French philosopher, politician and writer wrote and published a book named "The Founding Myths of Modern Israel", that was unofficially distributed, and later on, in 1996 republished under the title "Samiszdat Roger Garaudy". The publication had a reaction among intellectuals and NGO's, who started civil procedures against him, for "disputing the existence of crimes against humanity, racial defamation in public and incitement to racial hatred" (V.373, 2003), and consequently, five criminal investigations were open as well. Later on, he made an application towards the European Court for Human Rights, stating that Article 10 of the European Convention for Human Rights was violated in his case. "He argued that his book was a political work written with a view to combating Zionism and criticizing Israeli policy and had no racist or anti-Semitic content. He argued that, since he could not be regarded as a revisionist, he should have been afforded unlimited freedom of expression". He also called on the violation of the right to a fair trial (Article 6), freedom of thought (Article 9), and prohibition of discrimination (article 14). His appellation was found Inadmissible, and the Court found that "… as the domestic courts had shown, the applicant had adopted revisionist theories and systematically disputed the existence of the crimes against humanity which the Nazis had committed against the Jewish community", and that

> the real purpose of such a work was to rehabilitate the National-Socialist regime and, as a consequence, to accuse the victims of the Holocaust of falsifying history. Disputing the existence of crimes against humanity was, therefore, one of the most severe forms of racial defamation and of incitement to hatred of Jews. The denial or rewriting of this type of historical fact undermined the values on which the fight against racism and anti-Semitism was based and constituted a serious threat to public order. It was incompatible with democracy and human rights and its proponents indisputably had designs that fell into the category of prohibited

> aims under Article 17 of the Convention. The Court found that, since the applicant's book, taken as a whole, displayed a marked tendency to revisionism, it ran counter to the fundamental values of the Convention, namely justice and peace. The applicant had sought to deflect Article 10 of the Convention from its intended purpose by using his right to freedom of expression to fulfil ends that were contrary to the Convention. Consequently, the Court held that he could not rely on Article 10 and declared his complaint incompatible with the Convention (V.373, 2003).

This decision set a very basic rule: when estimating the denial of genocide and correlating it with the right to freedom of expression, the first in the particular case would be contrary to the Convention, its spirit and aim.

Genocide Denial in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Genocide denial is part of the every-day's rhetoric of individuals in Bosnia and Herzegovina and it is a true challenge for transitional justice in this country. For illustration, Green et al. researched genocide denial in Bosnia in Herzegovina for the period 2020-2021, and in their report, they concluded that in total 234 acts of genocide denial were identified in the media discourse (p. 19). Deniers were individuals, legal entities, formal and informal associations of citizens (Green et al., 2021, p. 20), but also officials such are representatives of the executive (16) and legislative power (12). They concluded that there are three most common tactics of denial of the Srebrenica Genocide: "challenging the number and the identity of victims, conspiracy theories that cast doubt on the ruling of international courts and historical revisionism" (p. 15). These tactics fit in the general theory of acts of genocide denial. Together with those actions, the glorification of convicted war criminals was done recently on various occasions. For instance, the student dormitory was named after convicted war criminal R. Karadžić. Convicted war criminal V. Šešelj published his book in 2020 named "There was no genocide in Srebrenica". The wider public could also have heard statements in the sense that the Srebrenica Genocide was staged to satanize Serb people (Voanews, 2018), or that is a "fabricated myth", or something that doesn't exist (indenpendent.co.uk, 2019). So, it's important to wonder: are these denial actions punishable by BH law?

Genocide Denial - Legal Framework

Due to the specific constitutional organization of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the legal system mirrored this specificity, which resulted in criminal law being regulated through

four codes: Criminal Code of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Criminal Code of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Criminal Code of Brčko District BH. Those codes are not harmonized, and provisions that refer to genocide denial are prescribed indirectly and only partially. Although it is the State Criminal Code that prescribed criminal offence Genocide, it didn't directly refer to cases of genocide denial until 2021. However, there was only a criminal offence of Invoking national, racial and religious hatred, discord or intolerance (Article 145a) that until that year had two forms; one that consisted of "publicly provoking or inciting national, racial or religious hatred, discord or intolerance among constituent peoples, and others, as well as others living or residing in Bosnia and Herzegovina" (Article 145a (1)); and the second form that was referring to hatred based on the discriminatory characteristics. However, there were few initiatives for genocide denial to be criminalized by the amendments of the Code, but they were unsuccessful since there was no political consensus.

The situation was a bit different at the Federal level since the denial was regulated indirectly by Article 163. (Criminal Code of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2003) through criminal offence Invoking national, racial and religious hatred, discord or intolerance. The aggravated form of this criminal offence, that is punishable with imprisonment from three months to three years would exist if public incitement or incitement of national, racial, or religious hatred, discord, or intolerance between the constituent peoples and others living in the Federation (Article 163. (1) Criminal Code of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina) by "public denial or justification of genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes established by a final decision of the International Court of Justice, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia or a domestic court". This criminal offence has few essential elements of its body: type of crime -the denial is prescribed widely, and it refers not only to genocide but other crimes against international law (crimes against humanity or war crimes); sources of the establishment of crime are also diverse - final decision of the International Court of Justice, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia or a domestic court; the result refers to hatred among particular individuals: the constituent peoples and others; their territory of residence: only Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Tomić, 2007, p. 57).

Criminal Code of Brčko District BH (2003) in Article 160 also contains criminal offence with the same title but doesn't prescribe any aggravating form that involves genocide denial. Finally, when Article 163 of the Criminal Code of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina is compared with the criminal offence with the same substance that is prescribed in Republika Srpska (Criminal Code of Republika Srpska,

2017), Article 359 named Public provocation and incitement to violence and hatred, it can be said that the formulation in the Code of Republika Srpska doesn't contain any part that refers to the Genocide denial. So, it can be concluded that in entity levels, only Federal Criminal Code contains a provision that is related (indirectly) to genocide denial, but that treats genocide denial as a tool for achieving the action of the criminal offence, not as the separate criminal offence.

Wind of Change

An important step in the fight against genocide denial was made at the legislative level in July 2021. The High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mr. Valentin Incko, by using the powers vested in the High Representative by Article V of the Agreement on Civilian Implementation of the Peace Settlement - Annex 10 to the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Bonn Power,[2] enacted the Law on Amendment to the Criminal Code of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which fully mirrored and legally solved most of the problematic situations that occurred so far in the practice. The substance of the Decision was amending the above-mentioned article 145a, by enacting five new paragraphs, that are directly referring to the genocide denial. So, based on the decision of the High Representative, the new paragraph 145a (3) criminalized condoning, denial, gross trivialization or justification of a crime of genocide, crimes against humanity, or a war crime, "when the conduct is carried out in a manner likely to incite to violence or hatred" against "a group of persons or a member of such a group defined by reference to race, color, religion, descent or national or ethnic origin" or a member of such group (Art. 145a (3) CCBH). The provision is written in a wide manner, that criminalizes not only denial and actions related to denial of genocide, but also other serious criminal offenses against international law. It is noteworthy to emphasize that this paragraph recognizes sources of the establishment of genocide, crimes against humanity or a war crime alternatively in "final adjudication pursuant to the Charter of the International Military Tribunal appended to the London Agreement of 8 August 1945 or by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia or the International Criminal Court or a court in Bosnia and Herzegovina" (Article 145a (3), 2003). The punishment prescribed is imprisonment in both special minimum and maximum: from six months to five years.

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[2] From the Conclusions of the Peace Implementation Conference held in Bonn on 9 and 10 December 1997"by making binding decisions, as he judges necessary" on certain issues including (under sub-paragraph (c) thereof) "measures to ensure implementation of the Peace Agreement throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina and its Entities".

The aggravating (new) form of this criminal offence exists if the above-mentioned action is being perpetrated by "public dissemination or distribution of tracts, pictures, or other material" (Article 145a (4) CCBH), and it is punishable with imprisonment of not less than a year.[3] The second aggravating form is based on the aggravating manner - the same action perpetrated by disturbing public peace, and order or which is threatening, abusive or insulting. Those characteristics of the manner of perpetration caused the form to be harder punishable - with imprisonment of not less than three years.

Furthermore, the provision of paragraph 6 of the same article is of high importance, since it criminalizes glorification, giving privileges, memorial, award, a memento to a person sentenced by a final judgment for genocide, crimes against humanity or a war crime, or naming public objects by their name. This criminalization is a starting point of ending the developed tradition of such actions in Republika Srpska, where schools, dormitories were named after such people, and their glorification was notable on everyday basis. The negative impact of such actions on victims but on Transitional Justice in a whole were the reasons for deterring with rather hard punishment - not less than three years. Following the next paragraph, and led by the same ratio, with the same punishment the criminal punitivity of individuals in particular official function was prescribed as an aggravating circumstance so that this aggravated form of criminal offence would deter official or responsible person or employed in an institution of authority, or anybody financed through the public budget and prevent of committing such crime.

Discussion

Bringing this decision on the criminalization of genocide denial and enacting it in the Criminal Code, is without any doubt a positive step forward in the fight against genocide denial and all the negative consequences it leaves for society and victims. It caused a reaction in Republika Srpska, among individuals who decided to challenge the legality of such decision and the law's provision. At this point, it is very important to note two important and connected notations: no matter if the genocide denial was criminalized or not, finalized verdict brought by the judicial organ (court) is a legal fact. In every legal state, facts are not being challenged as there are established without any reasonable doubt. So, even though individuals may deny the genocide, the fact of the existence of genocide remains, no matter what their opinion is. Similarly,

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[3] The sanction is prescribed in the special minimum. The maximum would be twenty years (General Maximum).

from ancient Rome onwards, the principle "(dura) lex sed lex" is kept as a principle in modern law: no matter what we thought about the law, if it is strict or not, we like it or not, the law on force is obliging all individuals to obey it. Agreeing or not agreeing with the Criminal Code, doesn't change the fact that everyone must obey it. Otherwise, any action or decision made against it is its violation, which berries legal consequence in form of punishment. '

Lack of political agreement to create an amendment of Criminal Law that criminalizes genocide denial and that would follow regular legislative procedure, showed a lack of the legal understanding of the obliging effect of the verdict in the case of Srebrenica and lack of humanity in reviewing the events from past. Unwillingness to create such law reminds very much on Hutterbachs (1999) explanation of the motive of denial. However, the amendment and criminalization are achieved. For the elimination of genocide denial as a challenge of transitional justice, apart from its criminalization, it is of high importance to achieve the effectiveness of the prescribed provision and to lean on prosecuting the cases of denial. The only certainty of punishment is what can help in achieving the prevention.

The genocide denial is a challenge for the achievement of transitional justice, as it denies all its mechanisms and erodes the potential for reconciliation. It is not a new phenomenon as societies witness its existence from the period after the mass atrocities in the past century, and through time many states showed their decisiveness in taking legislative and institutional measures for its termination and prevention. Many of them criminalized denial of genocide, some of them criminalized only of the Holocaust denial, while some of them include punitivity for denial of war crimes as well. Through this paper, we showed that the argumentation of individuals who are denying genocide, based on the idea that they are not violating any rules with it but only applying their right to freedom of expression, is not sustainable and the case law of the ECHR provides argumentation for that. Genocide denial is a challenging process of transitional justice in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well, where secondary victims of the Srebrenica Genocide are faced with frequent statements of the non-existence of genocide, although the finalized verdict of the International Court of Justice exists. The positive criminal law of Bosnia and Herzegovina, due to the impact of the international community, and not the political consensus, recently criminalized genocide denial. After the legislative step has been made, the responsibility is on the judicial institutions to effectively apply the relevant provisions and achieve the prevention of the denial. In order to help the transitional justice to be achieved and this challenge to be overcome, together with the legislative processes and judicial

mechanisms, education will have a twofold impact as well: on raising awareness on the Srebrenica Genocide, the events, convictions, and verdict in the case Bosnia and Herzegovina vs. Serbia and Montenegro; but also, in raising awareness on punitiveness of the genocide denial and on a legal obligation to respect and enforce court decisions.

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THE WAR CHILDHOOD MUSEUM IN SARAJEVO AS A MEMORIALIZATION EFFORT FOR TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE

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This chapter focuses on the significance of youth-led initiatives allowing for new realms of dialogue in the Balkans. The War Childhood Museum (WCM) in Sarajevo is presented as a good example of such initiatives. It is a non-for-profit independent museum focusing exclusively on childhoods affected by war. It tackles trauma at an individual level for participants whose personal stories and objects comprise the museum`s collection and visitors, without reinforcing ethnic boundaries. In addition to a collection of over 3000 artifacts of intrinsic value all acquired through donations, the War Childhood Museum contains an archive of audio-visual testimonies narrated by people whose childhoods have been affected by armed conflicts. With its rich collection enlarging on a daily basis, it provides a setting where all the testimonies produced through the practice of remembrance, memorialization and witnessing can co-exist in peace rather than as sites of struggle and contestation over their meanings and power implications. In opposition to all the mechanisms enforcing division within the Bosnian and Herzegovinian context, the War Childhood Museum sets a model for memorialization efforts associated with transitional justice contributing to peace and social building. It is a youth-led project empowered by entrepreneurship, dialogue and opportunities.

The War Childhood Museum is a youth-led independent museum focusing exclusively on childhoods affected by war. The War Childhood Museum tackles trauma at an individual level for participants, whose personal stories and objects comprise the museum's collection and visitors, without reinforcing ethnic boundaries. The War

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Childhood Museum, becoming an international platform giving voice to former and current war children with projects in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Lebanon, Ukraine and the United States, has expanded its activities to contemporary conflict, post-conflict, and resettlement zones. It also collaborates with some of the world's leading universities and had presented at the largest peace-building, youth, and museum conferences. Its efforts have received both national and international media coverage. The mission and the vision of the War Childhood Museum are stated by its founder and director Jasminko Halilović:

> The mission of the War Childhood Museum is to continuously and in accordance to the highest standards document and digitize materials related to growing up in the war, and to present the archived materials throughout various media channels in order to educate a broad audience about this experience.
>
> The vision of the War Childhood Museum is to help individuals overcome past traumatic experiences and prevent traumatization of others, and at the same time advance mutual understanding at the collective level in order to enhance personal and social development (Halilović, 2015, para. 3 and 4).

The War Childhood Museum, in addition to a collection of over 3000 artifacts of intrinsic value all acquired through personal donations, contains an archive of audio-video testimonies narrated by people whose childhoods have been affected by armed conflicts. The War Childhood Museum enables all voices to be heard and documented, regardless of geographic region, ethnic, religious background and educational level. Every person whose childhood is being or has been affected by armed conflict and would like to donate his/her memorabilia and to share his/her personal story of war experience may participate in the project by registering on the Museum website. The Museum pays utmost interest to the preservation of all artifacts collected.

The War Childhood Museum, as part of the European Museum of the Year Awards, was awarded with the *2018 Council of Europe Museum Prize*, which is one of the most prestigious awards in the museum industry. The judging panel praised the museum's "real potential to serve as a powerful self-sustained model of civic initiative" and considered it as **"**an example that could be replicated in other major conflict and post-conflict zones in the world." Adele Gambaro, the rapporteur on the Museum Prize, referred to the War Childhood Museum, as advocating "peace, reconciliation and the value of cultural diversity" through its collection ("War Childhood Museum, Sarajevo, wins," 2017, para. 3).

The War Childhood Museum actually stems from the "War Childhood" project initiated by Jasminko Halilović in 2010, with his launch of a call for people to send their short answers to the question: "What was the war childhood for you?" Following the responses was the first publication of his book titled *War Childhood* in January 2013. In his book, Halilović shares his motivation for establishing the War Childhood Museum with these lines: "The stories I heard, people I met, and everything else that I learned while working on the book have left an indelible impression upon me. Telling these stories has become my mission in life, and bringing the War Childhood Museum into existence felt like something I needed to do." (2018, p. 224)

The participants of the War Childhood Museum are a particularly vulnerable group of people: young adults who were children or adolescents during the 1992-1995 war in Bosnia and Herzegovina and its aftermath. Twenty-five years have passed since the war, and in the meantime, most of these people have developed the mechanisms needed to cope and live with the experience of growing up in war. Even though they were exposed to extreme events at the early stages of their lives, most of the participants became functional members of society, good professionals, and caring parents. Despite their courage and resistance, many of these young adults have never had the opportunity to tell their stories or to process them adequately. Some of the participants were exposed to events that, under international classification, are deemed traumatizing: losing the loved one(s) i.e. parent(s), brother(s), sister(s), friend(s), or other member(s) of the family; being wounded, witnessing someone die or getting wounded; being exposed to danger on daily basis due to shelling or sniper fire; detainment in concentration camps; rape; separation from parents; hunger; time as refugees; fleeing home...

Donation of personal objects is a psychological process for participants: Donors need to remember the events of the war, search through their parents' or their own houses for keepsakes that best illustrate the specific event or experience, and tell their story to the War Childhood Museum's researchers, thus freeing themselves through narratives. Moreover, remembering can subsequently mean sparking a conversation with parents about specific events or decisions from the war for the first time, or talking to family, friends, or one's own children about war events. Through the War Childhood Museum, some participants had a chance to hear alternate narratives or to tell their story to a person belonging to other ethnic groups. Due to their involvement with the book *War Childhood* or their participation in the Museum, some participants visited their hometown or country for the first time after the war.

Interviews for video testimonies are conducted using the method of oral history, wherein researchers ask open-ended questions to which participants respond the way they wish, and as long as they want. Oral history is a qualitative research method used to collect first-hand and personal narratives of a certain event(s) and/or period(s). Recognizing the value of personal accounts, oral history seeks out to individuals involved in and/or witnessed the historical event(s) or period(s). In doing so, it seeks to go beyond presenting a mere historical account of one's life and engage in a dialogue, discussion of memory, and nature of history itself. The primary source in oral history is created during the interview process whereby the oral history subject is the source of historical information - the first-hand narrative of memories.

Topics defined in the Museum methodology guide the oral history interview, and the questions that the researcher asks touch upon all aspects of growing up in war. The general themes, covered by oral history interviews, are life at present, life before the war, memories about the beginning of the war, the experience of displacement/being refugee, one's living conditions (water and electricity supply), food and provisions, safety, first-hand experience and witness of shelling and sniper fire, family life, friends and crushes, school, hobbies, games, UN soldiers and foreign journalists/humanitarians, the experience of being wounded, personal losses, the impact of war childhood on later life, the participant perception of being waged elsewhere today… ("Interviewing process", para. 9).

The War Childhood Museum is inclusive to all participants, regardless of their geographic, ethnic, gender, racial, educational, or religious background, who were children or adolescents during the conflict, or conflict has affected their childhood. Occasionally, about one time every two to three months, the War Childhood Museum organizes "gatherings for participants" in informal focus groups which aim at evaluating how project participation affects participants, with special reference to mental health and inter-ethnic dialogue. Halilović , in his book titled *War Childhood,* underlines the significance of trust established with participants for realization of both his book and museum projects; may they be sharing their recollections, memories, memorabilia, personal stories, testimonies… The trust established between the museum as a cultural institution and the participants sets a ground for the re-establishment of trust within the Bosnian and Herzegovinian society.

The War Childhood Museum provides a setting where all the testimonies produced through the practices of remembrance, memorialization and witnessing can co-exist in peace rather than as sites of struggle and contestation over their meanings and

power implications. Jenny Edkins (2003) in her book titled *Trauma and the Memory of Politics*, "examines how the sovereign state uses and abuses the commemoration of traumatic events to reify and reinforce the idea of the nation, and how opposition groups use the same traumatic events and the posttraumatic experiences to challenge political systems that produce violence, war, and genocide" (Vertzberger, 2005, p. 117) The idea of nation is to be replaced with `nations` within the Bosnian and Herzegovinian context due to the Dayton Peace Agreement signed on 14 December 1995 to mark the legal conclusion of the Bosnian War. The Dayton Peace Agreement divided Bosnia-Herzegovina into two entities: The Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina (subdivided into 10 cantons, with either Bosniak (Bosnian Muslim) or Croat (Bosnian Catholic) majority populations and the Republika Srpska – a unitary authority dominated by a Bosnian Serb (Bosnian Orthodox) majority. The treaty's endorsement of Bosnia's three 'constitutive peoples' namely; Bosniaks, Serbs and Croats worked towards the reinforcement of ethno-national/ethno-religious identities and the entrenchment of powerful ethnocracies which came to dominate the post-war realm.

International Center for Transitional Justice, in its fact sheet published in 2009, defines Transitional Justice as "a response to systematic or widespread violations of human rights. It seeks recognition for victims and promotion of possibilities for peace, reconciliation and democracy. Transitional justice is not a special form of justice but justice adapted to societies transforming themselves after a period of pervasive human rights abuse. In some cases, these transformations happen suddenly; in others, they may take place over many decades." ("What is Transitional Justice?", 2009, para. 1) Bosnia and Herzegovina represents one of the cases where the transformation process is still a work in process and need of progress.

There are three main approaches to transitional justice present in literature, namely; Retributive Method, Restorative Method and Reparative Justice. The theory of retributive justice emphasizes the need to hold perpetrators accountable and ensure some form of punishment for their crimes. The central idea is that the offender has gained unfair advantages through his or her behavior, and that punishment will set this imbalance straight (Maiese, 2003, para.1). Restorative justice is defined as a conflict theory of justice that emphasizes repairing the harm caused by criminal behavior. It is best accomplished when the parties themselves meet cooperatively to decide how to do this, thus leading to the transformation of people, relationships and communities (Prison Fellowship International, n.d., p.1). The endeavors of the War Childhood Museum seem to serve the transitional justice the most via Reparative Justice as it is defined as aiming "to acknowledge the legal obligation of a state, or individual(s) or

group, to repair the consequences of violations-either because it directly committed them or it failed to prevent them" ("*Reparations*," para. 1). Among the mechanisms reparative justice operates through, the War Childhood Museum can be affiliated with community development projects, social-psycho-rehabilitation and memorialization efforts.

International Center for Transitional Justice considers `memorialization efforts` among the initiatives adopted by the governments of the societies in `transition to democracy`. Memorialization efforts are described as including "museums and memorials that preserve public memory of victims and raise moral consciousness about past abuse and violation of human rights in order to build a bulwark against its recurrence."("What is Transitional Justice?", 2009) Participation in memorialization efforts can generate a high potential for expression and influence if the processes for creating textbooks, archives, and museum exhibitions offer spaces where victims and civil society can express their versions of what happened, and if their versions are effectively taken into account. Moreover, participation can also have a transformational potential if victims and civil society participate actively in the creation of these texts, archives, and exhibitions, or if they define the perspective, form, and content of such materials.

The War Childhood Museum`s `independent non-for-profit and not funded by government status` keeps it immune to the highly politicized funding problems faced by cultural institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The War Childhood Museum, with its neutral stand with politics, which is particularly reflected in its transparency in regard to its financial sources, focuses on the human aspect of war via childhood narratives. Halilović, the founder and the director of the War Childhood Museum, lists the funding sources of the Museum in his interview with Tatyana Takševa as follows: Public funds from the government of Bosnia and Herzegovina (2%) and other sources (98%). He narrates the majority of the other sources as foreign; from the United States i.e. the National Endowment for Democracy, Catholic Relief Services, and the American Embassy in Bosnia and Herzegovina and from some European organizations i.e. the Austrian Embassy in Bosnia and Herzegovina, World Vision, in addition to some other donors, sponsors, and a few private foundations to remain anonymous. Within the category of the other sources are also the support from individuals, and founders and staff of the Museum (Takševa, 2018, p. 9).

In this regard, the museum contributes to the achievement of goals of transitional justice within the Bosnian and Herzegovinian context as "there is no single formula

for dealing with a past marked by large-scale human rights abuse. All transitional justice approaches are based on a fundamental belief in universal human rights. But in the end, each society should -indeed must- choose its own path" ("What is Transitional Justice?," 2009). Achieving transitional justice encompasses, not only traditional judicial mechanisms, but also bottom-up approaches as repetitively mentioned in the literature (Arthur, 2009; Shaw, Waldorf, and Hazan, 2010; Fischer and Simić, 2015, as cited in Karabegović, 2019). In this regard, the War Childhood Museum sets a good example for bottom-up transitional justice initiatives.

The politics of memory plays heavily into the bottom-up transitional justice initiatives throughout the Balkans as memorialization and remembrance efforts set an alternative path regarding how to move forward via varying narratives about what happened (Subotic, 2009; Pavlaković, 2010; Moll, 2013; Barkan and Bećirbašić, 2015, as cited in Karabegović, 2019). This is particularly relevant for Bosnia and Herzegovinia context as it has a divided memory landscape based on three dominant narratives of its 'constitutive peoples'; Bosniaks, Serbs and Croats. These dominant narratives (re) politicize and (re)divide the population on daily basis and assure that the Bosnian and Herzegovinian society remains the way it was during the conflict in the post-conflict period as well. They compete with one another as well as with any alternative viewpoints of the past, which might be more nuanced, more inclusive, or more reconciliatory (Moll, 2013, as cited in Karabegović, 2019). This competition between narratives negates the potential for fruitful interaction among different groups and within local societies when it comes to implementing transitional justice measures (Barkan and Bećirbašić, 2015, as cited in Karabegović, 2019).

In this regard, the War Childhood Museum sets a model for civil memorialization efforts associated with transitional justice contributing to peace and social building: "The War Childhood Museum aims to provide a platform for coming to terms with the past on personal level. It is only through sharing and exchange of lived experiences that better understanding of alternative narratives can be reached and substantial changes in the society and sustainable reconciliation achieved."("Research Methodology," para. 1) The War Childhood Museum sets an alternative civil path for transitional justice by underlining the healing power of stories, may they be told by objects exhibited and/ or participants and by belonging `equally to everyone, and exclusively to no one`, in Halilović`s words, in a divided society. (p. 227) In this regard, its existence stands in opposition to all the mechanisms enforcing division by setting a platform for people who refuse to concede to division.

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PEACEBUILDING PROCESS IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA – THE INITIAL SUCCESS THAT HAS BEEN REVERSED

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The peacebuilding process in Bosnia and Herzegovina (B&H) has been more successful in the initial post-Dayton phase from 1999 to 2005/06/07. Throughout that period, peace did not mean a mere absence of war; it also reflected various efforts in support of legal, political, and institutional transformation necessary for the state's recovery. However, the recovery of B&H was less successful at later stages, especially after 2008. Since that year, many have lamented that the country was failing, or is at serious risk of failing. The question is: why did two phases produced different outcomes in B&H and why each phase last for so long? This chapter looks at external realities to answer these questions. It observes the role played by NATO/EU, representing American-led liberal, institutional and rules-based order in Europe with direct influence on policies in B&H from one side, and the role of Russia, representing a rival geopolitical pole with opposing stimulus. It is significant to evaluate how these systems-level factors and determinants outline key pressures on B&H, as well as predict the likely course of B&H in the future.

Introduction

The General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is better known as the Dayton Peace Agreement (DPA), was initialed in Dayton on 21 November and signed in Paris on 14 December 1995. The DPA, and the constitution it included, stopped the war that lasted for more than 3 years and created the state of B&H in its present form, composed of two political entities: the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FB&H) and the Republika Srpska (RS). In the quarter of a century since the signing of the Dayton/Paris accords, B&H remained a peaceful post-conflict state despite various internal and external challenges.

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However, in the initial post-Dayton phase from 1999 to 2005/06/07, B&H has been more successful in the process that Charles Call and Susan Cook (2003) generally reflect as peacemaking, peacekeeping, and conflict prevention. Furthermore, throughout that period, peace in B&H did not mean a mere absence of war; it also reflected what Eva Bertram (1995) describes as various efforts in support of political, institutional, and social transformation necessary to bring about lasting harmony. Thus, institutional reforms in Bosnia's key sectors in that particular phase resulted in new state institutions in areas of judiciary, intelligence, security, or defense that guaranteed more stability, and rule of law. On the other hand, peacebuilding in B&H was far more challenging at later stages, especially after 2008. Since that year, many have lamented that the country was failing, or is at serious risk of failing. Secessionist parties from the Bosnian Serb-majority entity voiced their ambition to reverse key institutional reforms undertaken after the signing of the Dayton/Paris accords. It is also illustrative to compare the political behavior of the Bosnian Serb entity leader Milorad Dodik in the initial post-Dayton phase from his behavior in the last 13-14 years. Then-Secretary of State Madeleine Albright saw Mr. Dodik as "a breath of fresh air" for Bosnia in the initial phase, her spokesman said at the time (Hinshaw, 2016). Dodik also approved major institutional reforms in B&H, publicly admitted Srebrenica Genocide, and criticized indicted war criminals, such as Radovan Karadžić or Ratko Mladić. At later stages, he shifted his narrative, denied the genocide, and honored the same convicted war criminals. For the latter Dodik, B&H also becomes an unsustainable country (Toal, 2013), and RS is the only self-sustainable community in B&H (Barlovac, 2012).

Therefore, it is necessary to question what was behind the agreement's initial success, what led to it losing its efficacy, and what struggles lie ahead for the region if the current trajectory is not reversed. The study puts forward in chronological order the strength of external factors, namely Euro-Atlantic pillars on one side and the impact of Russia on the other. In the first part, the chapter argues that Euro-Atlantic liberal, institutional and rules-based order, with the EU and NATO as two main pillars, was instrumental for political stability and progress in B&H. The second part explores what happens in B&H when this order is fading? Or worse, what occurs when Russia, as a rival geopolitical pole, attempts to project its power within B&H at the cost of the Euro-Atlantic alliance.

Although there are many studies on the process of peacebuilding in B&H, this chapter is, to the author's knowledge, one of the rare systematic reviews of the nature of the external environment and its application to this case. Therefore, the originality of this

chapter lies in the systematic approach to bring together geopolitical realities outside the national borders of B&H and some empirical evidence on the ground to reach a conclusion why B&H was more successful in the early post-Dayton phase. This chapter offers two interrelated propositions in this regard. First, it is not a coincidence that a golden phase of the post-war recovery in B&H overlapped with the unquestioned authority of European and Euro-Atlantic communities, their liberal and institutional agenda, and historic expansions toward central and eastern Europe from the 1990s to 2004. Second, as rules-based order within European and Euro-Atlantic communities gradually eroded, the peace process in B&H correspondingly reversed. Many also recognized the in-depth impacts of Russia's U-turn in European geopolitics and its illiberal tendencies that steadily stalled progress in B&H. This particular trajectory with opposing power dyads within the Bosnian state is often lamented as a nightmare for Dayton Peace Agreement that put an end to the bloody war in 1995 and kept the country in one piece for more than two decades.

The Strength of Euro-Atlantic Pillars and Peacebuilding in B&H

Throughout the initial post-Dayton phase, the NATO and EU have offered system-wide benefits and patiently put in place new structures and policies so the country can move forward in the peace process. They largely followed the dictates of liberal notions to strengthen the rule of law, democracy, and institutions. What also made two converging factors of post-war recovery in B&H more appealing rests on an enduring combination of their hard and soft power?

First, two strong UN-mandated and NATO-led missions in B&H - Implementation Force (IFOR) and Stabilization Force (SFOR) - have not only deterred threats to peace and security in B&H from late 1995 to 2004. They have also allowed refugees to return, trained and restructured new Armed forces in B&H and helped civil authorities and other international agencies toward a common goal. For example, key indicators of the success of the IFOR mission were the first postwar national elections and the safe return of over 230,000 displaced persons and refugees (Crouch, 1997). According to Crouch, "tangible results such as these are beginning to allow the people of Bosnia to recover from 42 months of war". By the end of the SFOR mission in 2004, a single Ministry of Defense, single chain of command, and unified armed forces were established out of three opposing armed forces that fiercely fought each other in the early 1990s. Bosnian state authorities also adopted common foreign policy aspirations to join the EU and NATO. In the absence of any major incidents, the number of IFOR and SFOR missions dropped from 60,000 from late 1995 to 7,000 in 2004 (Wilkinson, 2005). This was a clear indication of a steady success of the military implementation of the peace process, which includes disarmament, necessary reduction of local forces, their professional training, and so on.

Second, the EU offered a membership perspective to the countries of Southeast Europe, including Bosnia and Herzegovina, as an added value to these military missions. That perspective was highlighted through the Stability Pact for Southeast Europe, launched in June 1999, and the Stabilization and Association Process (SAP), also launched in June 1999 and then strengthened at the Thessaloniki EU Summit in June 2003. The EU roadmap highlighted generally the process of change that included adaptation to various EU standards largely in areas of democracy, rule of law, and internal economic market. The SAP in particular has brought relevant conditionality for each country to strengthen their democratic and economic institutions. The dominant logic underpinning EU conditionality was "a bargaining strategy of reinforcement by reward, under which the EU provides external incentives for a target government to comply with its conditions" (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeierm, 2004, 670). Through EU leverage, reforms in Bosnia's key sectors that were underway in the judiciary in 2002-2004, an economy in 2003-2005, border security in 2000-2002, intelligence in 2002, public broadcasting in 2005, to name a few, resulted in the formation of new state institutions that increased stability and strengthen rule of law, transparency, and a free market. B&H has also strengthened weak state government from 3 ministries only (Foreign affairs; Civil affairs; Foreign trade) in 1996 to the more functional cabinet of 10 ministries in 2003 (Foreign affairs; Civil affairs; Foreign trade and economic relations; Security; Justice, European integrations; Human rights and refugees; Defense; Communication and transport; Finance and treasury).

It is also not a coincidence that a golden phase of the post-war recovery in B&H overlapped with the historic EU and NATO expansions toward Central and Eastern Europe from the late 1990s to 2004. Throughout this period, Russia was an active member of NATO's partnership for peace. In 1997, NATO leaders and President Boris Yeltsin signed the NATO-Russia Founding Act, expressing according to the NATO fact sheet (2020) their determination to "build together a lasting and inclusive peace in the Euro-Atlantic area on the principles of democracy and cooperative security." In 2002, NATO-Russia Council was also established "to serve as a forum for consultation on current security issues and to direct practical cooperation in a wide range of areas." This liberal unipolarity within Europe and enthusiasm for integration that lasted from 2002 to 2008 helped motivate local Bosnian constituencies to accept the conditions for peace set out in the accord. Therefore, reconciliatory attempts by parties whose members committed war crimes were more regular as well. In 2003, former U.S. President Bill Clinton officially opened the Srebrenica Genocide Memorial in Potocari. Dragan Čavić, then President of the Bosnian Serb-majority entity, made a public apology for the Srebrenica massacre in 2004, calling it "the black page in Serbian history" (VOA, 2004). Milorad Dodik, a current Serb member of the B&H's tripartite presidency, also admitted genocide in Srebrenica and criticized indicted war criminals, such as Radovan Karadžić or Ratko Mladić. By 2004, about

half of Bosnia's 500,000 destroyed homes were also rebuilt and some 200,000 disputed properties were effectively given back to people who had been forced to flee the war (Wilkinson, 2005), a stunning achievement for Rhodri C. Williams (2008) in light of the lawless conditions that prevailed when the process began. Domestic institutions have also overtaken election supervision from the OSCE as the Bosnian Parliament adopted the Election Law in 2004.

All achievements in B&H were so remarkable that different commentators, including the author of this analysis (2005), celebrated successful Bosnia's passage from the phase of Dayton to the phase of Brussels. Institutes like Brookings also regarded lessons from Bosnia to emulate and apply in other war-torn countries such as Iraq (Williams, 2008). Major post-conflict results that were achieved in B&H while external factors were still favorable are listed in the table below:

Table 1 Post-Conflict Achievements

Major results achieved in the initial post-Dayton phase	External factors that help B&H pacify, stabilize and integrate during the initial post-Dayton phase
Judiciary reform in B&H with state court, prosecution, and multi-ethnic, independent state judiciary commission	NATO-led IFOR (60 000 strong force) and NATO-led SFOR (30 000 strong force) from 1995 to 2004
Defense reform, single Ministry of defense, single chain of command formed	Stability Pact for Southeast Europe from 1999 to 2008
Freedom of movement, refugee return, common car plates, and common civil documents (CIPS system)	The EU Stabilization and Association Process inaugurated in 1999
Common foreign policy goals across entity lines established (NATO integration in particular)	The EU Thessaloniki summit and EU membership perspective in 2003
Disputed properties solved at a rate of more than 99%	The EU conditionality on democracy, human rights, internal market
Border security reform, State border service created	The EU enlargement enthusiasm from 1997 to 2004
Intelligence reform, State intelligence service formed	Major NATO expansion beyond Iron Curtain
Council of Ministers of B&H strengthened from 3 to 10 state ministries	Russia integrated into NATO's Partnership for peace
Public broadcasting reform, State public broadcasting created	NATO-Russia Council was established in 2002 to serve as a forum on current security issues
The reconciliation process fostered, public apologies from political representatives from the Bosnian entity Republic of Srpska	Russia did not pose any challenge to the Euro-Atlantic order in Europe

Source: Author's Compilation

Most of these post-conflict achievements could have not been possible had Euro-Atlantic pillars been more inactive. In this respect, the Euro-Atlantic liberal order has been a net positive when it comes to the stability and security of the post-conflict state - if measured by the progress on where B&H started in 1995 not its distance from the liberal Western world. Nevertheless, in the last 10-15 years the international peacebuilding efforts were gradually reversed, and prospects for renewed instability started to emerge in the region. One of the main architects of the Dayton Accords, Richard Holbrooke, and the fourth High Representative for B&H, Paddy Ashdown, wrote a joint op-ed (2008) warning that Bosnia was "sleepwalking" into another crisis. They also desperately appealed to Brussels and Washington to take immediate and concerted action to reverse the course of the country. Patrice C. McMahon and Jon Western (2009) argued that the country stands on the brink of collapse. For Roberto Belloni (2009), the process of implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement in B&H has come to a halt. "Particularly since 2006, nationalist rhetoric has increased, political, economic, and social reforms have stalled, and some analysts warn that the country might be sliding towards collapse." Ever since that time, many more academics, diplomats, and policy experts have analyzed actual and specific threats that occasionally evolved in a fragile state that dangerously floats on a thin line between peace and new conflict. The question is what has triggered this turning point and how more divergent goals between three constituent groups in B&H have arisen?

The Weakness of Euro-Atlantic Pillars and Peacebuilding in B&H

Indeed, for a dozen years, Bosnia and Herzegovina has been in a peaceful deadlock. The causes for slower reintegration since 2006/07/08 can be analyzed domestically. However, the nature of numerous and interrelated attributes within the state could not possibly trigger this particular stalemate in B&H for one obvious reason. Domestic factors within B&H, such as interethnic grievances, religious differences, internal political divisions, poverty, or corruption have been largely uninterrupted throughout both phases.

Apart from the causes that can be found internally in any state, there are also external triggers of ethnic conflict (Brown, 1996). When such geopolitical dynamics converged with troubling internal realities, this created a new context of instability with underlying causes that make any country prone to uncertainty. According to Jalali and Lipset (1992), if a combination of causes occurs, then even a violent conflict may erupt. In the case of B&H, it was largely the nature of the external environment outside the national borders that has shifted and became more unfavorable in the post-2005 period. Instead of being rapid, these changes were slower but constantly adding up.

First, the European Union passed through a constitutional crisis that undermined its credibility as a transformation power. The rejection of the treaty establishing a European constitution by French and Dutch voters in 2005 has thrown the EU into a deep crisis. New enlargement enthusiasm has also vaned and states in the EU-led SAP process, including B&H, were largely left on their own. So far, only Croatia has managed to reach full membership status from the group of 7 Western Balkan states.

Second, NATO-led peacekeeping mission SFOR was replaced by a much weaker EU-led mission Altea in 2004. Today, the remaining 600 EU peacekeepers in B&H are in no position to guarantee Bosnia's stability or fulfill the mandate of the Dayton accords. In the meantime, the U.S. has shifted its focus from B&H to Kosovo at the regional level. Kosovo thus receives the largest share of U.S. foreign assistance to the Balkans, and the two countries cooperate on numerous security issues (Garding, 2021). The U.S. is also the largest contributor of troops to the NATO-led Kosovo Force. At the international level, the U.S. faced serious security challenges in other troubled areas, such as Iraq and Afghanistan. Its liberal hegemony, as structural realists coined the term, has failed miserably not only in these two countries (Mearsheimer 2018; Walt 2018). The foreign policy of the U.S. also pivoted to Asia from 2011 to prevent rising China from becoming its peer competitor. Thus, local causes such as Serb nationalism and secessionism in B&H, which had been checked and contained as a gene in the bottle for reasons of strong EU agenda and American geopolitical dominance, freed itself from captivity for opposite reasons.

Third, with Russia's U-turn in European geopolitics, Kremlin became more interested in replacing an existing liberal order, primarily the one extended beyond the Iron Curtain, with favorable and less democratic European regimes that fit Russia's image. Russia also became more interested in replacing the hierarchic order in Europe with some unknown and certainly more anarchic multipolar structure. So far, all attempts from the Kremlin to impose its own illiberal and structural order in Europe, largely constrained by its limits of hard and soft power, have only made young democracies and vulnerable countries scattered around the European periphery more divided and, eventually, more anarchic.

In August 2008, Russia's military intervention in Georgia restored the Kremlin's geopolitical relevance in the European neighborhood. However, Georgia was divided between Russian-backed self-proclaimed republics of South Ossetia and Abkhazia on one hand and the rest of Georgia on the other. This small triumph encouraged Russia to act again by lopping off Crimea from neighboring Ukraine in 2014. Ukraine was forcefully

divided along similar geostrategic and domestic lines between Kyiv's Euro-Atlantic aspirations and secessionist tendencies by a pro-Russian minority in the east. In recent years, Russia has also become visible in the Balkans that is deep inside NATO eastern borders. As reported by media, Russia "fanned the flames" of internal crisis in Montenegro in 2015-16, and Northern Macedonia in 2017-18 to thwart NATO's expansion (Bechev, 2019); Russia donated and supplied weapons to Serbia and conducted a joint military exercise in 2019 and 2021; Kremlin also built partnerships and alliances with local power holders in Bosnian entity Republic of Srpska and openly destabilized the country's long-established vision for security through Euro-Atlantic integration by opposing the Peace Implementation Council (PIC) in B&H and its steering board's communiqués, including the last ones in 2021.

In this regard, our proposition that secessionist parties in B&H would have obstructed institutional and rules-based post-war recovery had euphoria from Euro-Atlantic integration not existed, is historically verifiable. It went largely unnoticed that Bosnian Serb leader Milorad Dodik has held at least ten official consultations with Vladimir Putin in the last several years, most of which were in his capacity of provincial leader from RS. In his second consecutive meeting with the Russian president during critical events in Ukraine in 2014, he shared his unequivocal sympathy for Moscow in a press statement quoted by Kremlin (2014). "Naturally, there is no question that we support Russia. We may be a small and modest community, but our voice is loud." As Dodik's confidence grew with the success of Russia's subversion, so too increased his demands to reverse key institutional reforms undertaken after the signing of the Dayton accords in areas of defense, intelligence, or any other institutional reform conducted in the early 2000s. Thus, he threatened to withdraw RS soldiers out of the country's unified military, vowed to demolish mutually agreed and legally binding dynamics for achieving collective security within NATO, called the UN-mandated EU peacekeeping mission in the country, Operation Althea, to be terminated - all of which present significant security dilemmas for the country and the Balkans. RS also ignored the EU and held an unconstitutional referendum on September 25, 2016, thereby violating a final and binding decision of the B&H Constitutional Court. According to the Office of High Representative in B&H (2016), "this referendum follows the long-standing policy of the RS of opting out of the judicial system of B&H..." The crisis in B&H culminated in 2020 when Milorad Dodik called the Constitutional Court of B&H, composed of nine judges - two Bosnian Serbs, two Bosnian Croats, two Bosniaks and three international - an occupation court. Addressing RS legislature five days later, he provokingly declared: "goodbye B&H, welcome RSexit" (Al Jazeera Balkans, 2020). These secessionist tendencies, coupled with Russia's destabilization efforts, have made the complex multinational state of B&H impossible to govern efficiently. Major disruptive trends and outcomes in B&H during this phase are listed in the table below:

Table 2 Disruptive Outcomes

Major disruptive outcomes in B&H during this phase	External factors that destabilize and disintegrate B&H
RS renewed agreement with Serbia on a 'special parallel relationship" in 2006; They signed the agreement on parliamentary cooperation in 2008 which increased bypassing of Sarajevo in favor of Banja Luka	NATO-led IFOR and SFOR completed their missions from 1995 to 2004, replaced by much weaker EUFOR in 2004.
RS Assembly adopted in 2010 a new constitutional law on holding referenda	The EU passed through a constitutional crisis. French and Dutch voters rejected the treaty establishing a European constitution in 2005.
RS National Assembly formally withdraw its support for Euro-Atlantic integrations for B&H	Constitutional crisis generated the EU enlargement fatigue, it also weakened the EU agenda for SAP states
RS political leadership voiced their ambition to reverse key institutional reforms in B&H undertaken after the signing of the Dayton accords in areas of judiciary, defense, intelligence…	The U.S. was preoccupied with other troubled areas in Iraq and Afghanistan; The U.S. pivot to Asia to prevent China rise
RS honored convicted war criminals such as Radovan Karadzic	NATO becomes obsolete for the U.S. President Donald Trump. His statement has been welcomed in RS and Serbia.
RS organized an unconstitutional referendum in 2016	Russia's U-turn in European geopolitics as an encouragement for RS
RS mocks and ignores B&H Constitutional court decisions	Russia's military missions in Georgia and Ukraine as an encouragement for RS
RS declared to hold a successive referendum on its political status	Russia's collusion with local proxies in the Balkan region
Institutional reforms at the B&H level stalled	Russia's collusion with local proxies in B&H

Source: Author's Compilation

An even more detrimental structural change for Bosnia and Herzegovina would be the international actors leaving the country altogether. This would encourage local forces to move on with their secessionist agenda, generating serious security concerns, making B&H more divided, nationalistic, and prone to new conflicts in the future. Such a path would probably lead to new skirmishes and security dilemmas in the Balkans which at worst is all too reminiscent of the 1900s when unintended consequences of nationalist fervor led to the murder of millions. It is also widely accepted that should a referendum take place in B&H, the country will violently collapse (*inter alia*, Chivvis, 2010; Toal and Maksić, 2011; Lyon, 2015; Zuvela, 2015).

Conclusion

It appears from this analysis that strong American leadership in Europe and effective EU agenda in the Balkans are major factors of stability in B&H. In other words, their withdrawal could constitute a rapid change that could trigger a conflict breaking out. Should they leave B&H altogether, which is less probable, other extra-regional actors will be invited to fill the vacuum, in which case power relations would inevitably become subject to reconfiguration and different visions for both B&H and southeastern Europe would have to emerge.

First, a unilateral breakaway of RS from B&H would effectively tear apart Bosnia's postwar constitutional order of two entities, as well as other political and institutional arrangements that have gradually restored peace and security over the last 25 years. The RS secession would also signal an existential threat to the survival of a multiethnic state. Therefore, the actual conduct of a secessionist referendum would most likely provide the rapid change that could serve as a trigger for conflict to break out (Kartsonaki, 2017). Second, Serbia, which shares a long border with B&H and nationalist sentiments with the secessionist movement, is probably the first contender to be caught in the new Bosnian conflict for both internal and external reasons. Third, Turkey would also become entangled in the nightmare of a new Bosnian disorder. On one hand, Turkey and other NATO allies have common objectives to build a safe and prosperous B&H. On the other, Turkey projects its soft power throughout the Balkans, particularly in B&H, relying on historical, cultural, and personal ties. Hence, it would likely not agree to watch the country's descent into war from the sidelines, especially if its NATO allies and the EU choose to abandon their commitments to safeguard peace in Bosnia. Fourth, this scenario could set Turkey and Russia on a collision course because the latter's prospects in Serbia and Bosnian entity Republic of Srpska are of highest geopolitical value, having loyal proxies ready to do the Moscow's bidding, not in the European neighborhood, as Ukraine is, but deep within external EU borders. At the same time, Russia and Turkey possess formidable mediation capacity with confronting parties in the Bosnian theater that some European powers would oppose on geopolitical - and the more liberal ones on ideological - grounds. Fifth, the EU would face a major dilemma between a strong multilateral reaction to protect a collective peace-building legacy and unilateral moves by individual member states to pursue their national interests. Washington also understands well that Russia's unchecked incursion within NATO's eastern border would damage American-led liberal order and alliance structure and, at the same time, change the regional - and possibly even the European - balance of power to the detriment of the United States.

However, the very real threats to the hard-achieved peace in B&H should not lead anyone to conclude the region is destined for instability and conflict. The U.S. and EU remain key factors of stability in B&H despite the various shortcomings that their actions or inactions may have in a recent decade. Notwithstanding its current limitations, liberal, institutional and rules-based Euro-Atlantic order is also more vital than any illiberal alternative. Within this order, B&H still has a good chance of sustaining the peace and fulfilling its aspirations to become an indispensable member of the European family. B&H also needs to look back at its recent past, remember the devastation it experienced in the 1990s, and collectively work with Euro-Atlantic allies towards building on the foundations set with the Dayton agreement.

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PART II

GEOPOLITICS,
EU ENLARGEMENT AND WESTERN
BALKANS COOPERATION

THE EU'S POLICYMAKING FRAMEWORK FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

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The chapter explores the link between the *EU's Policymaking Framework for Sustainable Development - The European Green Deal* – and the systems approach to goals attributed to three interlinked systems: environmental (or ecological), economic and social in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Although this analysis focuses on *The European Green Deal,* the approach could also be applied to show major steps have been taken to strengthen B&H's implementation of international environmental and sustainability commitments, including the 2030 Agenda and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Accordingly, this chapter is based on the different concepts of sociological aspects of sustainable developmental perspectives with a focus on the structuration theory where social reality is understood as a reciprocal process of constructing social life through individual actions that are shaped by society (Giddens, 2007). It is evident that the process of accession of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the EU runs slowly, and many of the EU's Annual reports constantly indicate the need for quicker development of the socio-economic environment.

Introduction

This chapter presents a sociological view of the perspectives for sustainable development in Bosnia and Herzegovina (hereinafter: BiH) through the prism of environmental sociology and the process of Europeanization. Environmental sociology assumes "that humans are part of the environment and that the environment and society can only be fully understood in relation to each other" (McCarthy & King, 2009, p. 1). Thus, this chapter provides a developmental perspective that emphasizes the necessity of using modern developmental strategies based on the concept of a new

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environmental paradigm and its usage in environmental sociology (Catton & Dunlap, 1978) and an overview of the process of BiH's accession to the EU and changes required to achieve stronger and faster convergence. The chapter is dealing with a developmental perspective according to the five pillars of the Green Agenda[1] that emphasizes the necessity of using modern developmental strategies based on the concept of integral sustainability the implementation of the ambitious Green Agenda through the Instrument for Pre-Accession. Careful attention should also be given to systemic issues related to the EU architecture for investment outside the EU. For that purpose, there is a need to identify varieties of usage of the concept the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans (hereinafter: WB) included in the Communication on an Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans adopted by the European Commission (hereinafter: EC) and to assess the theoretical relevance of the concept the new environmental paradigm to a sociology of the environment. Within the structuration theory, social reality is understood as a reciprocal process of constructing social life through individual actions that are shaped by society (Giddens, 2007, 2009). Accordingly, the chapter also explains some of the preconditions and challenges of individual and institutional movement towards sustainable development in B&H showing that reflexivity can be a useful analytical concept in environmental sociology. In this regard, reflexivity is referred to studies of environmental governance and risk governance (Van Asselt and Renn 2011; Aven and Renn 2009) where reflexivity is associated with concepts and norms such as participation and transparency. Finally, the paper considers to what extent the five pillars of the Green Agenda is a relevant theoretical concept for understanding various sustainability issues in B&H in the framework of the process of Europeanization.

Europeanization and Sustainable Development in BiH

Before we start this discussion of the European Union's Policymaking Framework for Sustainable Development in BiH in the EU accession process, we have to explain the term "Europeanization" in the frame of sociological discuses. Europe is an area of regional integration where Europeanization involves the domestic assimilation of EU policy and politics. It is also a process of identity formation where public policy diffusion and institutional change can take place independently of the EU (Radaelli, 2002). More precisely, according to Ladrech's definition, I would argue that the concept of Europeanization in BiH refers to:

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[1] The Green Agenda for the Western Balkans is a new growth strategy for the region, leaping from a traditional economic model to a sustainable economy, in line with the European Green Deal. (European Commission. SWD [2020] 223).

> Processes of (a) construction (b) diffusion and (c) institutionalization of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, 'ways of doing things' and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the making of EU public policy and politics and then incorporated in the logic of domestic discourse, identities, political structures and public policies (Ladrech 1994, p. 69).

Every European country can apply for EU membership if it respects the common values of Member States. Candidate countries must fulfil political, legal, economic (defined in Copenhagen in 1993) and administrative criteria (defined in Madrid in 1995) implementation and sustainability of reforms which are created to achieve high level and quality adjustments, convergence, harmonization, but also Europeanization. Bearing in mind the definition of Europeanization one can approach the study of this phenomenon by raising the question: 'What is the process of Europeanization for BiH in terms of the EU's Policymaking Framework for Sustainable Development?".

In the interest of the clarity of further considerations, it is necessary to outline some basic information about the territorial systems of the country B&H that has a specific internal setup. B&H is divided administratively into two entities (the Federation of BiH and Republika Srpska) and the autonomous region of Brčko District.[2] In this context it is important to point out that territorial social systems is hereby defined as social systems in which a human community occupies, develops and controls a specified territory, on a permanent basis. Since the end of the war in 1995, B&H has made progress in its international environmental cooperation at bilateral and European levels, but there is still important work to be done, in particular in clarifying institutional responsibilities. The EU membership aspirations of B&H started at the 2003 Thessaloniki Summit, where the European Council declared that the future of the Western Balkans is within the EU, and in 2016, Bosnia and Herzegovina submitted a formal application to join the EU and in 2018 submitted its answers in response to the EU Questionnaire. In further discussion, the ideas from the referred literature above and relevant concepts of the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans will be drawn on.

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[2] The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina is divided administratively into 10 cantons, which in turn are divided into municipalities. There are 79 municipalities and cities in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Republika Srpska is divided administratively into 62 municipalities. Brčko District is a separate administrative unit under the sovereignty of Bosnia and Herzegovina. (*Voluntary Review*, 2019).

Green Agenda for the Western Balkans - The European *Green Deal*

Over two decades after the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement[3], with its complex and fragmented governance and power-sharing arrangements, progress in B&H toward accession to the EU is constrained by limited reform progress. The Western Balkan Countries all aspire to membership in the European Union and have re-affirmed their commitment to joining the EU in the race to climate neutrality by 2050 by signing up to the EU's Green Agenda for the Western Balkans. The Green Deal is an integral part of the EU Commission's strategy to implement the United Nation's 2030 Agenda and the sustainable development goals[4] and, above all, it is EU's response to climate change. The EU aims to transform its society and economy to make them sustainable, to protect and preserve natural resources from environmental risks. Accordingly, all public policies in the EU have to be viewed through the prism of sustainability. B&H, like other Western Balkan countries[5], is not a member of the EU, but that doesn't mean that the EU does not aim to protect the health and well-being of BiH's citizens from environment-related risks and impacts. Namely, the EU is currently considering how to adapt the Green Deal to the Western Balkans, where clean energy and energy efficiency must be prioritized. As shown in *Figure 1.* it is evident that The European Green Deal is a new European development strategy aimed at transforming the EU into a just and prosperous society with a modern, efficient and competitive economy with zero net greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. The figure below illustrates the various elements of the Green Deal.[6] This includes the place and role of the EU in a need to rethink policies for clean energy supply across the economy, industry, production and consumption, large-scale infrastructure, transport, food and agriculture, construction, taxation and social benefits.

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[3] The General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina- Initialled in Dayton on 21 November 1995 and signed in Paris on 14 December 1995. https://www.osce.org/bih/126173?download=true

[4] https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda

[5] Western Balkan region consists of six economies (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia and The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), occupying the territory of about 208 000 km2 with population of about 18 million. (Vuković & Vujadinović, 2018, p. 5).

[6] European Commission. (2019). *The European Green Deal.*

Figure 1: The European Green Deal

Source: European Commission. COM, 2019, 640 final, p. 3

Furthermore, achieving climate neutrality[7] by 2050 means making far-reaching changes to the way we live today, which is why the Commission is proposing to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 55% by 2030. The Staff Working Document (2020) of the European Commission *"Guidelines for the Implementation of the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans"*[8] outlines in more detail the actions related to the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans. It is necessary to highlight that document the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans should be seen as a blueprint for possible measures to be adopted jointly by the EU and each of the Western Balkans partners. Therefore, the actions related to the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans and adopted by the European Commission are related to:

(1) climate action, including decarburization, energy and mobility,
(2) circular economy, addressing in particular waste, recycling, sustainable production and efficient use of resources,
(3) biodiversity, aiming to protect and restore the natural wealth of the region,
(4) fighting pollution of air, water and soil and
(5) sustainable food systems and rural areas[9]

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[7] The EU has already started to modernise and transform the economy with the aim of climate neutrality. Between 1990 and 2018, it reduced greenhouse gas emissions by 23%, while the economy grew by 61%. (European Commission. (2019). *The European Green Deal*, p. 4).
[8] European Commission.(2020). 2020 Communication on EU enlargement policy.
[9] European Commission. (2020). *Guidelines for the Implementation of the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans*.

By signing the Sofia Declaration[10] on the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans, countries in the region have committed to a number of actions connected to the transition to climate-neutrality, such as: cut greenhouse gas emissions, ensure implementation of EU technical standards in all transport modes, support the region in planning and implementing sustainable mobility solutions, including alternative fuels infrastructure, prioritizing energy efficiency and improve it in all sectors, develop circular economy strategies, etc. In order to achieve these objectives in a sustainable and efficient manner the leaders from WB, gathered in Sofia on 10th November 2020, at the Western Balkan Summit under the framework of the Berlin Process initiative, agreed that the Economic and Investment Plan, designed to support the longer-term green socio-economic recovery of WB region and its economic convergence with the EU on the Green Agenda for the WB, laying down the key initiatives aimed at a green transition for the region.

B&H faces a significant number of social, economic and other issues, among which the issue of environmental protection stands out as a key issue. B&H was exposed to serious pollution of its basic natural resources – water, air and soil in the pre-war period. Having in mind that B&H was the center of heavy industry, resource and energy base of the former Yugoslavia, it is understandable that as a consequence of the war (1992 – 1996) BiH faced a decrease in economic activities in all sectors. Accordingly, in the last two decades, the country is getting a high level of social and economic environmental pressures undertaken by the EU because of the transition process of European standards necessary for accession of B&H to the EU.

International Cooperation and Progress toward the 2030 Agenda
B&H actively participates in regional activities of the countries of Western Balkans on introducing the implementation of regional cooperation in the area of sustainability. B&H ratified the Energy Community Treaty in September 2006, the European Common Aviation Area Agreement in July 2007 and the Transport Community Treaty in April 2018.[11] Between 2001 and 2006, the main source of EU assistance for B&H was the Community Assistance for Reconstruction, Development and Stabilization (CARDS) programme, which provided support, inter alia, to strengthen capacity in the environmental field. The country also benefited from the regional CARDS programme, which supported infrastructure development, institution-building and

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[10]During the Western Balkans Sofia Summit, held on 10 November 2020, the region reached an important milestone by endorsing the Leaders' Declaration on the Green Agenda that aligns with EU Green Deal. (The Regional Cooperation Council, 10. November 2020).
[11] European Commission. (2019). *Commission Opinion on Bosnia and Herzegovina's application for membership of the European Union.*

cross-border cooperation. In 2007, the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) replaced the CARDS programme and covers the period 2007–2013. The main objective of the IPA is to help BiH face the challenges of European integration. B&H, as a potential candidate country for EU accession, will mainly benefit from two components of the IPA, namely the support for transition and institution-building, and cross-border cooperation. Recent international cooperation *Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework*[12], between authorities in B&H and the United Nations (UN), should certainly be highlighted. This cooperation describes strategic priorities and cooperation outcomes, expressed by The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Sustainable Development Goals and targets in the emerging *SDG Framework in BiH and domesticated SDG targets* (The Audit Office of the Institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina; 2019). The BiH National Human Development Report (UNPD, 2021) presents a set of policy suggestions to help the country move towards the full achievement of locally-relevant Millennium Development Goals and their specific targets. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also referred to as Global Goals, build on the Millennium Development Goals promote a longer-term approach to addressing global challenges such as long-term unemployment, youth dissatisfaction, low educational standards, high level of corruption perception in society, marginalization of vulnerable groups, emigration, migration, etc. According to the so-called SDG index, measuring a country's baseline status for SDG implementation, BiH is ranked the 73rd out of total of 149 countries, with an index of 59,9 which is the lowest index among the WB countries.[13] This shows that BiH is undergoing a long-term, complex and extremely challenging transition from a post-conflict society toward the path of EU membership.

Climate Change and Vision for Sustaninable Developement

Anthony Giddens, authoring a book on global warming (Giddens, 2009) argues that while many people think that we should mobilize on a level comparable to fighting a war, "there are no enemies to identify and confront" (Giddens, 2009, p. 2). He blames business and industry succeed in shaping the daily habits that are responsible for the enormous externality of industry freely dumping tons of carbon into the air. Decarbonization and digitalization are the basic technologies of the "emerging" industrial revolution, which will inevitably cause changes in both global and local socio-economic and political relations. Analyses of the climate change in the western

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[12] This Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (CF), adopted by the BiH Council of Ministers at its 22nd Session on 16 December 2020 and reconfrmed by the BiH Presidency at its 114th Extraordinary Session on 5 March 2021, will guide the work of authorities in BiH and the UN system until 2025. (BiH Council of Ministers & UN Country Team).

[13] https://www.intosai.org/fileadmin/downloads/focus_areas/SDGs_and_SAIs/SDGs_Bosnia_and_Herzegovina_EN.pdf

Balkans recognize the human health, safety and life quality as highly vulnerable to natural hazards and sectorial weather-related losses. According to an EU survey[14] , 93 % of EU citizens consider climate change to be a serious problem. A similar survey conducted in the Western Balkans in 2019[15] revealed that only 65% of the region's population consider climate change a threat. As mentioned above, to achieve the objectives of the European Green Deal the EU promotes strong climate action and sustainable development through new technologies, sustainable solutions and disruptive innovation. According to the opinion of the European Commission B&H is at

> ... an early stage of preparation / has some level of preparation in the area of environment and climate change. Limited progress was achieved during the reporting period. A countrywide harmonized approach in strategic planning needs to be ensured to address alignment with the EU environmental acquis at all levels of government in a consistent and comprehensive manner, including on air quality. Significant efforts are needed on implementation and enforcement. (European Commission. *Guidelines for the Implementation of the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans*; p. 101).

In the context of the Green and Digital transition, the European Commission will examine the costs, the benefits and the impacts of the priority investments. The EU's Policy framework for climate and energy in the period from 2020 to 2030 (EU 2030) and Roadmap for moving to a competitive low carbon economy in 2050 (EU 2050) are the two documents of highest importance for the upcoming decades (Vuković & Vujadinović, 2018, p. 36).

Cooperation EU with the Western Balkans covers Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. In Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Serbia, both bilateral and regional initiatives should be possible through a different kind of cooperation in environmental issues. It means using the advantages of The Western Balkans Investment Framework, the European Fund for Sustainable Development Plus (EFSD+), and other instruments that will be the main implementing mechanisms in this regard. Keeping this in mind, B&H must incorporate contemporary technological achievements, which do not negatively impact the environment in both rural and urban areas. All these initiatives should contribute to expediting B&H membership in the EU. Activities in implementing a Green Agenda

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[14] Special Eurobarometer 490 April 2019 "Climate Change" https://data.europa.eu/data/datasets/s2212_91_3_490_eng?locale=en

[15] Balkan Barometer 2019 https://www.rcc.int/pubs/89/balkan-barometer-2019-public-opinion-survey

for the Western Balkans are expected to contribute to results in the following five areas: Decarbonization, climate, energy, mobility; Circular economy; Depollution: air, water & soil; Sustainable food systems & rural areas and Biodiversity: protection & restoration of ecosystems. These areas are going to be supported in aligning with the new EU Climate Law, the EU Emissions Trading Scheme as well as reducing CO2 emissions through quotas and carbon pricing mechanisms.[16] In this regard, the EU will support a green transition especially in a region highly dependent on coal where the shift towards cleaner and renewable energy sources is a must. In addition, the EU will support Western Balkan partners in developing transitioning to a fully circular economy, which is the key for B&H to achieve, or getting close to, a green transition. This implies not only the need for a green modernization in industrial policy, but also investments in the co-operative linkages in the industrial eco-systems such as innovation. Finally, it is very important for B&H to promote a strategic green approach in efforts and investments which are needed to establish proper functioning waste management. There is still a need in B&H to strengthen the administrative capacity of competent authorities responsible for environmental assessments for strategic planning, programmes and projects. In order to give support to Western Balkans in their efforts to enhance resilience and adapt to the unavoidable impacts of climate change, the EU is still keeping the enlargement process in the Western Balkans region high on the agenda. As a way of helping, it needs to promote regional cooperation and its mechanisms, especially in the transition towards a climate-neutral economy, as well as to strengthen the process of integration.

Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans

Environmental governance in B&H focuses on institutions at four administrative levels: state, entity, cantonal and municipal. The only institution at the state level with jurisdiction in environmental issues is the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations (MoFTER). B&H produced its first national State of the Environment Report in 2012 providing limited information on the state of the environment. The Report introduces a systematic approach to addressing environmental issues through policy planning that will respond to the needs of society and provides a valuable contribution in establishing regular systems of environmental data monitoring (UN, 2012). The European Commission adopted a comprehensive Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans[17], which aims to spur the long-term economic recovery of the region, support a green and digital transition. The main aim of the Economic and Investment Plan is to foster regional economic integration and to support a green and

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[16] European Commission. *Guidelines for the Implementation of the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans.*
[17] This plan is an integral part of the support to the Western Balkans on the path to the EU. (European Commission. *An Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans*).

digital transition in the Western Balkans. Therefore, the implementation of reforms is required to move forward on the EU path and to support the Western Balkan partners in aligning with the new EU Climate Law, the EU Emissions Trading Scheme as well as reducing CO2 emissions through quotas and carbon pricing mechanisms. In line with the European Climate Law, climate neutrality will be reflected in the EU's bilateral relations and accession negotiations with the Western Balkans, who should already start transforming their societies accordingly. [18]

The Economic and Investment Plan sets out a substantial investment package mobilizing up to €9 billion of funding for the region.[19] Under the Western Balkans Investment Framework (WBIF), almost €130 million extra funding has been granted as non-refundable assistance, supplemented by loans from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the European Investment Bank, the KfW Development Bank and the World Bank.[20] This requires a strong commitment from the Western Balkans to implement fundamental reforms, deepening regional economic integration and developing a common regional market based on the EU acquis to transform society and economy into a modern, efficient and competitive economy.

Conclusion

Western modernization has destroyed environmental regulation guided by the "deranged idea and practice of conquering nature, so typical of Western civilization" (Županov, 2002:105). Global environmental change is, without doubt, a profoundly social phenomenon. The community has a very significant role in supporting and initiating changes in the environment. As it is known, the environment constitutes of the natural environment, soil, air, water, and biosphere where "Environmental Protection" is defined as a result of human activities. The countrywide environmental protection strategy for BiH is now being developed. Laws on Environmental Protection of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republika Srpska and the Brčko District of B&H, as well as Laws on Waters, are the founding legal acts that define and set out goals, principles and measures of environmental protection in B&H. The country has ratified or acceded to many global and regional multilateral environmental agreements where instruments, such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, have also been negotiated and adopted to address sustainable development

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[18] European Commission. *2020 Communication on EU enlargement policy.*
[19] European Commission. (6 October 2020). *Western Balkans: An Economic and Investment Plan to support the economic recovery and convergence.*
[20] European Commission. (17. December 2020). *EU starts implementing Economic and Investment Plan in the Western Balkans.*

challenges. However, there is still much to be done in practical implementation, in particular, in clarifying institutional responsibilities. In recent years, B&H has brought its legislation and regulations into line with the EU's requirements and international agreements on the environment, climate and energy. There is still a need in B&H to reach a better understanding of environmental problems within the context of sustainable development, to contribute to forming opinions on environmental issues, to change the behavior of the society that would lead towards sustainability and to increase participation of the public in activities related to the environment protection. Accordingly, as B&H gets closer to the EU and to access it, environmental protection will become one of its priority areas. The countries of WB rely mostly on coal and oil for their primary energy supply, which is one of the major environmental problems. Instead, they must create a positive model of a low-carbon future in accordance with EU legislation. A change of attitude and a strong political will are needed in BiH for the transition towards a more sustainable economy. Accordingly, initiatives for sustainable public services should be supplemented with initiatives to promote more economically, socially and environmentally sustainable management of natural resources. BiH is both, a sovereign and internationally recognized country, just like most of the countries of the WB region. The process of EU accession for BiH requires full alignment of national legislation with the EU acquis, while the negotiation process between the B&H and European Commission determines the deadlines for full implementation for each specific piece of legislation in the economy in question. Taking into account the obligations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the process of harmonization with the EU acquis and high vulnerability of the region, development of legislation transposing the mechanism for monitoring and reporting greenhouse gas emissions could significantly contribute to better adaptation planning and its integration into all relevant sectors. Moreover, joint identification of vulnerability and adaptation possibilities, as the main motive for the development of the B&H, as well as implementation of adaptation actions according to the Green and Digital transition, could ensure climate-resilient and sustainable development in the whole region of the Western Balkans, especially in key areas for economic development such as sustainable transport and energy connectivity, the green and digital transformation, strengthening the competitiveness of the private sector and support to health, education and social protection.

Solutions to environmental problems in Bosnia and Herzegovina require changes in economic and environmental policies, and the potential impact of these changes depends heavily on social and political factors.

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THE EU NORMATIVE POSITION IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

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The European Union is one of the most important international actors, which seeks, in addition to the expansion of economic influence, to appear as a tremendous transnational power. In this regard, especially after the Maastricht Treaty, it has taken significant steps to increase its international political interactions. After the formation of the European Union, the issue of the position of the European Union as a whole in political circles and international forums was raised, and different views were expressed in this regard. The thought of normative power proposed by Manners brought new literature to the international arena. It created and aroused supporters and opponents. Bedsides, the Western Balkans, which mainly includes the former Yugoslavia countries, are of particular importance to the European Union. Geographical proximity, historical and cultural commonalities, and having a common border have created the grounds for developing relations between the two sides. Therefore, this chapter seeks to examine the impact of EU normative power on the Western Balkans. In addition to addressing the theoretical dimension of research and expressing the measures and policies used By the European Union, the relative stability of this turbulent region and their alignment with the West, which derives from the normative power of the European Union, will be analyzed.

Introduction

The European Union is the most significant economic bloc and an influential player in the international arena. At present, with 28 members and more than 505 million people, the Union offers a unique model of regional convergence. But after the formation of the European Union, there was much debate about the EU's position in

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the international system in the political and academic circle. As a whole of 28 countries with different and sometimes conflicting interests of member states, the European Union can be considered a superpower or a military power in the world and can be viewed in the context of civilian or civilian power. In other words, by applying the above principles in its foreign policy, the European Union seeks to have a normative influence in the international arena and, consequently, to secure its interests. To better understand this concept, it is necessary to assess the impact of EU normative power in a particular region. The main question is now what effect has the normative power of the European Union had on the Western Balkans, what tools has it used in this regard, and what are the main challenges facing it?

The Western Balkans region, which mainly includes the countries of the former Yugoslavia, is of particular importance to the European Union. Geographical proximity, historical and cultural commonalities, and having a common border have created the grounds for developing relations between the two sides. On the other hand, the chaotic aftermath of this region has continued so far and has faced this region with many challenges. Due to its geopolitical features, this region has been the highway connecting the West to Eastern Europe. It has always been a place for the invasion of great powers throughout history. Nearly two decades ago, following the collapse of the Eastern Bloc and the consequent collapse of the former Yugoslavia, political and economic instability and an identity crisis were prominent features of the region. In addition, during the Balkan crisis that led to the break-up of the former Yugoslavia, the weakness of the EU Joint Action Mechanism or Common Foreign Policy emerged as it failed to prevent the break-up of Yugoslavia in 1991 and later stopped Slobodan Milosevic's ethnic cleansing. It did not return to Kosovo, and the NATO-led Balkan crisis practically ended in the United States.

In fact, at this point, the weakness of the EU military power and the lack of joint decision-making in the international arena became apparent. But after this incident, the European Union adopted policies in the region that led to more stability in the area and a move towards changing norms. The European Union, which wants a regular part in its neighborhood, has developed a unique strategy for this region, especially since 1990. This strategy aims first to establish stability and then to bring the countries of this region as close as possible. To consolidate its normative position, the European Union introduced the EU enlargement policy and the principle of conditionality in the early 1990s in order to advance its goals in the region. To clarify the discussion, having an overview of the EU approach and approach to this policy. The development policy of any country seeking membership in the European Union must meet the

Copenhagen criteria. The Copenhagen criteria state that new members must meet the following three standards:

- The stability of institutions that guarantee democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and the rights of minorities.
- The existence of a free market economy.
- Acceptance of the EU's social achievements, including membership commitments, adherence to the EU's political, economic, and monetary objectives.

Therefore, any country wishing to join the European Union must first meet the above standards. The primary tool for its implementation is the Stability and Solidarity Agreement, which is signed separately with potential members.

This chapter seeks to answer the question of what effect the normative power of the European Union has had on the Western Balkans. In response, it can be hypothesized that the relative stability of the turbulent region of the Western Balkans and the alignment of the countries of this region with the policies of the European Union is due to the normative power of the said UnionUnion in this region. To explain this concept theoretically, we first need to explain normative power.

Normative Power

The Western Balkans region, which includes most of the countries of the former Yugoslavia, is of particular importance to the European Union. Geographical proximity, historical and cultural commonalities, and having a common border have created the grounds for the development of relations between the two sides. However, the disparity between the countries of the region and the lack of a clear timetable for joining the EU, and the differing views of EU members on enlargement policy have left the prospect of full membership in the bloc in the distant future.

The European Union is one of the most important international actors, which, in addition to expanding its economic influence, seeks to emerge as a significant transnational power. In this regard, especially after the Maastricht Treaty, it has taken necessary steps towards its international political weight. The European Union is a powerful economic bloc, and its most significant advantage is its expanding market. This feature is one of the most powerful tools of the European Union and is considered a driving force for other aspects of its development. However, in the field of political power, steps must be taken to transform it from a powerful economic bloc into a significant international power. These steps were accompanied by the idea of handing over part of the sovereignty of the member states, or in other words, the most essential

part of it, namely foreign and security policy, to transnational institutions. To explain the concept of normative power, it is appropriate first to define civil and military power to clarify the understanding of normative power and the distinction between these concepts.

Civil Power

The concept of civilian power or civilian power of the European Union is the first attempt to explain and interpret the nature of the European Union. Duchamp first introduced the idea, based on the economic and diplomatic advantages of the European Union. It was also criticized for its ambiguity in defining the characteristics of this concept. In fact, this concept refers to the use of civilian tools such as diplomatic, commercial, economical tools to achieve specific goals in the international arena and opposes the use of military means in this regard. Therefore, it can be concluded that the civilian power of the European Union depends on the significant economic power of the European Union and the use of peaceful methods in its foreign policy.

Military Power

The EU's foreign policy foundation has in the past been based on two elements: economy and trade, and the EU, as an important economic bloc, has regulated its foreign policy activities based on trade and economics. But significant events took place in the international arena to highlight the need for EU member states to coordinate and make joint decisions in foreign policy. These include the Balkan crisis of the 1990s, the Iraq crisis, the Kosovo crisis, and the US settlement. The failure of the European Union to overcome these crises has led European countries to decide on a mechanism for a standard foreign policy. The ratification of the Maastricht Treaty in December 1991 marks a turning point in EU foreign policy. The treaty created a transnational pillar for a standard foreign and security policy, explaining the concepts of joint action and raising the necessary budget in this regard. However, the EU has a long way to go to have a solid European army. Because the European Union does not have the necessary institutions in this regard and does not have an arms policy and a sufficient budget in this field. In 2008, for example, the US defense budget was three times the defense budget of all EU member states. At present, NATO support for the European Union is effective in maintaining and securing Europe.

Mr. Manners first introduced the concept of EU normative power in 2002. The main argument of this concept is that the European Union has unique characteristics that can act in a normative way. According to Manners, these characteristics stem from the historical context in which the European Union was formed, the multifaceted policy of

the European Union, and ultimately the political and legal foundations of EU laws and treaties. By examining this historical trend, Manners has identified five critical norms developed by Europe over the past 50 years through declarations, treaties, treaties, agreements, policies, and laws. These five core norms are peace, freedom, democracy, the rule of law, and respect for human rights, as recognized in Article 6 of the Treaty on European Union. Therefore, in addition to promoting these normative principles, the European Union seeks to support and encourage institutions that ensure the protection of these transnational principles through international law, regional organizations, and multilateral cooperation. In addition, the European Union, by promoting its norms, which stem from the unique character of this actor, is a percentage of promoting its international position and securing the interests of the UnionUnion. Therefore, it can be said that the interpretation of the normative power of the European Union is beyond the standard concepts in international relations and creates a new indicator in this field. This view has been criticized by, for example, Zelonka, who has questioned the claim that normative power is the exclusive role of the European Union.

Consequently, it can be concluded that critics, while rejecting the claim that this role is exclusive to the EU, consider this attitude as an apparent framework for achieving the interests of the EU. Some also equate this concept with the concept of civilian power, while others believe the use of military means necessary to promote norms in some third countries. Also, from the point of view of some critics, the concepts of power and norm cannot be put together, and putting the two together is an ideal view. Manners, however, argues that the idea of normative power is a new look at the behavior of the European Union and differs from the standard view of military, civilian or civilian power. He believes that using military force without considering its critical feedback and without imposing restrictions on Europe's security strategy endangers normative power. However, he believes that normative power will not hinder the EU military process if used in a reactionary manner.

Looking at the above views, it seems that this concept has been considered in academic circles, and proponents and opponents have added to the richness of this concept by expressing their opinions. However, this concept cannot be regarded as a definite issue, and the debate is still open in political and academic circles. To properly understand the concept of normative power, it is appropriate to examine it in one region, so we turn to the turbulent region of the Western Balkans, which borders the European Union.

The Western Balkans

The Western Balkans, a former Yugoslavia region, have a diverse ethnic, racial, cultural, and political composition. This diversity and mosaic structure has led to instability throughout the region, so-called "European gunpowder barrels" (Larrabee, 1994). The clashes turned violent and showed how fragile peace and stability are in the area. The Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia was composed of countries with ethnic, religious, and conflicting interests. Tensions in the region became apparent after the death of Marshal Tito, who led to the unification of the South Slavs and the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the end of the Cold War. Disputes arose between 1989 and 1991 between the six Yugoslav republics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Slovenia, and the autonomous regions of Serbia, Kosovo, and Vojvodina. The violent collapse of Yugoslavia in 1992 led to a new demarcation and the emergence of new countries on the world political map. This situation provoked the international community's reaction, and it was expected that European intervention in this crisis would lead to peace and stability in the region. At the time, the then President of the Council of Europe, Jacob Poz, stated in a speech on 28 June 1991 that "now is the time for Europe and not for the United States." In his remarks, Poz referred to an agreement reached by 12 European Union countries to end Belgrade's military strikes against Slovenia and Croatia. The agreement provided for the suspension of nearly $ 1 billion in economic aid to Belgrade (a clear example of Europe's soft power) and, most importantly, the preservation of Yugoslavia as an independent state (Riding, 29 June 1991).

However, this approach changed due to the different positions of European countries, especially Germany. At that time, Germany unilaterally recognized the independence of Croatia and Slovenia and pressured other European countries to change their approach in this regard. As a result, 12 members of the European Union failed to reach an agreement on deploying a peacekeeping force and a joint decision. Immediately after the recognition of Croatia and Slovenia, the other former Yugoslav republics declared independence, with Macedonia declaring independence in 1991 and Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1992, with Montenegro remaining united with Serbia at the time. As a result, the European Union failed to prevent the break-up of Yugoslavia in 1991, ending only the US-led entry into crisis in that decade. This highlighted the need for a coherent and long-term strategy to stabilize the region. But in the early twentieth century, the outcome was different, and the EU's policies towards the area led to its relative stability. One of the consequences of this crisis was that it put the newly independent countries on a new path, and that path was membership in the European Union and an attitude towards the West in this region. In this regard, the European

Union has adopted and applied a particular combined strategy for this region. These strategies include a range of tools available to the EU, such as economic assistance, the deployment of special envoys, and military and civilian action. Undoubtedly, the most crucial tool of the European Union was the promise of EU membership to these countries or EU enlargement policy. Accordingly, the countries of the Western Balkans were included in the list of potential candidates for membership in the European Union, which led to significant influence and influence of the European Union in the region (Rupnik, May 2009, 1).

EU Normative Power in the Western Balkans

As mentioned earlier, Manners introduces nine criteria for the EU's normative role, the five main criteria: freedom, democracy, respect for human rights, the rule of law, and peace. All of these principles, the legal basis of which is found in European constitutional instruments, are rooted in three unique features of the European Union. These features include the historical context in which the European Union was formed, the multifaceted policies and legal foundations of EU treaties (Manners, 2002, 242-244). The necessary legitimacy of these principles is derived from international instruments and instruments such as the UN Charter, the Paris Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights, and the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy is expected to pursue improvement, development and promote these principles in third countries. Article 6 of the Amsterdam Treaty also states that the principles of freedom, democracy, respect for human rights, and the rule of law form the basis of the European Union (Manners, 2009, 12).

The question now is what methods have been identified to promote these norms. In answer to this question, Manners has identified six common strategies, which are: non-targeted dissemination of criteria; Dissemination of information related to various forms of communication in the European Union; Expansion of procedures that contribute to the process of institutionalizing the relationship between the Union and third parties; The transfer of norms also occurs when the relationship between the EU and other actors requires trade or cooperation; The apparent expansion of norms also takes place when the EU has a physical presence in the territory of third countries; And the last is the spread of norms through cultural supervision, which is due to the impact of these norms in third countries (Manners, 2002, 244-245). Regarding the second solution, i.e., the expansion of procedures, the most obvious example is the Stability and Solidarity Agreement between the European Union and all the Western Balkans countries. The agreement, which guarantees the rights and responsibilities of

both parties, serves as a roadmap to advance the EU's goals in the region. The main element of the second solution, the transfer of norms, is the principle of conditionality in agreements. For example, in some of its trade agreements, the European Union has a chapter called human rights to implement the provisions of the contract conditional on the development of this principle in the contracting country. Thus, it can be said that to develop and implement the above strategies, tools are needed that, according to Manners, are based on the elements of persuasion, reasoning, and maintaining prestige (Manners, 2009, 12).

Challenges Ahead

The Western Balkans has its complexities, and although it has achieved relative stability and progress thanks to the EU's normative influence in the region and the EU's actions and policies, it also faces challenges. The first challenge is that the countries of this region are at different stages of political, social, and economic development, and therefore are at various stages of the stability and cohesion agreement. There is no specific timetable for completing this process. Croatia and Macedonia both became official candidates for EU membership in 2005. Croatia completed negotiations with Brussels in 2012 and joined the European Union in 2013. Greece has blocked talks with Macedonia over the name dispute and has not yet officially opened for Macedonia. Albania and Montenegro are also among the countries applying for EU membership. Albania suffers from high levels of political corruption, a lack of judicial reform, and a fragmented political climate. Although the European Commission has made some positive signs of increasing economic growth and some success in building good relations with its neighbors, there is still a long way to go. Montenegro joined the European Union in December 2008 and signed the Stability and Solidarity Agreement on 1 May 2010. The latest EU Progress Report on Montenegro has a positive view of institutionalizing a new and independent country but points to further efforts to create a professional, accountable, and politically non-interfering civil service. Montenegro's relations with Serbia also negatively affect Podgorica's decision to recognize Kosovo's independence (Conley and Cipoletti, 2010, 13). Bosnia's Stability and Solidarity Agreement (SAA) was signed in June 2008 and ratified by 23 member states. Because Bosnia's constitution was designed to end hostilities and be a temporary solution, it has failed to establish a lasting government and is currently destabilizing.

In addition, the country's leaders continue to be more loyal to their ethnic composition than the rest of the country. Although a recent progress report acknowledges that Bosnia has made relatively promising strides in prosecuting war criminals, judicial reform, corruption, and neighborly relations, the country's shortcomings in political

and institutional structures, as well as its inability to support a Sustainable civil society advocating for the rights of minorities has overshadowed any promising trend. In addition, the decentralized and complex political structure of Bosnia and Herzegovina has created a political stalemate that requires the intervention of official EU institutions (Conley and Cipoletti, September 2010, 14). As a result, one of the significant challenges at the various levels of these countries is in the accession negotiations and the relevant agreement. Therefore, no specific timeline can be defined for it. Another major challenge in this regard is the differing views of EU member states on this policy. Germany, France, and the Benelux countries tend to delay the membership of the Balkan countries in the European Union, except for Croatia. Reasons for this tendency include:

- The current eurozone crisis.
- Various economic challenges.
- Future disputes over the EU's common agricultural policy and regional subsidies to the EU budget.

Countries such as the United Kingdom, Denmark, and Spain are staunch supporters of EU enlargement, although their positions are not the same as those of the region. But Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, Italy, and Sweden can be considered the strongest supporters of the EU's expansion into the Western Balkans (Conley and Cipoletti, September 2010, 17).

Conclusion

The European Union is one of the most important international actors, which, in addition to expanding its economic influence, seeks to emerge as a significant transnational power. In this regard, especially after the Maastricht Treaty, it has taken significant steps to increase its international political weight. After the formation of the European Union, the issue of the position of the European Union as a whole in political and academic circles was raised, and different views were expressed in this regard. The thought of normative power proposed by Manners created new literature in the international arena and aroused both proponents and opponents. According to this view, Manners introduces nine criteria for the normative role of the European Union, the five main criteria of which are: freedom, democracy, respect for human rights, the rule of law, and peace. There is. Accordingly, by pursuing these principles in its foreign policy, the European Union, while influencing other actors in the international system and securing its interests, seeks to enhance the EU's international standing.

In fact, instead of using coercion, the European Union has enhanced its position in the international system by resorting to norms derived from its historical context, multilateral politics, and its laws and treaties. To better understand this concept, the normative influence of the European Union in the Western Balkans was examined. The Western Balkans has various ethnic, racial, cultural, and political compositions and is referred to as the European Gunpowder Barrel. Such an insecurity zone near the EU borders threatens the security of this bloc. The Union's failure to resolve the crisis of the 1990s in the region led to the policy of expansion in the early twentieth century. Under this policy, the countries of the region became potential candidates for membership in the European Union. Therefore, these countries must implement the rules of the Union and the Copenhagen criteria, which are the normative principles of the Union. Consequently, it can be said that based on the principle of conditionality, stability, and solidarity agreement were concluded with the countries of this region. Therefore, this agreement acted as a roadmap for the countries of the region and encouraged them to take corrective action. The current relative stability can be attributed to this policy and its practical tools. Thus, the Union was able to significantly impact the region with the civic tools at its disposal. However, the heterogeneity of the countries in the region and the lack of a clear timetable for accession to the Union, and the different views of EU members on enlargement policy have put the prospect of full membership in the Union in the distant future. This could reduce the motivation of countries in the region to take corrective action. Therefore, it seems that the European Union should review its policies towards this region to continue this process and be more effective. It appears that the Union should provide a model that, although it may not eventually lead to the membership of these countries, has created a new kind of convergence and is still sufficiently encouraging. Continuation of the current trend causes despair and slows down the reform measures of the countries in this region. Although Croatia's membership in 2013 was an incentive for other countries, it now seems that there is a need for a new perspective on the region and the provision of concrete incentives to continue.

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COSMOPOLITANISM, GLOBAL RISKS, AND FRAMING OF THE WESTERN BALKANS RELATIONS

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Postmodern metamorphosis and unpredictability of the world, reflexively perceived as fragile and liquid, requires new methodological (de)construction and framing of the Western Balkans. Most of the studies on the Western Balkans have neglected emerging realities that frame and model the Western Balkan's mutual social, cultural, economic, environmental, technological, and security interdependence. Emerging realities, which go beyond mere linear and structural assessment of historical, diplomatic, and economic relations, significantly frame future risks and anticipated opportunities. Emerging realities transcend national borders and they require coordinated cosmopolitized response. Arising new risks ultimately frame interdependent, cooperative, and coordinated responses and actions. New postmodern Western Balkans relations will be shaped by mutual risks and opportunities, whereby common risks in the form of fragile states, intra-state conflicts, economic crisis, environmental challenges, pandemics, dysfunctional system of governance, migrations, energy dependency, terrorism, organized crime, human trafficking, and many others, shall become the main triggers for cosmopolitized response and actions. This paper will apply the theory of cosmopolitanism and risk, introduced by Ulrich Beck, to develop a new model for conceptualizing the Balkan's interdependent relations. Throughout the discursive analysis of democratic capacities, this paper will explore core risks and inherent socio-political, economic, technological, security, and cultural uncertainties in a reflexive manner. The chapter will clearly illustrate how international legalism, security risks, economic and energy interdependence, transnational networks, technologies, elites, and civil society shape the Western Balkan's interdependent relations.

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A Paradigm of Cosmopolitan Vision and Global Risks

From Progress to the Metamorphosis of the World

The interest in the study of an ever-changing world, caused by demographic, technological, cultural, biological, ideological, educational, economic, environmental, and security factors, has been a famous subject among scientists. An ancient model of a cyclical view of human affairs has reached its climax in the Age Enlightenment, whereby change and scientific progress started to be seen as an inevitable vehicle of human progress, development, and continuous improvement of human well-being. For instance, leading Enlightenment philosophers argued for the progress of the human mind and creativity. In addition, British Empiricism, based on the idea that our knowledge is grounded in experience, furthermore strengthened a doctrine of linear progress and development. Similarly so, early philosophical and sociological works of Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), G.W.F. Hegel (1770-1831), and Auguste Comte (1798-1857) argued that the fundamental and opposing change, which is an essence of both human nature and the society, inevitably causes progress. Thus, human potentialities necessarily lead towards progress and development. These early discussions on a doctrine of progress pointed to the view of change and progress as linear, progressive, systemic and structural (Adler, 2002, 435-445).

A doctrine of progress, as the essence of modernity, has been shaped throughout different periods, beginning from the Industrial Revolution to the Digital Age. The first phases of human progress and development were characterized by the mechanical worldview, mass production, electronics, information technology and scientific knowledge. All these phases of human progress broadly correspond to modernity and its climax in the acquisition of linear knowledge, strongly grounded in science, technology and research. Consequently, the modern world was seen as progressive, structural, orderly and predictable (Giddens, 1990, 150). Thus, modernity gradually led towards the development of digital technology and network society, which in effect shaped the postmodern world of risk, threat, uncertainty, fragility, liquidity and insecurity (Beck, 1992, 97-123). In the 1980s Ulrich Beck was aware of the side effects of modernity and posed the question that will shape the future "how to live and cope with risk?" Being influenced by the critical theory of Jürgen Habermas and Theodor Adorno, Beck was interested in giving sense and meaning to the global developments that were very quickly unfolding and producing risks. He proposed moving away from the classical doctrines of progress to the world of metamorphosis (*verwandlung*) (Blok, 2015, 110-114; Mythen, 2018, 189-204). According to Beck (2015):

> Metamorphosis is not social change, not evolution, not revolution, not crisis, not war. It is a mode of changing the mode of change. It signifies the age of side effects. It challenges the way of being in the world, thinking about the world and imagining and doing politics. And it calls for a scientific revolution (as Thomas Kuhn understands it) – from 'methodological nationalism' to 'methodological cosmopolitanism' (78).

Consequently, the scientific, technological, and structural modern world began to be challenged, whereby risk as a new determinant started to shape the postmodern world. Thus, the future of humanity is predominantly uncertain, which is going to be the condition of human life, knowledge and existence. Today, we must cope with the victory of modernity that in effect led to the emergence of the postmodern world and world risk society (Bergkamp, 2017, 1275-1291).

Although Beck died in 2015, his ideas became very influential, especially due to current world predicaments and the COVID-19 pandemic. In his uncompleted work *The Metamorphosis of the World,* he captured the curiosity of social scientists. He introduced his key ideas of cosmopolitan vision and global risk society by discussing the Chernobyl catastrophe in 1986, which provoked debates on nuclear weapons, nuclear catastrophes, warfare and new military destructive technologies (Guivant, 2016, 227-228). This nuclear accident, with its indeterminate, complex and unpredictable characteristics, started to be seen as a characteristic of a world risk society, which began to transcend specific geography, state institutions, and the nation-state model. The world had to cope with the Chernobyl radiation cloud, which provoked questions related to security, safety, risk and risk prevention. This nuclear accident, coupled with nuclear tensions, environmental hazards, and over-use of energy, created a sense of threat and risk as inevitable that have to be dealt with on the global scale (Beck, 2015, p. 76; Beck, 1992b, p. 22; Kuchinskaya, 2011, 405-421). Thus, Beck (2005a) argued that manufactured uncertainty and world risk society, in the context of the sociological discourse of postmodern world, will define the socio-political dynamism of the 21st century (212-214).

The first waves of industrialization and modernization contributed significantly towards the subordination of nature to science and technology, which caused environmental and climatic changes. Modernity, grounded strongly on science and technology, fostered the growth and progress on one hand and emissions of carbon dioxide, methane and other emissions, on the other hand, altering the planet's climate

changes. Similarly so, atomic arsenals produced unintentional consequences on the modernization process and its rigid emphasis on scientific and technological progress. Therefore, in the 1970s, the environmental movements started awareness campaigns and debates regarding the eminent threats posed by excessive using of nature to foster scientific, technological and economic growth. However, such calls had gained public attention only after the nuclear catastrophe, which contributed to the debates regarding the destruction of nature, ultraviolet radiation, frequent flooding, snowmelt, hurricanes and earthquakes (Beck, 2010a, 47-82; Beck, 2010c, 254-266). In the following decades, a tremendous increment of man-made risks has significantly affected the planet. In this regard, we live in the Anthropocene age, where the nature is no longer nature due to substantial human invasion of the planet. It is important to mention that in the postmodern world environmental and climatic issues started to transcend specific geographies, state institutions, and the nation-state borders. Therefore, the environmental and climatic changes began to be tackled as a global risk. In this regard, Beck (2015) argued that environmental issues are central to an understanding the global risk society and the postmodern world (79).

Humanity has also encountered biological and biomedical threats, which have become eminent in the postmodern world. For example, humanity has to cope with new viruses and pandemics, like the COVID-19 pandemic. Being accidental in nature, biological and biomedical threats often emerge without clear and measurable signs from nature. Humanity had to cope with different influenza pandemics and infectious diseases in the past. Although humanity had seriously taken earlier pandemic diseases like EBOLA and SARS, the COVID-19 pandemic as a deliberate security threat more than ever has provoked global awareness, collaboration and coordinated actions. In the very beginning, the biological and biomedical threats were seen through the frame of terrorism but today due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the biological, biomedical, and chemical threats greatly define global security, which is not simply confined within the nation-state model and its institutions (Beck, 2006b, 59-61).

Terrorism, migrations, and securitization have also transcended the nation-state borders and became a central part of the global agenda. In the very beginning from 2001 to 2005, the 9/11, the Madrid, and London bombings and attacks contributed towards the global war on terrorism and setting the agenda of the global, collective and transnational security (Beck, 2002, 39-55' Beck, 2006b, 62-66). Under the leadership of the US and the EU, global counter-terrorism laws and policies have been adopted worldwide. In addition, securitization as a product of modernity has shifted from mere military threats to political, social, economic, technological, and even environmental

sectors. In effect, such changes and transformations, coupled with advancement of modern science and technology, significantly affected human liberties and freedoms, which in effect was another side effect of the modernization process. For instance, Edward Snowden's case clearly pointed to extensive use of the global surveillance program and misuse of metadata from the Internet. Therefore, the postmodern world is framed by risks and security, whereby we live in 'the state of exception' and "the state of obsession with the risk prevention and its management" (Bergkamp, 2017, 1275-1291).

The rise of the global population in some parts of the world and demographic decline and aging in the developed countries also led to numerous uncertainties and challenges. According to current estimates, the world population increased from about 1 billion in the 1850s to about 7.7 billion today. If this trend continues in the future, the population growth might reach 9.3 billion by the year 2050. The population growth in Africa and Asia is projected to continue with the significant population growth. On the other hand, in the predominantly developed countries, the population growth has significantly decreased. In addition, there is a high rate of life expectancy and as a result the emergence of aging societies (Smith, 2004, 242). Rapid demographic changes inevitably produced numerous side effects, risks and threats. In the future, some countries may fail to provide basic services to their citizens. This is especially the case with the underdeveloped world that will hardly cope with severe food, water and medical shortages. Then, the demographic changes may bring about increased needs for consumption, accelerated industrialization process, excessive energy consumption, and over-use of natural resources, which may affect environment and climate changes (Beck, 2010a, 47-82). In this regard, the demographic challenges started to transcend specific geography, state institutions and nation-state model.

In the future, an increased number of global financial crises will inevitably affect global security. The global financial crisis 2007-2009, not the one restricted to the US only, was a call for an urgent need to tackle the global financial and banking problems in a coordinated manner. Although the US began with massive support from the government and central bank to resolve the crisis, losses, bankruptcies and losses of millions of jobs the governments and their institutions had to make a coordinated international action (Beck, 2006b, 100-101). It is important to mention that the crisis had intensified the discussions about an urgent need for the global financial system and global governance (Beck, 2013a, 11-17; Beck, 2006c, 31-56). There is a need for (re)assessment of the role of the international institutions, including the UN, the World Bank, the WHO, and others. In this regard, the financial crisis transcends specific geography, institutions and nation-state model.

In the postmodern world science and technology shapes human lives and human nature. Human intelligence has been connected with artificial intelligence, whereby knowledge, creativity and innovations ceased to be exclusive of the human domain. In the postmodern world, smart robots, smart cars, smart computers and phones are overtaking human activities, and as such, they shape and transform our automated lives and even human nature. Nanotechnology, robotics, digital technology, and artificial intelligence may challenge future lifestyles, norms and values, producing numerous benefits and at the same time side effects. Such trends of the rise of science, technology and innovations, coupled with high risks, will certainly increase in the future, shaping a metamorphosis generation (Beck, 2015, 83-85). For instance, advances in science and technology significantly changed our perceptions and approaches towards governance and security. Today, the human hand in the system of governance and security has been limited due to science, technology and automation of processes and decision-making. Thus, technology led to global uniformity and the emergence of transnational governance and security. In this regard, science and technology will produce on one hand opportunities and risks and on the other hand, a need to reconsider old nation-state models of governance, security, and citizenship (Beck, 2005b, 22-47; Beck, 2006c, 31-56).

The above discussion clearly points to the progress of humanity throughout history, which in effect contributed towards postmodern global risk society and cosmopolitan vision. The realities of an ever-changing world, affected by science and technology, mobile life, migrations, communications, transportations, virtual life, demographic changes and urbanization may significantly shape future risks and opportunities. In this regard, in the postmodern world present generation is living in a civilization that is different from the past because today's world is not simply progressing and developing but is metamorphosing (Guivant, 2016, 231-233; Cottle, 1998, 5-32). The number of examples, demonstrated in the above discussion, clearly pointed to the pace of metamorphosis in the past few decades that is unprecedented in comparison to human history. However, the risk or the edge as new determinants should not be seen as apocalyptic but instead useful for an understanding of today's world. In this regard, Beck (2006a) has identified three possible reactions to risk such as denial, apathy and transformation (331). The transition as a reaction to the shock of danger occurs unintentionally and opens up new possibilities for the emancipation of humanity. Beck (2015) elaborated these three phases by arguing that "first, the anticipation of global catastrophe violates sacred (unwritten) norms of human existence and civilization; second, thereby it causes an anthropological shock, and, third, a social catharsis (79). Thus, future generations must focus on the risk without being too much pessimistic

and/or idealistic. Current circumstances, risks and uncertainties could lead humanity towards new opportunities and alternatives, including using interdisciplinary approaches and new paradigms. In this regard, Ulrich Beck has introduced the conceptions of cosmopolitan vision and world risk society to understand today's world.

Global Risks beyond the Nation-State Model

The postmodern world consciously challenges the truth and reality. It is not inquiring into how truth and reality are found but rather how they are made. In this regard, humanity has made a significant transition from Nietzsche's anti-foundationalism to Beck's world risk society and ironic understanding of the truth and reality. Perhaps, Beck has attempted to use Socratic irony and Descartes' doubt to provoke human curiosity about unfolding dichotomies of risks as reflexive norms and opportunities. Beck (2006a) talked about the narratives of risks as irony of security, rationality, modernity, science, technology and control, whereby in the postmodern world the scientific-technological society does (not) know. His works are filled in by metaphors, which project very serious issues in ironic ways (329-330). Beck's questioning of today's world is based on the notions of non-knowledge, metamorphosis and emancipatory catastrophism. He used these concepts ironically to turn the dominant worldviews upside down by challenging current approaches, methods and views. His new social theory firmly goes beyond modernity, whereby risk may be defined as a way of dealing with hazards and insecurities induced and introduced by the modernization itself. In this regard, the risk does not mean catastrophe but its anticipation, whereby there is a need for a shift to the study of a non-linear world that is no longer progressive, orderly, systematic and structural (Beck, 2006a, p. 332; Beck 2006b, 44-46; Lash, 2003, 49-57). He firmly argued "I cannot understand how anyone can make use of the frameworks of reference developed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in order to understand the transformation into the posttraditional cosmopolitan world we live in today" (Beck, 2005a, 211). In the postmodern world, we can hardly apply grand narratives to study social life because structural analysis lost its validity and reliance. According to Beck, a new interconnected world is reflexive, in which knowledge is not absolute and ironic non-knowledge has become a new paradigm, which could be studied from an interdisciplinary perspective without barriers among the scientific disciplines (Gross, 2016, 386-402). In this regard, Beck influenced the security scholars to focus more on the technologies of risk, prevention, preemption and precaution (Selchow, 2016, 369-385). Beck argued that postmodern problems require an interdisciplinary approach, whereby there is a need for an epistemological shift in social sciences (Beck, 2011a, 17-32; Guivant, 2016, 229-231; Elliot, 2002, 293-315).

Security issues and existential threats frame today's world, whereby securitization focuses on the politics of framing issues as security issues**.** Thus, Beck defined threats, risks and manufactured uncertainties as types of insecurity, which furthermore influenced security scholars to expand their scope of security issues away from mere military threats. The securitization after 9/11 has become a condition of society. According to Beck, we live in times of (more) risks whereby "an environmental issues will shape our future." Manufactured risks, created by humanity itself, are characterized by de-localisation, incalculableness and non-compensability, which imply that in essence problems are global (Beck, 2006a, 333-334; Beck, 2005a, 216-219). He argues that de-localisation of incalculable interdependency risks takes place at spatial, temporal and social levels, which implies that the new risks evolve beyond nation-state borders, their effects are timely unlimited, and their social consequences are unpredictable too. Manufactured risks and uncertainties are not limited to place, they cannot be easily calculated and predicted and their negative effects cannot be easily controlled and prevented. For instance, climate change and financial crisis could be considered as manufactured uncertainties. In this regard, Beck argued that in the future states, institutions, experts, science and technology will encounter difficulties in rigid controlling of manufactured risks. In their attempts, they will become part of the problem they are supposed to solve because high technology will in effect bring about high risks (Beck, 1995, 1; Beck, 2006, 338).

In the postmodern world, the nation-state model has been challenged. In different parts of the world, there are examples of states, which have failed to maintain an effective system of governance and security. The citizens have significantly suspended their trust towards the governments and institutions because of ineffective tackling of current problems. Such mistrust has also extended towards the scientific, technocratic and technological capabilities in solving current nation-state problems. In addition, not only that the public began to question democratic political systems but both the welfare state and corporatist capitalism started to be questioned too. The very justification for the government is to provide equality, justice, order and security. However, absolute trust in state governance and security started to be challenged immediately after 9/11. Such trends had continued in the following decades and they have reached their climax due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Why citizens do doubt state governance, security and protection? In the postmodern world, national security and global security have transformed significantly, with the emergence of new risks and permanent insecurities, including terrorism, cybercrime and terrorism, the proliferation of new weapons, pandemic threats, natural disasters and climatic changes, and biological warfare (Beck, 2006b, 135-140). These postmodern risks

and permanent insecurities significantly shape the public sphere and views about the governments, which cannot give absolute answers to unfolding challenges and predicaments. Therefore, old nation-state and institutional models failed to tackle unfolding challenges, which contributed towards global doubts in an effective system of governance. On the contrary, in the postmodern world, global governance and the global governance of uncertainty will shape the future.

From a conventional point of view, the state promotes and protects basic human rights, equalities, and freedoms. In this regard, citizens have a legal right to participate actively in the affairs of the state in return for security, services and fulfillment of their interests. However, in the postmodern world, the responsibilities of citizens go beyond mere legal citizenship to the global, political, social, cultural and economic dimensions of citizenship (Beck, 2012, 302-315). Thus, new technologies and communications led to the emergence of citizens who possess multi-identities. According to Beck, global citizenship, which doesn't reject ethnic, cultural and religious identities, will eventually replace legal citizenship strongly grounded on the nation-state model (Beck, 2006b, 56-57). In addition, due to new types of cooperation and mega-power sharing, the nation-states will be obliged to share their sovereignty as in the case of the EU cosmopolitan model (Beck, 2006b, 163-177). Beck's cosmopolitan view of international relations doesn't ignore the role of nation-states but argues for their adapting to the new reality without borders, ideologies, ethnicities and differences (Beck, 2006a, 38-40; Beck, 2006b, 119).

The Cosmopolitan Vision

Ulrich Beck made a great contribution to the reaffirmation of the conception of cosmopolitanism and risk society discourse. Beck's cosmopolitan vision is a sociological phenomenon that has a basis in the philosophical traditions of Enlightenment, primarily in the philosophy of Immanuel Kant and Hegel. However, Beck's cosmopolitanism is exclusively a sociological phenomenon (Beck, 2006a, 344-345). Although Beck attempted to differentiate his original ideas in his works, his notion of cosmopolitanism could be partially related to internationalism, globalization, transnationalism, universalism and the like.

According to Beck, cosmopolitized reality and the tradition of national perspective are inclusive dimensions of a non-linear cosmopolitized world (Lash, 2003, 49-57). The cosmopolitized reality is shaped by lived realities, cultures, horizons of experience and horizons of expectations, which take place independently within unconscious and unintended contexts, spaces and times. Furthermore, it is shaped by the global

risks caused by science, technology, economics, and climate change. Cosmopolitized reality leads to the borderless necessity to cooperate and solve global problems and exchange with others. Then, it leads to inherent uncertainty, which has shaken up the basic principles of modernity based on science, technology, progress, governance and security. It also leads to side-effects that are not necessarily 'apocalyptic' but new (Beck, 2006b, 7).

Cosmopolitanism became part of everyday life and a new social determinant, which requires a new cosmopolitan approach. We cannot neglect the process of a global integration of economy, politics, law, culture and communications, which has intensified the world interconnectedness, risks and opportunities (Beck, 2006a, 340-341; Beck, 2006b, 8-10; Beck, 2011c, 16-34). For instance, global communications led to the emergence of a global public sphere, global consciousness, global civil society and global civil society activism (Beck, 2011b, 23-33). Therefore, Beck's cosmopolitanism, as an alternative, holistic, interdisciplinary and inclusive, will (re)define existing models that are taken for granted. His cosmopolitanism is multi-dimensional that irreversibly changes the essence of the modern world, especially our understanding of the nation-state and citizenship. It primarily refers to the social processes of integration, a plurality of identities and cultures. Cosmopolitanism as a post-national conception is based on shared values and overcoming the differences between us and them, which may lead towards inclusive cosmopolitanism (Beck, 2006b, 50-54). In Beck's cosmopolitanism, the borders between societies, states, nations, ethnicities, cultures, races and religions are redefined, intertwined and self-affirmative. As such cosmopolitanism contributes towards the creation of transnational forms of social organization and space and role for non-state political, economic and civic actors of the world (Beck, 2005b, 22-47; Beck, 2010b, 217-228).

Beck (2015) argued for a shift from methodological nationalism to methodological cosmopolitanism. He was very critical of methodological nationalism because it is limited with the national outlook and neglects global processes, former types of social organization beyond the nation-state model, and interconnectedness of the world (76). Then, it uncritically accepts the nation-state and its focus on sovereignty, nationality, territory, boundaries, subordination of the people to the nation-state and the like. According to Beck, methodological nationalism, as an old paradigm, cannot be used for an effective study of the postmodern world. Since different global risks tear down national boundaries and challenge the international order, methodological cosmopolitanism and interdisciplinary approach will replace methodological nationalism, whereby "the national" will be significantly redefined. The postmodern

world is also based on intrinsic reflexivity at an institutional level. Beck argued for a need for a radical transformation of the present institutional dimensions of modernity, capitalism, industrialism, military power, surveillance, towards a new social order (Beck, 2006b, 24-32; Beck, 2007, 286-290). He criticized old modernist models and stated "by using the old categories (like class, family, gender roles, industry, technology, science, nation-state and so on) they take for granted what they actually try to demonstrate: that we still live, act and die in the normal world of nation-state modernity" (Beck, 2005a, 211).

In the postmodern world, the society and politics exist also outside the nation-state models. Therefore, Beck argued for the cosmopolitan community which is opposite to a homogenous, territorially limited, national homeland, ethno-nationalist models (Beck, 2006a, 24-30). A transition to methodological cosmopolitanism is due to the digital communications and media that produce an awareness of global interdependence within the global public sphere (Beck, 1992b, 46). In addition, transnational challenges, climate change, environmental issues, conflicts, migrations, terrorism, poverty and organized crime require cosmopolitan action and new post-national policies (Beck, 2006b, 34-37; Beck, 2013b, 278-289). In this regard, Beck's methodological cosmopolitanism is not new methodology but the broader frame of an interdisciplinary, global, reflexive and cosmopolitan study and copying with the world risk society. It is the process, which is understood as the denationalization of social sciences and their scope of the study (Beck, 2006b, 75-78).

According to Beck, the postmodern world should be seen through reflexive modernisation and individualisation. Individualisation is characterized by personal destiny, self-reflective biography, new forms of sexuality, gender relations and marriage, individualized lifestyles and self-centres. The self must be reflexive, which requires our perceptions and direct experiencing the world around us. Individual lifestyles have changed and class patterns do not necessarily determine our choices. In addition, the world risk society has produced new forms of conflicts that involve subjective perceptions, emotions and feelings. Individuals take a variety of lifestyle choices in an effort to cope with the new world (Beck, 2006b, 66-67). This has to be understood as self-organisation and self-monitoring of individual life narratives. In today's world individuals, are detached from structures, whereby they question perfect, systematic, structural, scientific, and technological society (Guivant, 2016). In the postmodern world, we have witnessed a change in the meaning of national, ethnic, local and religious identities. Beck argued for cosmopolitan identity that represents inclusive differentiation which rejects exclusive either/or identification. Within the

public sphere, there is a continuous dialogue and individual choices, beyond given political agenda, ideology and class distribution. Thus, we cannot use the old social class concepts to study social, political, economic, cultural aspects of human life. Instead, individualized lifestyles emerged without visible collective uniformities (Beck, 2006a, 336-337).

There is a possibility that the postmodern world could be a dark, dangerous and unpleasant place characterized by the growth of totalitarian power, the collapse of economic growth mechanisms, ecological decay and nuclear conflict, or large-scale warfare. However, high risks may lead the humanity towards high opportunities, whereby humanity doesn't encounter the doomsdays. Therefore, Beck's cosmopolitan vision appears as the equivalent of a 'third way' between right and left, in which the postmodern world encounters new possibilities. A third way and emerging opportunities began to unfold significantly within the global risk society. Some of them are present in the form of international legalism, international civil society, international elites, transnational perspectives, transnational networks, transnational corporations, global governance, global security, global citizenship, global cooperation and activism and global environmental activism (Beck, 2006a, 338-344). It is significant to compare and analyze the Western Balkan's awareness and active participation in the postmodern world characterized by world risk and cosmopolitanism. How the promotion of these two models could counter rigid nationalistic, ethnic and nation-state models that prevail in the Western Balkans countries?

The Democratic Indicators and Capacities

Introduction

The Western Balkans countries had evolved from one-party totalitarian and communist systems after the break-up of the former Yugoslavia. This region was marked by bloody conflicts in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, and North Macedonia, which significantly affected the region's democratic and economic transition. Then, multiethnic and multinational features of Western Balkans were obstacles towards the democratic nation-state building process and effective accommodation of minorities. On the contrary, the nation-state building process led to conflicts, crimes against humanity, ethnic cleansing and genocide, which in turn affected bilateral relations, regional cooperation and copying with the historical memory. The tragic events in the past significantly slowed down the democratization process and the transition to the market economy (Mandić and Joksimović, 2018, 15-27). Since the 1990s, the Western Balkans countries have a difficulty developing a consolidated democratic

system, although numerous attempts have been made due to the requirements of the EU integration process. In this regard, Belloni (2020) argued that the enlargement prospects for the Western Balkans states became intangible and the region continuously exists within the state of 'permanent transition' without sound political, economic and social certainty (135-169). According to Freedom House (2021) and Index of Economic Freedom (2021), the Western Balkans countries are semi-consolidated, transitional and/or hybrid democracies. It is important to mention that Croatia and Slovenia are graded as free and consolidated democracies. After partial progress from 2004 to 2010, in the past decade, the Western Balkans countries have been mostly in continuous democratic and security decline (Kovaćević, 2019, 26-49; Keil, 2018, 59-82). Such indicators clearly point to the old nation-state models, as a legacy of the post-communist era, which inhibit political, economic, and social progress and development.

In the past two decades, the European Union has introduced numerous strategies for stabilization, association and eventual integration of Western Balkans countries to the EU. This process requires political, legal and economic reforms that would enable the Western Balkans countries to harmonize their legislation and governance with the EU. Then, the Western Balkans countries are encouraged to foster inter-ethnic and regional cooperation, the system of governance, the rule of law, democratization, human rights, equality, justice and freedom (Hoxhaj, 2020, 143-172; Shcherbak, 2021, 41-47). These reforms and transitions would eventually lead the Western Balkans towards greater regional cooperation, cohesion, and acceptance of the EU cosmopolitan model of shared sovereignty, governance and security. In this regard, political stability, security, economic prosperity and communication infrastructure are key elements of the EU policy framework for the Western Balkans countries. In addition, the EU policy framework highlights the Western Balkan's fight against terrorism, organized crime, corruption and crimes against humanity. The EU policies have been aimed at peace, cooperation and security because of fears that the Western Balkans countries may revive old hatred and conflicts (Bojčić-Dželilović, Kostovicova and Randazzo, 2016, 5-22; Petrovic and Wilson, 2021, 1-18).

The EU policy framework partially contributed towards the rebuilding the bilateral relations among the Western Balkans countries. Since 1999, the number of bilateral relations has been signed and as well as diplomatic recognition, which in effect led toward the opening of embassies (Mulalić, 2019, 130-135). Some critics argue that the EU, through its passive presence, has been mostly focusing on peace, security and crisis management without improving significant relations among the Western Balkans countries, fostering a greater democratization process and fight against

corruption (Miloshevska, 2017, 683-703). The critics argue that the EU frequently changed its strategy and used double standards in treating Western Balkans countries. In this regard, the Western Balkans countries are still in the process of transition, which significantly affect regional cooperation, the system of governance, the rule of law, democratization, economic development, human rights, equality, justice and freedom (Tzifakis, 2020, 197-205).

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Bosnia and Herzegovina is often regarded as a captured state because of very high levels of corruption and ineffectiveness of the system of governance, public administration, and the rule of law (Weber, 2017, 10-15). According to European Commission Report (2020a), the rule of law, the independent judiciary, the fight against corruption, the independent media and free elections are at a very low level, for a country aspiring to become an EU member. Since 1996 the elections have usually been misused for the revival of ethno-nationalist issues and further polarization of the society, without an exception for the last local elections that were held on November 15, 2020 (Huskić, 2019, 199-217). The Electoral Law and the election process as a whole have been challenged by almost all political parties due to its legitimacy and transparency, especially regarding the terms for running for the Presidency which is granted only to the members of constituent people, which is a clear violation of fundamental rights. However, after each election, the main ethno-nationalist political parties usually form a coalition and the government. One visible progress regarding the elections was the holding of local elections in Mostar for the first time since 2008 (Repovac-Nikšić, 2021, 30-39; Piacentini, 2020, 1-14). There is very strong pressure and control of the media, which mostly depends on the public budget. The media's questionable transparency furthermore affects the democratization process and fair and transparent elections. On the other hand, very few independent media stations and their journalists have been under tremendous political pressure and attacks (Gengo, Omerović and Ćendić, 2019, 73-93). Thus, the state institutions in terms of the rule of law and good governance have significantly deteriorated since the international community has transferred the responsibility to the local political leaders (Weber, 2017, 10-15). Citizens do not trust the judiciary because of very high corruption in this sector and very low efficiency, whereby the European Commission Report (2020a) clearly pointed to very low progress in the fight against corruption and organized crime. The state institutions are politicized and captured by the cartel, political and economic elites, whereby there is no separation of power across legislative, executive and judicial branches of governance. The reasons for this are inconsistent laws, ineffective coordination across different levels of governance and fragmented institutional structures. In this regard, the EU's famous fourteen priorities for its membership application request the

reforms and changes in public administration, democratic system, the rule of law, the state institutions, and fundamental rights (European Commission, 2019).

According to Freedom House (2021a) and Index of Economic Freedom (2021a), Bosnia and Herzegovina is still in a transition from a post-conflict state to democracy, seeking peace, stability and security. At the same time, the state is seeking the EU membership that is furthermore conditioned by a consensus at cantonal, entity and state levels. Ethnic, political and ideological issues overshadow real social and economic issues in turn keep the state in a permanent state of conflict and crisis (Mujkić, 2010, 123-132; Piacentini, 2020, 1-14). The constitutional rights and multi-layered system of governance have been continuously challenged by the political and ethno-nationalist populists (Weber, 2017, 10-15). The International Community and the Office of High Representative have not been active in fostering necessary reforms and changes, which eventually resulted in their retreat and transferring of such a responsibility to the local political leaders and actors. In the past decade, the local political elites and leaders have reversed reforms and brought back ethno-nationalist issues to the public sphere, which overshadow real democratic, social and economic aspects of life. Frequent calls for secession, referendums, political obstructions, corruption, and ethno-nationalism in the public sphere have become one of the main security challenges not only in Bosnia and Herzegovina but in the Western Balkans (Bassuener and Mujanović, 2017, 99-111). Ethnic divisions, legalized in Dayton Peace Agreement, significantly contributed towards the ethnification of politics, state institutions, political parties, sports, education and almost all other aspects of life. For instance, most of the political parties exclusively function along the ethnic lines and 'captured' territory, municipality, canton or entity. In this regard, the system of governance is primarily conditioned by ethnic interests, whereby the state efficiency is very low and as such cannot meet the international obligations set by the EU and NATO (Džihić, 2021, 13-15; Piacentini, 2020, 1-14).

Table 1: Democratic Indicators: Bosnia and Herzegovina

Indicator	Corruption Perception Index	Government Effectiveness	Control of Corruption	Index of Economic Freedom	Corruption Score	Democracy Score
Agency	*Transparency International*	*World Governance Indicators by World Bank*	*World Governance Indicators by World Bank*	*Heritage Foundation*	*Freedom House*	*Freedom House*
Score Year 2019-2020	**35/100 (country ranking 111)**	**-0.63 (country ranking 133)**	**-0.61 (country ranking 130)**	**62.9/100 (country ranking 82)**	**3.00/7.00**	**3.32/7.00**

Source: Author's Compilation

This brief analysis demonstrated that ethno-nationalism led towards the capture of the state in which corruption and misuse of ethnic rights have inhibited the reformation and transition of the state. In addition, lack of the democratization process has opened the door for Serbia and Croatia to misuse local political elites as proxies for the achievement of their national goals. In addition, the notion of failed state has been frequently used by both local and regional political leaders who began to question territorial integrity and sovereignty of the state. Such initiatives have been strongly supported by the calls for referendums and secession from Bosnia and Herzegovina (Bassuener and Mujanović, 2017, 99-111).

Serbia

The Republic of Serbia with its historical burdens, unstable democratization processes, old nation-state models and warlike relations with the neighbors is far away from being a consolidated democracy. Since 1990s, Serbia had a difficulty to replace nationalism and hegemonic nationalistic discourse and diplomacy with the democratization process. This socio-political environment inhibits democratization process because of the past events, war burdens and war like rhetoric's in the public sphere (Petrović and Wilson, 2018, 49-68). According to European Commission Report (2020b) Serbia has made a partial progress in the EU accession process, whereby 18 chapters out of 35 chapters have been opened and two of which provisionally closed during the observed period. However, the main obstacle in the accession process is the normalization of relations with Kosovo and pace of rule of law reforms. In the past few years the relations have deteriorated due to the formation of Kosovo army and introduction of additional tariffs on goods from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, which violated the provisions of CEFTA and SAA. In 2020, the leaders of Serbia and Kosovo met in Washington and reached an agreement on economic normalization (Muharremi, 2021, 1-7).

The ruling political parties and their programs are heavily based on the nationalism, which is another reason for the slow democratization process. Another problem is strong authoritarian political leadership, which is driven by local and regional spreading of nationalism. Such leadership prevails also within a single political party, where leader's authority is undeniable (Biber, 2018, 337-354). For instance, such circumstances are due to the centralization of power in the hands of the current president, Alexandar Vučić whose political party SNS gained more than 75 percent of seats in the 2020 Serbian parliamentary elections. Serbian local governance and municipalities has been firmly controlled by the SNS. Other municipalities under the control of the opposition parties were under strong pressure from SNS and the

ruling coalition. The elections, which are conducted on regular basis, often indicate irregularities, deficiencies and violations of election rules, especially claimed by the opposition political parties which called for the boycott of the elections. The election results demonstrated very high disparities between political parties in power and opposition political parties (Bursać and Vučićević, 2021, 1-12)

According to European Commission Report (2020b) and Freedom House (2021b), the Serbian democratic transition has been very slow, which perhaps has been inhibited by the issues with the neighbors. In addition, the democratization process, free and transparent electoral processes and impartiality of the media have deteriorated in the past decade. Although freedom of media is granted by the constitution, media freedom is at very low level and it has been steadily declining in recent years. The elections are free but with severe limitations of the media (Milinkov and Gruhonjić, 2021, 72-95). Although Serbia currently has significant number of registered civil society organizations, their activism, criticism of the ruling political elites and expressed dissatisfaction has not contributed towards greater democratization of the state. The civil society has very little influence on public policies, which are tightly controlled by the state authorities. Thus, an absence of liberal values and weak civil society hinders the democratization process. Such developments significantly prevented the emergence of alternative political parties that will challenge the political party in power (Bursać and Vučićević, 2021, 1-12). The alternative political options must expand their political programs and agendas from rigid Serbia-Kosovo relations to main local political issues related to the democratization process, the rule of law, equality, human rights and freedoms. These predicaments produce political instability, slow economic growth and development and democratization process.

Table 2: Democratic Indicators: Serbia

Indicator	Corruption Perception Index	Government Effectiveness	Control of Corruption	Index of Economic Freedom	Corruption Score	Democracy Score
Agency	*Transparency International*	*World Governance Indicators by World Bank*	*World Governance Indicators by World Bank*	*Heritage Foundation*	*Freedom House*	*Freedom House*
Score Year 2019-2020	38/100 (country ranking 94)	0.02 (country ranking 88)	-0.45 (country ranking 120)	67.2/100 (country ranking 54)	3.50/7.00	3.96/7.00

Source: Author's Compilation

The rule of law is significantly limited by the cartels and political elites who dominate the public sphere. This is coupled with organized crime and violence, which is closely connected with politics and state institutions. According to the Index of Economic Freedom (2021b) the fight against corruption has not improved, although it is one of the core problems in Serbia besides unemployment and poverty. Although there are examples of arrests for corruption, corruption is present across the public administration, including health care, education, administration and police. Then, the judicial framework and its independence are one of the most important steps towards joining the EU. Although there are signs of committed reforms, political influences and pressures are still evident. The laws are passed without a proper assessment, without significant involvement of the civil society, associations, trade unions, NGO-s and citizens.

Kosovo

Kosovo has been in the process of transition from being part of Serbian statehood to independence. Although troubled relations between Serbia and Kosovo started in the 1990s, a full-scale conflict resulted in the adoption of the UN Security Council Resolution 1199 in 1998, calling on Serbian and Kosovo authorities to cease fighting and to start negotiations. However, one year later a violation of international humanitarian law and war crimes against humanity by Milosevic's regime led to the international intervention and NATO bombings. After changing Milosevic's regime, renewed negotiations culminated in the adoption of the Ahtisaari Plan in 2007, which granted Kosovo's independence under international supervision. On February 17 2008, the Assembly of Kosovo adopted the Declaration of Independence (Rexhepi and Sahiti, 2021, 2019-2023). After the withdrawal of the Serbian army, the power was taken over by the international community. Since then Kosovo has been under the protectorate of the international community and continuous dialogue and negotiations have been taking place between Serbia and Kosovo but without a solution. On April 19, 2013, Kosovo and Serbia signed the Brussels Agreement, which granted an integration of autonomous Serb-majority municipalities into the Kosovo legal system. The agreement paved the way for ending parallel legal and institutional structures (Biber, 2015, 285-319; Ernst, 2014, 122-126). However, until today Kosovo Serbs continued to refuse Kosovo independence and their participation in the elections and constitutional bodies has been frequently a matter of dispute, negotiations and dialogue.

Kosovo-Serbian relations and mutual recognition have not been achieved in the past two decades, which affected Kosovo's transition to a democratic, independent and

free-market state. Kosovo's prolonged conflict resolution, coupled with the revival of Serbian and Albanian nationalist aspirations, significantly inhibited Kosovo's status in the international community. Although Kosovo is facing similar challenges as other Western Balkans states, the recognition issue and strained relations with Serbia significantly affect Kosovo's democratization process. On the other hand, due to strong support by Russia and China, Serbia has regained a stronger diplomatic position, which is evident in the frequent blocking of Kosovo's admission in main international organizations. Then, the European Union has been involved in the dialogue and negotiation process between Serbia and Kosovo, which has become a part of the Western Balkans EU enlargement strategy. Actually, mutual recognition is often seen as a precondition to the EU membership for both countries (Bashota and Dugolli, 2019, 125-149; Gashi, Musliu and Orbie, 2017, 533-550).

Kosovo's democratization process has been under international supervision because the state and all its constitutional bodies are obliged to cooperate with the international bodies. Then, according to the UN Security Council Resolution 1244, a military-technical agreement between NATO and Serbia, NATO (KFOR) is responsible for granting security and must prevent the renewal of violent conflicts. In addition, international bodies, like UNMIK and EULEX, have the mandate to investigate and prosecute war crimes, terrorism, organized crime and corruption (Muharremi, 2014, 719-733; Beha and Hajrullahu, 2020, 103-122). Thus, Kosovo's public administration has many shortcomings because of a power vacuum and the politicization of state institutions. According to European Commission Report (2020c) and Freedom House (2021c), corruption is one of the main problems in Kosovo, which inhibit domestic socio-political and economic progress, international credibility and meeting of the EU membership conditions. Although the Kosovo judiciary has improved after the signing of the Brussels Agreement, there is no pressing of corruption charges against high officials who have been involved in the corruption. Therefore, the independence of the judiciary has been frequently violated by the political interferences through the adoption of the budget and the dismissal of closed cases by the National Assembly. The courts are burdened with unresolved cases, including cases on violation of the rights of minorities. Civil society has also been actively involved in the political processes, public administration reforms, and monitoring of the implementation of the rule of law. Due to decentralized territorial organization, municipalities effectively manage the local system of governance, without significant pressures from state institutions and authorities. However, very low funding and resources of the municipalities inhibit the effective fulfillment of their political and administrative role. Municipalities funding mostly comes from the central government in the form

of grants. According to Freedom House (2021c) and Index of Economic Freedom (2020c), democratic capacities in Kosovo are still at a very low level, reflected in a weak system of governance. Kosovo has difficulty to cope with ethno-nationalism, internal tensions and nationalistic political issues. In addition, the political scene is dominated by ethno-national political elites who do not foster democratic and liberal values. Such political parties grant to their members certain social and economic benefits due to party support and loyalty.

Table 3: Democratic Indicators: Kosovo

Indicator	Corruption Perception Index	Govern-ment Effec-tiveness	Control of Corruption	Index of Economic Freedom	Corrup-tion Score	Democra-cy Score
Agency	*Transparen-cy Interna-tional*	*World Governance Indicators by World Bank*	*World Governance Indicators by World Bank*	*Heritage Foundation*	*Freedom House*	*Freedom House*
Score Year 2019-2020	**36/100 (country ranking 104)**	**No Data**	**No Data**	**66.5/100 (country ranking 58)**	**2.25/7.00**	**3.14/7.00**

Source: Author's Compilation

Kosovo's electoral system and election processes, as a key democratic indicator, have been often questioned. According to European Commission Report (2020c) and Freedom House (2021c), the parliamentary elections of October 2019 were held without major incidents and as such were rated as free, competitive and transparent. Minor irregularities and pressures were registered in the Serb-populated areas, including the vote-counting process. Similarly so, on February 14 2021, Kosovo's parliamentary elections were rated as free and transparent. Kosovo's media sector operates according to well-established liberal norms. However, the digital media with online free access, which has become the main source of information in the digital world, including in Kosovo, provides questionable news without a formal verification process, transparency and reliability. Such trends have especially increased due to the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic (Gërguri, 2021, 312-322)

Montenegro

After the 1990s, Montenegro decided to stay in a common state with Serbia until delayed independence in 2006. The independence was achieved after the referendum

in which 55.5 percent of citizens voted for the independence and 44.5 percent voted for the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro. Referendum divisions, mostly based on the national divisions of Serbs and Montenegrins, have remained to this very day (Kelmendi and Pedraza, 2021, 1-5). The Serbia-Montenegro relations were furthermore affected due to the recognition of Kosovo in 2008, whereby Serbia declared Montenegro ambassador a persona non-grata. This decision also affected a border dispute between Montenegro and Serbia. Serbia refused to discuss borders because Montenegro considers Kosovo a state, and in effect recognizes Kosovo's borders, which are considered by Serbia its own state borders. These disputes also provoked discussions about the position of Serbs in Montenegro, their religion, language, culture, ethnicity and nationality. Such claims aroused because according to the 2011 census, 44.98 percent are Montenegrins, 28.73 percent are Serbs, 8.65 percent are Bosniaks and 4.91 percent are Albanians. This is closely related to an issue of dual citizenship, which Montenegro has not signed with any country in the region. In 2010, Montenegro received the status of a candidate for EU membership, which required the completion of several regional infrastructure projects, like the construction of Corridor 11, which became a subject of dispute between Serbia and Montenegro too. Montenegro aspirations to NATO membership have been strongly opposed by Serbia, which reached its climax with full membership in 2017 (Petrović and Wilson, 2018, 54-55; Katnić and Lukušić, 2016, 689-709). Serbia-Montenegro relations furthermore strained due to the church-state relations and the *Law on Freedom of Religion,* which was strongly opposed by the Serbian Orthodox Church. The Serbian Orthodox Church was against the article according to which the religious communities must prove ownership of their properties that were built or were state-owned before 1918. In the case they cannot prove it; the property will be registered as state property (Hilton Saggau, 2019, 21-23). Although the former regime lost the elections and the party of Milo Đukanović was ousted from power, the new pro-Serbian government could not solve this issue.

According to European Commission Report (2020d) and Freedom House (2021d) recent period was marked by the political tensions and ineffectiveness of state institutions and bodies. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the parliament was not active enough while the elections were competitive, fair and transparent. The elections took place in the highly polarized and fragmented environment over the issue of church, state and national identity. The elections resulted in the change of the ruling majority coalition, the new ruling majority (Davidović, 2021, 743-746). The new parliamentary majority has difficulty to secure the required majority for the *Law on Freedom of Religion* and important judicial appointments. Then, although

some progress was made, the system of governance needs to strengthen transparency, participation and capacity to implement reforms. Montenegro moderately developed its public administration and the reforms included the implementation of the law on civil servants. However, there is an urgent need for the depoliticisation of public administration and its optimization and managerial accountability. Montenegro moderately reformed its judiciary and there is a need for continuous work and reform to apply the EU judicial standards and norms. Montenegrin judiciary furthermore needs independence, professionalism, efficiency and accountability. As stated above, the judicial court needs to re-appoint seven court presidents. Montenegro made limited progress in the fight against corruption. Although, the Anti-Corruption Agency has strengthened its capacity building and technical assistance, the reforms and changes must be completed regarding its independence, priority-setting, approach and decision-making processes. Strong political will is required to tackle high-level corruption, in which high-ranking political figures have been involved. The fight against organized crime also requires similar reforms and changes. Some progress has been made in the fight against terrorism and cooperation with the other Western Balkans countries.

Table 4: Democratic Indicators: Montenegro

Indicator	Corruption Perception Index	Govern-ment Effec-tiveness	Control of Corruption	Index of Economic Freedom	Corrup-tion Score	Democra-cy Score
Agency	*Transparen-cy Interna-tional*	*World Governance Indicators by World Bank*	*World Governance Indicators by World Bank*	*Heritage Foundation*	*Freedom House*	*Freedom House*
Score Year 2019-2020	**36/100 (country ranking 104)**	**0.16 (country ranking 75)**	**-0.03 (country ranking 82)**	**63.4/100 (country ranking 80)**	**3.00/7.00**	**3.82/7.00**

Source: Author's Compilation

According to European Commission Report (2020d), Montenegro made some progress on an advancement of its fundamental rights, which has been significantly addressed within the legislative and institutional frameworks. In 2020, the law on same-sex couples was enacted by the Parliament. Then the capacities of human rights institutions, ministries and Ombudsperson's office have been improved. However, ethnically and religiously motivated attacks have increased, discrimination against

minorities, gender-based violence and violence against children remain of serious concern. The freedom of expression has not been significantly tackled because of arrests of editors and citizens for their posts on online portals. Cases of attacks against journalists have not been resolved, including the 2004 murder of the editor-in-chief of the daily newspaper. Finally, concerns remain regarding the national public broadcaster, its funding, independence and professionalism. Montenegro's tackling of migrations in the past few years demonstrated upward trends, regarding migrant's apprehension, asylum-seeking, illegal entries and illegal exits. Montenegro must continue to cope with migratory pressure within the international framework and cooperation with the other countries. According to the Index of Economic Freedom (2020d), Montenegro moderately developed its market economy but due to low investment growth and the COVID-19 pandemic, there is an economic slowdown. These challenges significantly affected the financial sector, labor market and labor activation (Kantić and Bošković, 2019, 9-22). With regards to good neighborly relations, Montenegro has remained committed to good relations with all Western Balkans countries with and exception of Serbia. The bilateral relations with Serbia were marked by tensions.

North Macedonia

After a national referendum for independence, with 95 percent support, in October 1991 Macedonia proclaimed its independence from Yugoslavia and became the Republic of Macedonia. However, because of early pressures from Greece, it was recognized as the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYRoM). Since 2001, Macedonia began the process of stabilization and association, gained an official candidacy status and in 2020 opened the accession of negotiations with the EU. According to the European Commission Report (2020e), North Macedonia was granted accession of negotiations due to its sustainable and tangible results in the judiciary fight against corruption and organized crime, intelligence services reform and public administration. In the same year, North Macedonia became the 30th member of NATO (Daskalovski, 2019, 63-73; Šorović, 2019, 87-107).

According to European Commission Report (2020e) and Freedom House (2020e), North Macedonia made significant efforts in the implementation of the EU-related reforms, which in effect contributed towards fostering the democratization process. The parliamentary democratic development has enabled political parties to support the EU-related reforms and the NATO integration processes (Demaja, 2020, 9-16). Political parties agreed on early parliamentary elections in July 2020, whereby a technical government was appointed according to the national legislature. The elections were assessed as competitive, fair and transparent. After the elections, the

newly constituted parliament continued to strengthen inter-ethnic relations according to the requirements of the *Ohrid Framework Agreement*, which ended the 2001 conflict. The government and the civil society have played an active role in the implementation of the *Strategy and Action Plan for the Cooperation between Government and Civil Society* (2018-2020). As a result of the intelligence service reforms, the National Security Agency became more independent unlike the former *Bureau for Security and Counterintelligence* (UBK). North Macedonia moderately improved its public administration through transparency the operationalisation, monitoring of public spending and adoption of the *Transparency Strategy* (2019-2021). Allegations of nepotism, cronyism and political influence in the public sector have been properly monitored by the *State Commission for Prevention of Corruption* (Rexha and Reka, 2021, 43-54). Although the judicial system has been subject to different reforms, additional efforts are needed to implement action plans and judicial reform strategies. However current reforms and mechanisms ensure judicial independence, accountability and public trust. North Macedonian fight against corruption has been proactive, whereby high-level corruption cases have been prosecuted. This is coupled with the fight against organized crime and fight against terrorism.

Table 5: Democratic Indicators: North Macedonia

Indicator	Corruption Perception Index	Govern-ment Effec-tiveness	Control of Corruption	Index of Economic Freedom	Corrup-tion Score	Democra-cy Score
Agency	*Transparen-cy Interna-tional*	*World Governance Indicators by World Bank*	*World Governance Indicators by World Bank*	*Heritage Foundation*	*Freedom House*	*Freedom House*
Score Year 2019-2020	35/100 (country ranking 111)	0.00 (country ranking 90)	-0,41 (country ranking 82)	68.6/100 (country ranking 46)	3.25/7.00	3.82/7.00

Source: Author's Compilation

North Macedonia has significantly harmonized its legal framework on fundamental rights with the EU standards. The legal framework effectively tackles violation of human rights, children's rights, gender-based violence, hate speech gender equality and alike. Then, the freedom of expression and media freedom has been moderately implemented. However, there is a need for self-regulated efforts by the media, its independence, professionalization, investigative reporting and resilience against the

spreading of disinformation and hate speech. This is coupled with media financial sustainability and political independence. North Macedonia has developed good relations with the Balkans countries, especially due to the adoption of the *Prespa Agreement* and the *Treaty on Good Neighbourly Relations with Bulgaria*. This cooperation is also visible in tackling migration flows. Finally, according to the Index of Economic Freedom (2020e), North Macedonia developed its market economy according to the EU standards but the COVID-19 pandemic significantly affected the economic growth and development. The state has introduced different measures to support companies and citizens to tackle the negative impact of the economic crisis.

The Western Balkans Responding to Cosmopolitized World

Beck (2006a) presented the cosmopolitan models that shall inevitably direct the world to respond collectively to the global risks. In this regard, these models could be meaningfully applied in the Western Balkans in strengthening democratic capacities, socio-economic development, security and regional cooperation, which goes beyond the basic flow of capital, goods, services and people. That is why current platforms for cooperation like the South-East European Cooperation Process (SEECP), the Western Balkans Six (WB6), Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA), Mini-Schengen and the latest Common Regional Market (CRM) could not produce desirable results because of an exclusive emphasis on economic cooperation only. Furthermore, numerous free trade agreements failed in the creation of an integrated regional economic and trade market, based on cooperation and healthy competition. The side-effects of such approaches are visible in the very low competitiveness of the Western Balkans countries in comparison to the rest of the world. In effect, cosmopolitan models may challenge and eventually replace the classical nation-state models and ethno-nationalism.

The Western Balkans countries must modify the old nation-state models with emerging cosmopolitan models because such changes are preconditions for their EU membership. The European Union is strongly grounded on postmodern cosmopolitan models and not on the old nation-state models. Unfortunately, the socio-cultural, political and economic integration and interdependence of the Western Balkans today is at a very low level in comparison to the former Ottoman and Yugoslavian times. The basic analysis would indicate that the Western Balkans countries have developed parallel security, economic, socio-political, financial, energy, tourism, scientific and technological structures that have not been harmonized within the region. Therefore, to what extent the Balkans states are ready to modify their rigid nation-state models with

emerging postmodern cosmopolitan models? Certainly, such changes and transitions would determine the future of this region in relation to the EU and the global world and its position in an integrated global world.

The Balkans savage, divisive, disintegrative, and the backward representation of the region, could be replaced with the cosmopolitan model of involuntary enlightenment that was introduced by Beck (2006a). Such models could also challenge the Western Balkan's cultural and psycho-social closeness and xenophobia towards anything that is foreign, which had created the resistance to necessary postmodern changes and transitions (Mulalić, 2013, 37-49). According to Beck (2006a) *involuntary enlightenment*, represented in the common risks and threats, inevitably cause the world to engage in the discourse and to initiate the collective action. The environmental problems and catastrophes move the world towards inescapable local, regional and global reflexive reactions and cooperation. In this regard, the Western Balkans countries must develop public consciousness regarding global interdependence, whereby small and isolated nations cannot cope alone with emerging risks and threats. For instance, the Western Balkans countries have been frequently affected by floods, snowdrifts, wildfires, landslides, earthquakes and droughts. Although a temporary solidarity and collective reaction to such risks, threats and natural disasters is often express, regional strategic coordination and risk management are lacking as instruments in the Western Balkans. It is important to mention that besides coordinated action and proper utilization of resources, the Western Balkans countries may foster dialogue and cooperation in tackling common environmental and natural threats and disasters. The Western Balkans countries have a responsibility to tackle environmental and climatic changes, including pollution, global warming, waste disposal, deforestation, soil degradation and air pollution. Since all these environmental challenges and problems do not recognize ethnicity, ideology, nation and specific geography, the Western Balkans countries have a space for dialogue, cooperation and coordinated action. Such emphasis would significantly replace the diplomatic focus on old harmful topics related to history, conflicts, borders, ethnicities and animosities,

Beck (2006a) argues that the global risks shall *enforce communication across different borders*, including the borders in the Western Balkans countries. Risks and threats compel the people, leaders and governments to engage in the dialogic democratic discourse, which goes beyond emancipatory politics, narratives and ideologies. Dialogic democratic discourse takes place even among staunch enemies, and especially those who aim at reflexive coping with risks and threats. Risks bring the people together, whereby they utilize the public sphere constructively and attempt to

come up with solutions and remedies to emerging risks, threats and calamities (Levy, 2017, 56-67). Thus, the Western Balkans countries must consider openness that will furthermore foster economic and political dialogue and freedoms. For instance, the Western Balkans countries share the rivers, without considering the proper utilization of such natural resources. This could be a platform for a broader Western Balkans environmental dialogue that involves the citizens, private sector, public sector, and the global community. On the contrary, a wave of hydropower plants on the banks of rivers and streams has provoked only individual and civil society outcry. This challenge and as well as the COVID-19 pandemic could become effective platforms for effective dialogic communication across borders, which may in turn amount to coordinated and collective action in the Western Balkans.

The tragic events, disasters, catastrophes and suffering often cause *political catharsis*, which becomes the common language not only among the common people, leaders and the global community (Beck 2006a). The common tragedies may often become an opportunity for dialogue and reconciliation, like the recent earthquake in Croatia. Then, the past historical events, conflicts and wars in the Western Balkans, contributed to the common tragedies on all sides, which could be used for fostering peace, forgiveness, reconciliation and catharsis. Instead of the memory politics and misuse of the commemorations, these events could be used for reconciliation and catharsis, making them a part of the common Western Balkans history, like after the Hundred Year War, Thirty-Year War, the American Civil War, just to name few. Therefore, reassessment of the past and the political catharsis may reduce the burden of the past events and tragedies, which are the main reason for prolonged mistrust between the Western Balkans countries.

The Western Balkans countries may overcome the nation-state container by participating in tackling the global and shared risks. Beck (2006a) argued that global risks would eventually lead towards the *enforced cosmopolitanism* because risks do not recognize geographical boundaries. For instance, the economic and financial crises in interconnected economic and financial systems do not recognize nation-state borders. Failure to manage economic and financial crisis affects economic growth, high unemployment, income deterioration, economic competitiveness, trade, foreign direct investment and poverty. Then, health risks beyond national borders require coordinated action, like in the case of the COVID-19 pandemic. Such coordinated efforts are inevitable for the prevention of spreading of diseases and for the safe mobility of people, goods and services. Besides, many other global threats like the destruction of ecosystem, cyber-attacks, recession, natural disasters, water crisis,

governance failure, terrorist attacks, pandemics, inter-state polarization and conflicts, climate change and others may become a good platform for the Western Balkans countries to enhance their cooperation through enforced cosmopolitanism, These challenges require a global response, whereby the Western Balkans countries may participate more effectively in tackling global risks.

In the postmodern world, the system of governance has been challenged, whereby global risks and governmental wake-up led to the alternative *global system of governance and international legalism* (Beck 2006a). Since national action is not sufficient, global world interdependence requires global political action and governance. Thanks to the digital world, media and communication, the old understanding of nation-state borders and sovereignty have significantly changed. In the postmodern world, transparent and open borders and shared sovereignty had prevailed. In this regard, in today's world financial system, security system, economic system and governance operate within supranational space. According to Brűhl and Rittberger (2001), "global governance is the output of a non-hierarchical network of international and transnational institutions: not only IGOs and international regimes but also transnational regimes are regulating actors' behavior" (2). The global system of governance and internationalization inevitably brings together different actors to tackle collectively the issues of peace, security, justice, mediation, economics, trade and finance. Thus, the global system of governance is conditioned with risk and risk management, often caused by different humane and technological factors. In this regard, the Western Balkans countries should use the opportunities of the global system of governance to move from being an object of international politics towards being the subject and participatory actor in tackling global risks. In order to do away with the international tutelage, the Western Balkans countries must initiate and create their own progressive social, political and economic agenda, attuned with the global prospects.

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FRAMING THE WESTERN BALKANS COOPERATION THROUGH SEECP

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The Southeast European Cooperation Process (SEECP) is one of the main platforms for the cooperation and preparation for the Balkan region for EU membership. However, the decades-long platform has been limited to annual meetings of regional politicians without significant substantial effects for any of the SEECP member countries. As the platform was launched under the umbrella of the EU during the mid-1990s, the weakening of the Unions' influence, the rise of regional powers like Turkey and the restoration of Greco-Turkish rivalry in the Aegean Sea challenged the platform's role, survival and future. On the other hand, SEECP neglects an active work on cultural cooperation among the Balkan nation-states, which share a long mutual history. This chapter explores the premise that increasing the emphasis on common Balkan culture and heritage in the platform and slight re-shifting it from EU umbrella to real regional cooperation with common Balkan culture at its center would inject a necessary spirit in the platform that would eventually make it more relevant for the regional countries.

Introduction

Southeast European Cooperation Process (SEECP) is a regional initiative launched in June 1996 in the Bulgarian capital Sofia. This platform brought to cooperation 13 countries of the wider Balkan region (Regional Cooperation Council, 2013). [1] The founding states are Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Greece, North Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, and Turkey, while Croatia joined in 2005, Moldova in 2006, Montenegro in 2007, Slovenia in 2010, and finally Kosovo in 2014. The initial idea was to have a "voice of the region" in a political sense (Ministry of Defense of the

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[1] Turkey and Moldova are also participating in the platform.

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Republic of Serbia). The platform was supposed to assist the participating countries in their path towards full integration into the European Union and NATO, by focusing on four different areas of cooperation such as security, economy, culture, and legal issues. As it is stated in the main Charter of the platform; *"the main objectives are to enhancement of political and security cooperation, fostering economic cooperation, enlargement of cooperation in the fields of human dimension, democracy, justice, and combating illegal activities"* (Regional Cooperation Council). The original name of the initiative was "The process of good neighborly relations, stability, security, and cooperation among SEE (Southeast European) countries", which later was renamed into the present name. The essential document of the platform is the *Charter on Good-Neighborly Relations, Stability, Security and Cooperation in SEE* adopted in Bucharest in 2000 (SEECP Participating Countries, 2000). The launching meeting was attended by the Contact Group of Five (USA, UK, Russia, France, and Germany) and international organizations like UN, European Union, OSCE, Central European Initiative (CEI), Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) and others (Regional Secretariat for Parliamentary Cooperation in South-East Europe).

The member states meet annually at the level of Heads of State/Government, Ministers of Foreign Affairs, and Political Directors of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs under the chair of the participant country, which is having a one-year mandate rotating every year. In the annual, meetings are held of so-called "Troika of the SEECP", which brings together representatives of current, past, and future SEECP Chair-in-Office. The purpose of the Troika meetings is to "ensure continuity of activities" (Turkish Chairmanship in Office of the SEECP 2020-21, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, 2020). A chairing country has the right "to invite another non-regional country, international organization, and other regional initiatives" to the annual SEECP meetings (Southeast European Cooperation Process, 2012). Decisions within the SEECP are made by the consensus of the participating member states (Turkish Chairmanship in Office of the SEECP 2020-21, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, 2020).

The Regional Cooperation Council (RCC)
The main operational body of the SEECP is the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), which is financed by the European Union. The Council was launched in 2008 in Sofia at the meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the SEECP replacing Stability Pact (Regional Cooperation Council).[2] Stability Pact was an EU-founded platform

[2]The Stability Pact was launched in 1999 by the European Union. It was active between 1999 and 2008 and included majority of the Balkan countries like Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, North Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania and Serbia.

and acted more Europe-wide with a wide network of observers and supporting partner countries that are not located in the region. By founding the RCC the aim was to have more of a "regionally owned and led cooperation framework" (Statute of the Regional Cooperation Council-RCC, 2007; Regional Cooperation Council, 2013). Sarajevo was chosen to host the permanent office of the Secretariat of the RCC, while there is also Liaison Office headquartered in Brussels. Its operations are chaired by the Secretary-General. The RCC meets three times a year. The main duty of the RCC is "to provide the SEECP with operational capacities through its Secretariat and task forces" (Regional Cooperation Council). Among other obligations is to work closely with the governments and other regional cooperation mechanisms. Besides the thirteen SEECP members, the RCC has other supporting members formed of sovereign states, multilateral organizations, regional initiatives, thus making it in total 46 different political entities (Regional Cooperation Council).

The RCC is responsible for organizing coordination meetings with the SEECP. After the RCC's Board meetings, the Secretariat of the RCC, SEECP Troika, and the EU representatives come together to discuss the relevant agenda issues. These coordination meetings are co-chaired by the Secretary-General of the RCC and The SEECP Chairmanship in Office (Representatives of the country presiding that year). The RCC also organizes its annual meetings that are held back-to-back after the annual SEECP Summits.

Contextualizing the SEECP

The end of the Cold War and the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement, which has ended a bloody Bosnian War (1992-1995), signaled a need for a new set of political arrangements in the region. The majority of the Balkan states, except for Greece and Turkey, just got rid of the oppressive Socialist regimes. There was a need for a political platform that would make the transitional period smoother and that would boost regional cooperation. A region that in the past was known for inter-state and ethnic violence was economically and demographically destitute. The Old geopolitical division of the Cold War, which would divide the region into two different ideological camps was gone. With the West's victory during the Cold War and the dissolution of the Soviet Union for almost all of the Balkan states, there was not a doubt in which direction to look in a geopolitical sense. With the small exception of Moldova, which was still feeling the strong grip of the Kremlin[3] and the Federative Republic

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[3] Ethnic minority of Russians living in Moldova together with pro-Russian supporters proclaimed a quasi state of Transnistria. Moldovan political scene is still divided over pro-European and pro-Russian political forces.

of Yugoslavia[4] which was struggling under the internationally isolated authoritarian regime of Slobodan Milosević, almost the entire region was interested in integrating with the EU and NATO. At the first meeting in Sofia, it was stated that Balkan as a region should be "transformed in line with the general developments throughout the continent and to provide a region's contribution to the construction of a new Europe" (Meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Countries of South-Eastern Europe, 1996).

Even before the 1996 meeting in the Bulgarian capital, there were some minor initiatives for regional cooperation. The first concrete steps in articulating a regional voice happened during the meetings of Balkans countries in Belgrade in 1988 and later in Tirana in 1990 (Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Countries of South-Eastern Europe, 1996). The eruption of violence in the states of Former Yugoslavia interrupted this process. When the Bosnian War ended with the NATO intervention, this provided an opportunity for Balkan states to come together in 1996 and form what later will be known as SEECP. A document called *Sofia Declaration* was adopted at the first meeting in 1996. Four priorities were emphasized in the document (Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Countries of South-Eastern Europe, 1996).

- Regional security by enhancing good-neighborly relations and mutual trust, security-building measures;
- Economic growth by developing economic cooperation through encouraging cross-border cooperation, upgrading the transport, telecommunications and energy infrastructure, trade and investment promotion;
- Social and cultural development: promotion of humanitarian cooperation by improving social and cultural contacts between countries.
- Legal issues and the crime: Cooperation in the field of justice, the combating of organized crime, illicit drug and arms trafficking, and the elimination of terrorism; (Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Countries of South-Eastern Europe, 1996).

Based on the priorities stated in the Sofia Declaration, the process of good neighborly relations, stability, security, and cooperation among the SEE (Southeast European) countries (Later SEECP) was created to focus on four different issues in the region; security, economy, culture and legal issues. However, what the impact of the SEECP was in improving the conditions in the four mentioned areas.

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[4] It was a state union between Serbia, with Kosovo as a province, and Montenegro that has existed under this name between 1992 and 2003. Between 2003 and 2006 this union will be named Serbia and Montenegro. In 2006 Montenegro proclaimed an independence from the union.

SEECP Regional Security

Security is historically one of the most important issues in the Balkans. The end of the Cold War order caused another period of instability. A big part of the peninsula was torn by decade-long wars in the Former Yugoslavia (1991-2001) (Finlan, 2004). After the Yugoslav Wars, as the United States launched a Global War on Terror the issue of security once again came to the focal point. With Washington's pressure, many Neo-Wahhabi cells were cracked down in the parts of the peninsula where Muslims constitute a majority (Bougarel, 2018, p. 349, 350). [5] Another serious security issue during the 1990s and 2000s was organized crime. Due to state failure in places like Albania, Kosovo or Serbia organized crime flourished significantly (Atanasijevic, 2010, p. 149-155). Many governments had a hard time controlling crime. Because of the region's geographical position and the failure of the states, the Balkans became the main heroin route flowing from Asia to Europe. With dozens of operations, the problem of gang violence was reduced, but the region continues to serve as the main hub for drug trade into Europe.

For all those reasons, SEECP has recognized security as one of the most pressing regional issues. The problem of terrorism, drug trade, and inflammatory ethnic nationalism is often raised at the SEECP meetings (Summit of the South East European Cooperation Process-SEECP Declaration, 2019). It would be wrong to claim that the region has healed from the mentioned problems, but as years are passing, some minor improvements are noticeable. Especially terrorism is not causing a significant security threat anymore. Drug trade continues but never had the potential to create destabilization like for instance ethno-nationalism or terrorism did. When it comes to populist-nationalist rhetoric, the progress is probably the least. On the other hand, fragmented political will, aging of the population, the possibility of emigration to more developed countries, and the West's instituted security apparatus are all lowering the chances for a possible conflict. Overall, the region today is not even as closely unstable as it was during the 1990s or early 2000s. This does not mean that the security concerns are gone. Still there are pressing issues with the potential to turn into a serious crisis. The new sets of instabilities are threatening the region, which requires a serious engagement of the SEECP and other relevant institutions, among which the most current is the migrant crisis. In addition, unresolved bilateral issues, ethnic nationalism, and many others are waiting to be sufficiently dealt with.

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[5] After the 9/11 attacks the West started seeing foreign fighters from the Muslim World that came to fight alongside Bosniaks during the war as a serious security problem. After the pressure from the Washington many NGOs that were related to Gulf Arab states or Iran were forcibly closed down.

SEECP Economic Cooperation

As one of the poorest parts of Europe with high unemployment rates, economic underperformance in potential is generating security concerns in the region. Quite opposite to what the SEECP actively working on in previous decades, the region is still not integrated enough. Especially when compared to other parts of the European continent the lack of regional integration and economic cooperation is creating even less chance for economic improvement. For that reason, SEECP has committed to actively work on promoting economic integration in the region and helping regional states to economically prosper together. When it comes to cross-border trade economy is still a victim of politics. Economic cooperation is often a victim of bad bilateral relations. This most clearly is seen in the case of Kosovo and Serbia. Despite being neighbors and having all the potential for a successful trade of goods, Serbia is poorly represented among Kosovo's trading partners. Kosovar goods are even less represented in the Serbian market, not making it even among top ten trading partners (Републички завод за статистику, 2020). Bad economic performance for decades is triggering economic emigration from the region, which further hardens the awaited development. The economy also created demographic problems in the region. Emigration rates are alarming. Just in six years period, from 2013 to 2019, more than half a million people, making it 15 percent of the overall population emigrated from Bosnia-Herzegovina (Radio Slobodna Evropa, 2019). Insufficient transport links between the states is another problem that makes it harder for the region to economically prosper. Although the SEECP cannot enforce economic measures on regional states, neither it can invest in the infrastructural projects, it could and should serve as a catalyst and a moderator of more economic cooperation between its members, helping to fight corruption, nepotism, and suspicious foreign investments that is coming from countries like Russia and China.

SEECP's and RCC's role in economic activities in the region should be more visible if it wants to keep the region's geopolitical priorities to remain oriented towards the EU and NATO. If it remains to be irrelevant in helping the economic cooperation it might leave the region to the populist economic ideas like the recent 'Mini-Schengen' initiative was. It was solely promoted by Albanian President Edi Rama (Simić, 2019). The idea immediately caught the attention of other states like Kosovo, North Macedonia, and Serbia. It proved that bilateralism, and populism given the fact that nothing was achieved in creating the trade zone, is still one of the main driving forces in the region.

Social and Cultural Programs of the SEECP

Balkans is a unique and culturally rich part of Europe. The historical experience through which the region has passed created an interesting blending of different cultures. SEECP among its activities has the idea of "improving social and cultural contacts between the member countries" (Meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Countries of SEE, 1996. p. 13). Despite all potential, the cultural cooperation in the region seems deficient. Especially the cooperation that goes through SEECP is minimal. As one of the primary reasons for launching the platform was to help to integrate the region to the EU, most of the cultural and social programs are in the spirit of EU-Atlantic integration. The cultural and social activities are directed towards the EU rather than creating a cultural platform that would bear a regional spirit. Populism in the member states and ethno-nationalism are diminishing any serious work on social and cultural integration. Generating a regional cultural synergy is even more threatened by populist ethno-nationalism. Without the elimination of harmful dynamics, it would not be enough to speak about the social and cultural integration of the region. Once region-wide sport and cultural competitions like the Balkan Athletics Championship that is organized since 1929 or ABA Basketball League that has united national basketball leagues of the former Yugoslav states were promoted by the regional states. Those events serve as a good hub for socio-cultural integration. For a long time, we don't witness the launching of similar events. All the existent ones are organized by the vibrant private and corporate sector rather than there is a political logic behind them. In order for the region to socio-culturally integrate more there should be more reception for those ideas from the states and multilateral organizations. SEECP has the potential to do much more in promoting regional events that would boost social and cultural cooperation between the states.

SEECP and Legal Issues

Almost all of the member states are struggling with the rule of law. The legal system remains one of the main problems in the region. As it is stated in the Sofia Declaration, SEECP is willing to work on "cooperation in the field of justice, the combating of organized crime, illicit drug, and arms trafficking and the elimination of terrorism" ((Meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Countries of SEE, 1996. p. 13). Besides organized crime and terrorism that are already mentioned, almost all of the member states are having chronic problems with the legal system. The region is still among the most corrupted ones. A weak legal system paved the way for systematic corruption and nepotism. Besides the classical political or societal corruption, judiciary systems in many Balkan states are also corrupted. Corruption in the judicial and legal system is one of the main generators of dissatisfaction among the general

population. Opinion polls indicate that the distrust towards the justice system and widespread corruption are important sources of frustrations causing youth to emigrate. Judicial systems are least trusted among the public institutions (Regional Cooperation Council, 2019). On the other hand, dissatisfaction that is forcing people to emigrate is one of the most serious generators of economic underperformance. The stability of the legal system, thus, is a very important element for the region to economic prosperity.

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THE MINI-SCHENGEN AS A FUTURE FRAMEWORK FOR THE WESTERN BALKANS MULTILATERAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION

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Multilateral economic cooperation between states belonging to the same geographical region has a special role in the future of the region concerned. In addition to economic development, this organisation provides an opportunity for the harmonization of the laws of the participating states, a review of the border control and customs systems, and more effective coordination on the field of different politics. The number of multilateral economic cooperation increased with the end of the bipolar era. The European Union aimed to achieve a level of cooperation that goes beyond trade and economic integration. As a result, the Maastricht Treaty and the Treaty of Lisbon gave birth to today's EU, which is a single and uniform legal and economic area. Under the current negotiations, the "Mini-Schengen Area" would cover a significant part of the Western Balkans. The resulting cooperation would serve as a model for the Schengen Area established by the EU in 1995. According to current plans, the result of the integration would be a single economic area. In addition to the commercial and financial benefits, the establishment of the Mini-Schengen would make significant progress in harmonizing the civil law, border and customs administrations of the participating states. This could have a significant impact on the future accession of the countries belonging to the Mini-Schengen Area to the EU.

Nature of Regional Economic Integrations

The number of regional economic and political integrations grew after World War II. In the period between 1945 and 1990, their purpose was to ensure a closer connection to an array of great powers in the bipolar world order. Due to the growth of the internal

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structural crisis of the Soviet Union, some integrations with Eastern orientation disappeared, others became open to the former "capitalist states".This new approach is called "open regionalism", the essence of which is that states that can be linked to a given geographical region are willing to work closely with other states for economic reasons (Annamaria, 2009, 4-5).

The common benefits of integration include improved competitiveness, the four fundamental freedoms of the market and the strengthening of the cross-border role of businesses. This phenomenon arises in the context of integration because the free movement of capital and people (including labor) makes factors of production not previously present in each state available in the internal market (such as skilled labor or the inflow of foreign direct investment). New resources will become available among the States Parties in the frame of the integration after its foundation. In previous millennia, new labor and capital growth-enhancing capital injections were available to states only through conquest or after the establishment of a subordinate or superior relationship with another state actor.

Characteristically, in antiquity and in the Middle Ages the horizontal cooperation in a multilateral forum was conceivable only in a narrow circle, in the field of trade for the feudal ruling class (Eliyahu, 2014, 126). Today, with the development of international trade relations, a global system of multilateral, regional economic integrations has emerged. Regional integrations orient the participating states towards economic unification and cooperation. Levels of economic integration and their content:

Table 1 Regional Integration
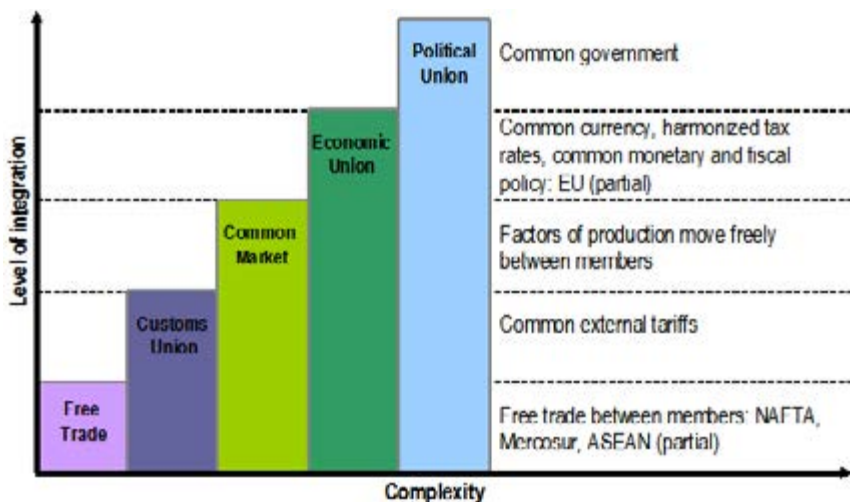
Source: Rodrigue, 2014

In general, integrations reach the level of an area with a single internal market and rarely move beyond the level of monetary union. A fictive border on this field is the abandonment of the national currency because it already means the abandonment of the independence of monetary policy which is an essential element of sovereignty. Openness to integration shows significant differences globally. European states show a much greater willingness to integrate due to their "geographical proximity" and centuries of trade history, so it is not surprising that the EU has reached the level of political integration in its purest form.

Another major regional integration of the European continent is the CIS, which has not reached the level of EU integration (Mehdi, 2016, 13-14; 75-78 and 170-179). The reason for this is that the CIS was not formed along the lines of the equality of the member states, but in order to inherit Soviet power and maintain the dependence of the former Soviet member states from Russia. In the 1990s, a group of CIS member states successfully worked within the organization to maintain its foreign policy independence from Russia while maintaining economic cooperation. These political aspirations have led to a situation of military conflict between Russia and some Member States gravitating out of integration (Bruna, et al., 1998, 12). The CIS is currently an internally shared integration because the groups formed by each Member State have reached a different level of integration (Evgeny, 218, 25).

The European regional integration organization with Mini-Schengen-related features is the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA) (Cameron, 2002, 102-103). At the beginning of the post-bipolar era, the founding states considered it a common goal to meet the conditions for EU membership in addition to trade cooperation. There has been a significant change in the membership of the organization over the past 30 years. Due to the close economic co-operation between the current members of the EU and CEFTA the founders all became members of the EU in 2004, so their CEFTA membership was terminated. It has since become a practice within the organization that the former CEFTA members terminate the membership in this organisation in the same time of entering to the EU (Ibid., 100-109). The organization can be joined by a country that concludes an accession treaty with the EU, is a member of the WTO and concludes a free trade agreement with other CEFTA members. Due to its close relationship with the EU, CEFTA has become an "incubator" for EU membership. Northern Macedonia has been a member of the organization since 2006, Moldova, Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania and Kosovo since 2007. The seven member states aim for EU membership. The accession process is more advanced for Serbia and Montenegro than for the other CEFTA members.

In Africa, there are other "driving forces" for integration. On the continent, the willingness to cooperate between states is significantly influenced by the common colonial past, the dependence on a colonial state. In the XIX. economic co-operation between the companies of the successor states that later became independent during the colonial century, which still plays a decisive role in terms of the production chain and the uptake market (Söderbaum, 1996, 46-51). The primary goal of African integrations is the creation of monetary unions, as the introduction of the single currency within zones will greatly simplify accounting for trade. In addition, it requires disciplined fiscal policies from the national banks of the participating states. There are five major economic integrations in Africa, of which a monetary union has so far been established between ECOWAC and CEMAC (Heshmati, 2016, 2-5; 76-80).

The "Mini-Schengen Area" Initiative

Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama, who is at the forefront of the initiative, admits that the idea comes from Fatosa Nanoa, a former Albanian prime minister. Following almost a year of diplomatic consultations with the Serbian side, the idea of a Mini-Schengen area was announced on 10 October 2019 in Novi Sad. Further conciliation meetings were held in October 2019 in Ohrid and in December 2019 in Durres on the depth of integration.[1] As a result of three months of intergovernmental consultations, the Macedonian, Serbian and Albanian parties have declared their intention to create a "single market" covering the three states by 1 January 2021. The name of the initiative refers to the name "Single Schengen Area" between the 22 Member States of the European Union. On 4 September 2020, Kosovo announced its intention to join the initiative.[2]

According to the unanimous resolution of the participating countries, the indirect aim of the Mini-Schengen initiative is to prepare the Member States for joining the EU. Negotiations are under way on the future accession of Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina to the zone. Montenegrin President Milo Djukanović said in a statement that Mini-Schengen is a secondary goal as Montenegro focuses on joining the EU.[3] In the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, there was no consensus among political leaders on accession, and this has not been the case.[4]

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[1] The Ohrid meeting was significant because it was decided by Macedonian Prime Minister Zoran Zaev, Serbian Prime Minister Aleksandar Vucic and Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama to include political and cultural cooperation in addition to the economic aspects of the planned area. https://www.euronews.com/2019/11/11/western-balkan-leaders-plot-their-own-mini-schengen-zone

[2] Kosovo's declaration was preceded by a 2020 "economic normalization agreement" with Serbia, which attempted to boost economic cooperation between the two international actors without recognizing Kosovo. The agreement provided for the coordination of rail, road and energy projects in addition to the accession of the two states to the Mini-Schengen area. https://www.csis.org/analysis/serbia-kosovo-normalization-process-temporary-us-decoupling

[3] https://www.cdm.me/english/dukanovic-on-mini-schengen-a-balkan-union-cannot-replace-the-eu/

[4] https://quo-vademus.org/eu-enlargement-and-mini-schengen/

Key elements of the agreement:

- simplified border crossing for nationals of States Parties with an identity card;

- the establishment of a unified border control system;

- free movement of goods and capital between States Parties;

- faster customs clearance and reduction of administrative burdens,

- higher education cooperation,

- crossing the border without a PCR test in the event of a COVID-19 virus and a system for financing medical care for nationals.

Key data for the four Member States and accession countries:[5]

Table 2 Western Balkans Indicators

State:	Serbia	Albania	Kosovo	North-Macedonia	in all:	Montenegro	BiH
GDP (in 2020.)	58 mrd USD	15,4 mrd USD	7,9 mrd USD	12,7 mrd USD	94 mrd USD	4,8 mrd USD	19,8 mrd USD
population (based on latest census)	6,95 million	2,82 million	1,87 million	2,08 million	13,72 million	0,62 million	3,5 million
growth in the first half of 2021	6%	5,1%	4%	3,6%	average rate 4,7%	7,1%	2,8%

Source: World Bank

There are currently four currencies in circulation in the zone: the Serbian dinar, the Macedonian dinar, the Albanian lek and the euro in Kosovo. Thus, States Parties in the zone retain their monetary autonomy. During the negotiations, the possibility did not arise that the zone would result in a single monetary zone with the introduction of a single currency. This is probably because the member states have been granted candidate status from the EU, so joining the EU makes it unreasonable to introduce a new currency, which would have to be abolished before joining the EU, as it would compete with the euro.

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[5] https://data.worldbank.org/country

According to the above data, the GDP per capita in the zone is 6851,- USD pro person.[6] The power center of the resulting economic zone is Serbia, which has a GDP of 62% and a population of 50.65% of the zone as a whole. Fears of Serbian dominance and concerns about the realization of the "Greater Serbia" idea by economic relations are the main reasons for the two Western-Balkan states - Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina - postponing join to the zone, because in these two countries lives the largest Serbian nationality outside Serbia.

According to the legal examination of the Mini-Schengen cooperation, we can state that the participating states in it achieve the goals in the framework of multilateral agreement. The Mini-Schengen Agreement did not establish a specific institutional framework for the operation of the organization. Cooperation between states is implemented with the involvement of the competent bodies of the executive branch. The equality of States Parties is expressed in the fact that the Organization has no seat. Based on these, the Mini-Schengen cooperation belongs to the series of multilateral international agreements and cannot be classified as an international organization due to the lack of an independent institutional structure. The significance of the latter is that, if the status of an international organization is fulfilled, the Mini-Schengen would have an independent legal personality under international law, within the framework of which the participating states could act jointly in international legal relations. Failing this, Mini-Schengen does not provide a common enforcement option for the participating states. The secondary, but not insignificant, significance of the lack of legal personality of the Mini-Schengen under international law is that cooperation in this form does not restrict the exercise of international law or obligations of the Member States. As a result, States Parties enjoy a high degree of economic autonomy and full political sovereignty in their relations with third countries.

Development of European Economic and Monetary Union

Before setting out the theoretical rationale for the possible future of the Mini-Schengen area, it is necessary to briefly summarize the main steps in the EU integration process as a model for Mini-Schengen, which has reached the current level of integration as a sui generis multilateral organization.

The European Coal and Steel Community, the first stage of economic integration, was established in 1951[7] as the EU's legal predecessor, followed by the European Economic Community and Euratom in 1958.[8] The creation of the EEC was justified

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[6] https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD?locations=EU
[7] Wetter Anna: Enforcing European Union Law on export of dual-use goods, OUP Oxford 2009. 28-29.
[8] Treaty of Rome: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/DE/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:11957E/

by the fact that the founders, encouraged by the realization of corporate benefits, broke away from the military and heavy industry motivations of the coal and steel community and considered it justified to extend the common market to other economic sectors. In addition to the abolition of internal customs duties and the customs union, competition and market protection rules have been standardized and the free movement of services and goods has been achieved. It is important to keep in mind that this process took 12 years. In 1965, the six founding Member States merged the ECSC, Euratom and EEC Treaties into the "Merger Treaty".[9] The institutional system created by the three treaties has been streamlined in such a way that the organizations have retained their independent legal personality. This created the organization of the "European Communities". In terms of economic integration, the role of the EEC became decisive, as the ECSC and EURATOM operated only in the economic segments defined in their founding treaties, while the EEC became the general body responsible for establishing the common market.

In order to create a so-called "single market", Member States have decided to achieve the "Single European Act" which was adopted in 1986 to increase economic integration.[10] The document helped to enhance economic integration, mainly through legal harmonization. In addition to the abolition of border controls, all regulations relating to trade in goods, trade and consumer and environmental protection have been harmonized. Mutual recognition of diplomas and qualifications has been completed for the free movement of workers. Company registrations have been standardized and efforts have been made to reduce existing barriers by converging tax systems.

In order to ensure the economic benefits of the single market, Member States considered it appropriate to implement financial union. The abolition of the Breton Woods system in 1971 and the subsequent acceleration of the enlargement process in the 1980s justified the introduction of a single financial account in the single market. The many different currencies of the Member States have made it difficult to settle between market participants that can be linked to more than one Member State, and exchange rate fluctuations have had a negative effect on market conditions. This is how the ECU (European Currency Unit) was born, which until 1999, when the electronic euro was introduced, was the single accounting base among the currencies of the Member States.[11]

TXT&from=EN
[9] Merger Treaty in: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=LEGISSUM%3A4301863
[10] Single Europen Act in: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=LEGISSUM%3Axy0027
[11] https://www.investopedia.com/terms/e/european-currency-unit.asp

The attempt to introduce the euro as a Community currency was the first time that previously dynamically developing economic integration came to a halt. The introduction of the Community currency, which replaced the ECU, necessitated contractual arrangements between the new Member States. This is how the Maastricht Treaty was born, which provided for a timetable for the introduction of the single currency.[12] The rules for joining the euro area are the criteria set out in the treaty. Financial integration was counteracted by the fact that in some Member States the population saw the unrestricted sovereignty in keeping their own currency, so a referendum had to be held on the introduction of the euro.[13] In Denmark, it was the first to show that the commitment of the populations of the Member States to integration also has an "invisible borderline" that they are unfortunate to cross. The idea of limiting financial sovereignty could lead to an unstable political situation in some Member States and political tensions between the Member States in the EU. A similar situation arose with the introduction of the single currency in Denmark and the United Kingdom, which eventually abandoned the introduction of the euro.[14] On 1 January 2002, the official currency was replaced by the euro in 12 Member States. It is currently used by 19 Member States as their currency, making it the core of the European Economic and Monetary Union.

The Treaty of Amsterdam and the Treaty of Nice sought to resolve problems with the EU's institutional system and legislative mechanism. The Lisbon Treaty, which entered into force in 2009, abolished the former "pillar structure", but did not lead to further measures in the field of economic integration.[15] The view expressed in the context of the Lisbon Treaty is that the current framework of the EU as a sui generis supranational institution does not allow for its further development. According to another approach, with the introduction of the single currency, the EU has already created a gap in Member States' sovereignty in the economic space that can only be widened by new standardization procedures. This would clearly result in the EU moving further towards a federation. This is likely to provoke significant resistance from some Member States. Thus, the economic development of the EU has now come to a standstill and has not reached the level of full monetary union and tax and wage union.

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[12] https://europa.eu/european-union/sites/default/files/docs/body/treaty_on_european_union_en.pdf

[13] https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/euro-area/enlargement-euro-area/convergence-criteria-joining_en

[14] The United Kingdom and Denmark, which otherwise meet the conditions for convergence, did not adopt the single currency in 2002, while a referendum in France decided to adopt the euro, with only 51.05% of the vote in favor of the euro. It was a warning signal to EC leaders that economic integration cannot be unrestricted and that future EC development must take into account Member States' expectations of the EC's role.

[15] Amsterdam Treaty https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:11997D/TXT
Nizza Treaty https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/HU/TXT/?uri=CELEX:12001C/TXT

Factors against Further EU Integration

With regard to the EU's foreign policy, already after the 2004 enlargement, it was noticeable that the functioning of the EU is disturbed by the fact that "foreign policy of the Member States and the EU is implemented at two asymmetric levels". Due to the principle of EU subsidiarity and the system of the Lisbon Treaty, Member States continue to enjoy a high degree of autonomy in foreign policy. In contrast, the procedural possibilities of the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy Representative and the President of the EU Commission are strictly in line with the line set by the Council of Heads of State and Government or the Council of Foreign Ministers. Due to the form of operation between the federation and the general multilateral organization, the Member States have an independent, parallel system of external relations. This is also reflected in the construction of their economic relations outside the EU. Economic diplomacy takes place at Member State level, and in the field of foreign economic affairs, unity is only effectively reflected in decision-making in extreme cases, such as the adoption of sanctions against Belarus. With the creation of the monetary area and the customs union, the EU has raised economic cooperation between Member States to a level where the economic actions of individual governments and central banks have a serious impact on common market mechanisms. The "Greek crisis" has shown that, despite comprehensive and uniform EU regulation, the 'center-periphery' contrast is vividly present in the EU when we look at the monetary policies of the Member States. The Spanish, Portuguese, Greek and Italian blocs, as well as the Visegrad Four Member States and the Baltic States, are at different economic levels than the former founders. And there is competition between these 'southern states' and the former socialist countries to increase their share of the EU budget. The asymmetry between Member States' economies and differences in living standards has only been partially reduced in the last two decades by EU "targeted subsidies" and catch-up programs. The differences between the center and the periphery have basically stagnated. This economic situation has led to an unprecedented level of internal migration within the Union, leading to labor shortages in some Member States and serious demographic problems in others.

From an economic point of view, we can say that there is a 'two-speed Europe', which is made desirable by the single system of EU law and the support system for peripheral states. In addition to the asymmetry in foreign affairs and the negative effects on the economy, the "self-negative effect" of integration is the problem that most hinders further integration. The BREXIT process has shown that economic and political integration is too apt for ultra-nationalist political forces to undermine social trust in integration by using anti-union rhetoric. The strengthening of Eurosceptic political

movements could also lead to a Member State leaving the EU, as has been the case in the United Kingdom. The example of BREXIT warns that the European nationalist approach to politics is still strongly present in the political thinking of the people of the Member States. The level of support for Euroscepticism is linked to the historical development of the Member States. In the case of Member States with significant far-right and far-left movements, it can be seen that there is more room for criticism of Brussels than in those states where extremist organizations are negligible in addition to the "political center". EU leaders face the dilemma that further integration will allow peripheral areas to catch up, but further unification of monetary policies and legal systems could lead to a further strengthening of Eurosceptic movements, leading to more Member States stepping out and integration "devouring itself".

Mini Schengen or Mini Maastricht?

In the framework of the Maastricht Convention and the Lisbon Treaty, the EU is a regional economic integration with the customs union, the four fundamental freedoms of the market, the harmonization of competition law and private law, and the partially successful attempt to introduce the Community currency. All levels of integration have led members of the community to take another step of political and legal integration. In all cases, these were forced by the fact that reaching a new level promised greater economic growth and a higher standard of living. According to the statements made by the leaders of the countries participating in the Mini-Schengen initiative, the single market can be achieved through their cooperation. The choice of the name itself, on the other hand, suggests that the initiators consider the first level of integration steps, the customs union without border controls, to be a realistic goal for the time being as a "cautious tide". Economic integration beyond the customs union already raises the need for legal harmonization between states in private law. In the case of increasing trade in goods between States Parties, it may be a problem for all States concerned to use different national currencies. The Mini-Schengen States do not currently aim to introduce an electronic unit of account similar to the ECU, but the security of trade may require this at a later stage. It is questionable to what extent the remaining integration at the level of the single market can be effective in the Western Balkans. With this in mind, the implementation of a "Mini-Maastricht" that also provides for monetary cooperation in the future may be justified. To the best of our knowledge, the Mini-Schengen initiative can be described as economic integration along limited objectives, provided that we start from the premise that the common goal of the participating states is to achieve EU membership. It is questionable why CEFTA, as a pre-existing convention framework, has not proved sufficient for the Mini-Schengen States to pursue their own integration efforts. With the exception of

Moldova, CEFTA membership covers the Mini-Schengen States. CEFTA could have provided an appropriate framework for its further development. The answer lies in the system of complex political relations between the Balkan states.

The most serious brake on integration between the states of the Western Balkans is the ethnic divide that pervades the region. Of the current Mini-Schengen members, Serbia, Northern Macedonia and Albania were in the easiest position to join, as their population shows a homogeneous picture. Of these countries, only in northern Macedonia are ethnic tensions on the agenda related to the local Albanian minority. Kosovo, which is not recognized by Serbia, is in the most peculiar situation, as it is given the opportunity to cooperate economically with the Serbian side, despite the refusal to recognize it. This is of particular importance for Kosovo, as electricity supply, the road network and railways were also an integral part of the systems within Serbia until the 1998-1999 conflict. With the secession of Kosovo, relations between the two countries are severed, and economic reconstruction has so far only been possible due to the isolation of the Serbian side.

In 2019, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro still wanted to stay away from such a regional community in order to preserve their own sovereignty. In both states, the idea has emerged in political communication that Mini-Schengen actually serves to expand Serbian economic interests. In the long run, this process could lead to an increase in Serbia's economic dominance and the realization of its territorial needs. This is contradicted by the "political vision" that Serbia is only in a relatively dominant position in the organization, meaning that the other members as a whole outperform Serbia in all respects. On the other hand, the initiative is based on equality of members and does not have an institutional system in which (for example, a weighted vote) Serbian dominance can be put into practice. The "horror image" of Serbian dominance is also contradicted by the fact that the multilateral agreement regulates only the relations between the members, while it does not affect the relations with third parties. Communication between political actors in the two states turned to accession when Serbia approached Kosovo with the Washington Convention and its membership in the organization became possible. Nevertheless, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina have still not ratified the Convention. For Bosnia and Herzegovina, ethnic divisions based on the Dayton regime are the most serious obstacle, necessitating comprehensive constitutional reform in order to preserve the country's unity. The Mini-Schengen area can be a step forward for Bosnia and Herzegovina in providing economic cooperation with the countries of the region, regardless of the internal political situation and the constitutional emergency. The corporate benefits

of Mini-Schengen co-operation contribute to the improvement of living standards in the States Parties through economic growth, which mitigates negative demographic trends and promotes lasting reconciliation between nationalities.

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POLITICIZATION OF THE MINI SCHENGEN BY THE WESTERN BALKANS POLITICAL LEADERS

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The Mini Schengen Initiative (later the Open Balkans) was presented to the public as a joint attempt of the Western Balkan countries to overcome bilateral disputes and regional problems through cooperation and better regional integration. The initiating countries are the Republic of Serbia, the Republic of Albania, and North Macedonia. Although at first glance the economic framework of regional cooperation, this initiative brought with it a debate in which the national and political representatives of the Western Balkans, and not economic experts and analysts, took the lead. The national connotation in the discussions on the Mini Schengen Initiative is most pronounced in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where from the very beginning there have been three different approaches to this initiative. Apart from Bosnia and Herzegovina, in this chapter, we also touch on Montenegro and Kosovo, where we also examine how the representatives of national groups in these countries position themselves against these discussions. This work show that the discussions on the Mini Schengen are deeply colored by national concerns, doubts, mutual mistrust and as such do not emphasize enough economic aspects and benefits from the Mini Schengen initiative.

Contextualizing Mini Schengen

The mention of „Mini Schengen" didn't happen for the first time only in the context of the Western Balkan initiative. In 2015, the Dutch government has launched a discussion on the possible establishment of „Mini Schengen" within the framework of the already existing „Schengen" zone, which comprises 26 European countries that

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have agreed to abolish all forms of border control at their mutual borders (Havlíček et al., 2018). The original idea was to unite Germany, Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg through this initiative, primarily for a more efficient and concrete response to the growing issues caused by the migrant crises. Although this initiative never received an official form, nor was any proposal submitted to the European Commission, it managed to provoke various reactions from the mentioned countries, but also other members of the existing „Schengen". Most countries have rejected this idea from a perspective of their domestic policies as, to put it mildly, unnecessary (*Mini-Schengen Not an Option, for Now*, 2016). Thus, any talk about changes in regulations on the borders between certain countries is deeply colored not merely by the official international relations of those countries, but also by their internal socio-political dynamics.

Discussions on Mini – Schengen in the context of the Western Balkans have also caused many controversial comments from various sides. The term "Western Balkans" has been used by European Union institutions to refer to the Balkan region that includes countries that are not members of the EU, but are directly involved in the process of Europeanization on their path to the European Union (Džankić et al., 2018). Mini Schengen zone has been announced on 10 October 2019 in Novi Sad, Serbia, where the prime minister of North Macedonia Zoran Zaev, the President of the Republic of Serbia Aleksandar Vučić, and the Prime Minister of the Republic of Albania Edi Rama have reached an agreement on a mutual commitment to closer, primarily economic cooperation. The initiative was launched to create new opportunities in the field of international trade, education, but also a more successful process of integration into the European Union (Simić, 2019). It is believed that facilitated movement across borders would allow for an easier and faster flow of goods, services, and investments, which would ultimately lead to a more prosperous and economically stable region.

On 20 July 2021, at the regional cooperation forum in Skopje, the three abovementioned parties have announced the change of the name of the initiative from "Mini Schengen" to „Open Balkans". Furthermore, a clear readiness was shown for mutual recognition of diplomas and job qualifications, which should result in a more flexible movement of the workforce, but also in attracting potential investments. Also, at this meeting, the readiness to open the borders between these three countries to the citizens and the unhindered flow of goods as early as January 1, 2021, was expressed (RFE/RL's Balkan Service, 2021).

Mini Schengen Initiatives

The Berlin Process, launched in 2014 following a statement by then-European Commission President Jean Claude Juncker on a five-year moratorium on the admission of new members to the European Union, also aimed to mitigate the effects of growing Euroscepticism by aiming at increasing regional cooperation and European integration among Western Balkan countries (Marciacq, 2017). However, as more than seven years have passed since then, and there have been no new indications of the EU enlargement (Keil & Arkan, 2016), some Western Balkans countries, with the tacit support of some European countries, have found an alternative option of regional cooperation and interconnectedness. Thus, five years after the introduction of the five-year moratorium, the President of the Republic of Serbia, and the Prime Ministers of North Macedonia and the Republic of Albania, Zoran Zaev and Edi Rama in October 2019 signed a Declaration of Intent to establish a Mini Schengen zone between these three countries.

Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama stated that the goal of this initiative is to prevent the spread of the further image of the Western Balkans as „a small caricature of the European Union, where for everything is needed a consensus and everyone can block everyone through a veto". Rama was backed in this approach by his Macedonian counterpart Zaev, who, highlighting the European Union as their final goal, added that until a final decision from the European Union, they must find their ways to continue the process of Europeanisation. The Serbian President Vucic also highlighted the need for determination and „taking matters into their own hands, which ultimately put the discussion on Mini Schengen in the framework of an initiative that comes as the will of the Western Balkans countries to solve their mutual problems on their own (Euronews, 2021).

The Mini Schengen Dilemma in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The deep political divisions in Bosnia and Hercegovina along national lines is almost without exception a stumbling block in the formation of clear foreign policy goals (Banović et al., 2021). This matter becomes even more pronounced when it comes to regional cooperation. Any form of closer cooperation with neighboring countries entails the question of state or national sovereignty. Thus a seemingly purely economic initiative, such as the Mini Schengen (later the Open Balkans), is more accompanied in public discourse by the comments of political officials and analysts than economists and economic experts.

Discussions on Mini Schengen in Bosnia and Herzegovina have had strong national connotations since day one. Although this initiative was initially presented as an economically attractive framework for international cooperation, as such it rarely got a chance in the public political discourse of Bosnia and Herzegovina. From day one, it reflected national concerns and doubts about the background behind the initiative, declared declaratively acceptable but without a concrete determination to affirm it, or was positively affirmed in parallel with the interests of cross-border neighbors coming from the same national community.

Serbian political representatives have the clearest position on the issue of Mini Schengen. When it comes to Serbian political representatives in Bosnia and Herzegovina, based on the results of the last election cycles, the Alliance of Independent Social Democrats (SNSD) holds complete domination at the state level. The party's approach to the Mini Schengen Initiative fully coincides with the official position of the highest state officials from the neighboring Republic of Serbia. The president of this party, Milorad Dodik, who is also a member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina at the same time, has repeatedly supported the initiative as an economically justified and desirable format of regional cooperation. Dodik's determination and support for the affirmation of this initiative was clearly expressed in his media speech in August 2021, when he announced talks with Serbian President Aleksandar Vučić on the possible accession of the Bosnian entity Republika Srpska to the Mini Schengen zone, accusing Bosniaks of sabotaging any rapprochement with Serbia. With this speech, Dodik once again emphasized the repeatedly expressed position on personal political aspirations towards unification with Serbia and the impossibility of survival of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a state that Serbs do not see as their homeland (Saff, 2021).

If we exclude the above statement of Milorad Dodik, it is possible to claim that his statements on Mini Schengen are mostly justified by economic assumptions. Zoran Tegeltija, a high-ranking SNSD official and Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, cites international economic cooperation as the main argument in favor of Bosnia and Herzegovina's accession to this initiative (*Tegeltija: BiH spremna da bude dio "Mini-Šengena,"* 2021). On the other hand, Dodik characterized potential fears of Serbian domination in the newly formed zone as meaningless, pointing to the fact that the number of Muslims in the Mini Schengen zone would exceed the number of Serbs (*Dodik: U Zagrebu nismo ništa crtali, "mini Šengen" je dobra inicijativa*, 2020). Although the number of Muslims in Serbia, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Albania, and Bosnia and Herzegovina in this area

would indeed be significant, the political disconnection and immeasurable differences in policies of these groups preclude any possibility of a potential counterbalance to Serbian policy, which is much more imported and harmonized (Taji-Farouki & Poulton, 1997). Therefore, the argument of numbers in favor of non-Serbian national communities can hardly carry satisfactory weight in the discussions on Mini Schengen.

It is precisely the population that is one of the main arguments cited as an unacceptable aspect in the discussions on the Croatian side. Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) has been the most important Croatian political subject in Bosnia and Herzegovina since the introduction of the multiparty political system in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Although none of the high-ranking officials of this political party has so far made a statement on the issue of Mini Schengen, their position is clearly reflected in the analyzes of the written media close to them. Thus, the portal dnevno.hr brought an analysis in which Mini Schengen is being characterized as an attempt by the President of the Republic of Serbia, Aleksandar Vučić, to create the „Greater Serbia", while the support of the International Community is explained by its efforts to open the way to a new Yugoslavia. The statement of the Minister of Internal Affairs of Serbia, Aleksandar Vulin, on the unification of all Serbs into a single state and political community as the primary Serbian political goal is cited in this context as the hidden motive behind the talks on Mini Schengen (*Hrvatski Mediji: Vučić preko Mini Šengena stvara Veliku Srbiju*, 2020). In another analysis of the same portal, the Mini Schengen has been criticized as a farewell from the European Union, in which Belgrade and Tirana will have the main say instead of Berlin (*Žilavi projekt velike Srbije ili od Oluje do Velike Albanije*, 2021). *Večernji List* has drawn attention to the already „poor constitutional position and the small number" of Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina and questioned their political survival if Mini Schengen becomes an alternative to the European Union (Pavković, 2020). These analyses indicate that the foundations of the so-called „Fourth Yugoslavia" were thrown in Washington and pave the way for Serbian domination in the Balkans (Romac, 2020).

Unlike Serb and Croat representatives, the position of high-ranking Bosniak officials towards Mini Schengen abounds in mutually ambivalent approaches. There are different views on this topic among Bosniak politicians. However, in this chapter, we will touch on the views expressed in front of the Party of Democratic Action (SDA), which since the introduction of the multi-party system has been the most prominent Bosniak political party, and also has the greatest influence on state policy in front of the Bosniak people. Different approaches to the Initiative are also reflected in the various circumstances in which high-ranking officials have spoken

out on this issue. Therefore, in November 2020, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bisera Turković, expressed doubts about the justification of this initiative, having in mind the Berlin Process, which includes all the benefits of international cooperation promised by Mini Schengen. Somewhat later, Minister Turković stated that any initiative that is not in conflict with the Berlin Process can be considered, which is a milder approach than the initial exclusivity towards the Mini Schengen Initiative (BBC News na srpskom, 2021).

In the statements of Šefik Džaferović, a member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina and a prominent SDA official, it is also possible to notice insufficiently concrete answers to the questions about Mini Schengen. Thus, in a statement to the media in mid-September 2020, Džaferović points to the need for a clearer definition of the Mini Schengen, rejecting the possibility of introducing an institutional and political framework through this initiative (*Džaferović potvrdio pisanje "Avaza": Sutra neće biti podrške za "mini Šengen,"* 2020). At the end of September of the same year, after a meeting with European officials in Brussels, Dzaferovic drew attention to the positive aspects of Mini Schengen, talking about the possibility of realizing fundamental European freedoms when it comes to moving goods, people, capital, and services through similar initiatives, leaving enough space for his message to be interpreted as affirmative (*Džaferović: Spremni smo da podržimo "mini Šengen,"* 2020). A similar statement could be heard from Bakir Izetbegovic, the president of the SDA, who in one of his interviews called Mini Schengen a good exercise before joining the European Union (Pekmez, 2020).

In addition to media appearances by senior SDA officials, who have been mostly using diplomatic vocabulary to leave the door open for the implementation of this initiative, the media on the other hand, often problematized „hidden intent" as a danger of potential dominance of Serbian politics through such and similar initiatives. Thus, the media reported through unofficial sources addressed to Deputy Minister of Justice Nezir Pivic, a senior SDA official, warning of the possibility of losing sovereignty, which will certainly put Bosnia and Herzegovina in an unequal position due to the behavior of neighboring countries, as well as underdeveloped trade capacity and a dysfunctional internal market. According to the report, a much greater real danger lies in a certain projection of the imposition of the legal and administrative system of Serbia primarily on the territory of Republika Srpska, and their interconnection to such an extent that it will no longer be possible to talk about Bosnia and Herzegovina's internal sovereignty within its internationally recognized borders (*"Mini Schengen" podržali Srbi, Hrvatima ne odgovara, a Bošnjaci mudro kooperativni*, 2020).

Although this position reflects the fears of part of the Bosniak national community, it seems more likely for Bosniak political representatives that, due to the pressure of the International Community but also their commitment to the European path, they will bring their position closer to the initiators of Mini Schengen and ultimately support this initiative.

The very important role of the Republic of Serbia as one of the main initiators of Mini Schengen has automatically led Bosniak and Croat political representatives to be cautious when considering this initiative. Although there was no official reaction from Croatian political representatives, the available media analysis suggests that Croats are more exclusive on this issue and that they are particularly concerned about the position of Croats as an even more prominent minority in the Mini Schengen area. On the other hand, although some reservations are noticeable among Bosniaks, especially from the aspect of potential political domination of Belgrade and even greater influence on the Serb population in Bosnia and Herzegovina, their official position shows signs of openness to closer regional economic cooperation. Only for Serbian political representatives in Bosnia and Herzegovina can it be claimed that the idea of the initiative was fully accepted from the very beginning and that their position on this issue does not differ in any way from the official position of the Republic of Serbia.

Montenegro and the Mini Schengen

The discussion on the Mini Schengen Initiative, although still very young, has undergone major political changes in Montenegro. After decades of rule, Milo Đukanović and his Democratic Party of Socialists of Montenegro (DPS) have been replaced by a new government led by Zdravko Krivokapic. Although tensions between the new government, in which some of the most prominent protagonists of pro-Serbian politics in Montenegro have the main say, and the protagonist of pro-Montenegrin politics, on the other hand, led by Dukanovic, have been the subject of escalation of violence several times in recent years, the Mini Schengen has still not gained much importance in the confrontation of these policies. Moreover, the reservations of both sides towards this initiative leave enough room to talk about a fairly balanced approach of the position and the opposition in Montenegro.

At the very beginning of the discussions on Mini Schengen, Montenegrin President Milo Đukanović expressed doubts about the insufficiently clearly defined framework of this initiative. According to him, any initiative that has indications of a substitute for European integrations cannot be seriously considered when it comes to Montenegro (Marković, 2019). Although Đukanović justified his presence at the meetings in Ohrid

and Tirana by getting better acquainted with the details of this initiative, he shared the same doubts in an interview given a year later. On that occasion, Đukanović stated that the Berlin Process is the best framework for dynamizing cooperation and economic integration to advance countries and integrate into the European Union and that initiatives such as Mini Schengen must ensure that elements of regional cooperation are not unnecessarily duplicated (*Đukanović o mini Šengenu: Mora se voditi računa o elementima regionalne saradnje*, 2020). Former Minister of Economy from the government of Milo Dukanovic was even more explicit in drawing attention to the needlessness of Mini Schengen, claiming that Montenegro already fulfills all the items listed in that initiative (*"Mali Šengen" Za Crnu Goru "Trošenje Energije,"* 2019).

The approach of the newly formed position in Montenegro can be said to be largely similar to the approach of the current opposition. Đorde Radulovic, the current Minister of Foreign Affairs of Montenegro, stated the Berlin Process as an already existing alternative to the Mini Schengen Initiative and that in economic terms there is no need for new regional initiatives (*"Mali Šengen" Za Crnu Goru "Trošenje Energije,"* 2019). The abovementioned indicates that Mini Schengen in Montenegro is still not an interesting idea and that the publicly expressed views of Montenegrin political officials indicate reservations on this issue, which ultimately reflects Montenegro's lack of interest in this initiative.

Kosovo and the Mini Schengen

Kosovo has changed three prime ministers since the start of discussions on the Mini Schengen Initiative. The then outgoing Prime Minister, Ramush Haradinaj, in his only public speech on Mini Schengen was very exclusive on this issue. Haradinaj has described the initiative as „an attempt to spread Chinese and Russian influence in Europe through Belgrade" (*Haradinaj: Mini-Schengen Aims to Expand Russian and Chinese Influence in the Balkans*, 2019). Avdullah Hoti, who succeeded Haradinaj as Prime Minister, although initially reserved for Mini Schengen, after meeting with the President of the United States of America Donald Trump and Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic in Washington, changed his stance and expressed support for the initiative (Al Jazeera, 2020). Although Kosovo undertook the Washington Agreement on economic normalization of relations with Serbia to join the Mini Schengen zone, the government of Albin Kurti, which succeeded Hoti's government, did not show readiness on that issue.

The Prime Minister of Kosovo, Albin Kurti, called this initiative visionless, despite the already existing regional agreements and initiatives, unnecessary (*Vlada Kosova: "Mini-Šengen" Inicijativa Bez Vizije*, 2021). In one of his media appearances, Kurti commented on the name change into „Open Balkans" as „opening the Balkans to autocracy, corruption, and war criminals" (Euronews, 2021), describing the hidden intentions behind the initiative as an attempt to create a „Fourth Yugoslavia" (Deutsche Welle, 2021). The Albanian Prime Minister dismissed the criticism as unfounded, ultimately straining relations between Albanian and Kosovo political representatives (Al Jazeera, 2021).

The initiative was supported by the Serbian List Vice President, Igor Simic, who pointed to Mini Schengen as an opportunity the Balkan countries must not miss (BBC News na srpskom, 2021). The Serbian List is part of the Government of Kosovo, where it has one minister and in the political sense represents the most influential political subject of the Serbian national minority in Kosovo. As it can be concluded, while Serbian political representatives in Kosovo support this initiative, Albanian politicians in Kosovo approach this initiative with caution, having in mind the even greater potential influence of Serbia on the territory of Kosovo, which directly contradicts the national policy of Kosovo Albanians.

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TURKEY'S FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS THE WESTERN BALKANS: HISTORY, THEORY AND PRACTICE

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The Western Balkans region is one of the most important areas where political, economic and cultural effects of the new vision of Turkish diplomacy are reflected. According to the new vision of Turkish foreign politics, Turkey, as the inheritor of the Ottoman Empire, is obliged to protect the interests of the Turkish and Muslim minorities and should equilibrate the strategies of the international factors in this region, and additionally, is obliged to strengthen its bilateral relations with the Western Balkan countries. The principles of the new concept of Turkish foreign politics, like *security for all and giving advantage to dialogue for solving crisis* also had their reflections on the Turkish diplomacy in the Western Balkans region. It should be highlighted that Turkey's political and economic relations with the Western Balkans countries are moving upwards, however, the world economic crisis and the Covid-19 pandemic have had and still are having negative reflections on these relations. Besides the political and economic reflections, the new proactive and multidimensional foreign politics of Turkey also has cultural and educational reflections in the Western Balkans region.

Introduction

In the new conjuncture created as the result of the Cold War, Turkey began to put great efforts in the road of development of its relations with the West Balkan countries. However, these relations during the 1990's faced series of challenges, some of them were the conflicts on the territory of former Yugoslavia, which had very important implications on the relations between Turkey and Western Balkan countries. After the

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conservative AKP party came to power in Turkey, led by Recep Tayib Erdogan, a new era of relations between the Turkish country and the Western Balkan region began, which was characterized by deepening of mutual political and economic relations, as well as the increase of the impact of the Turkish soft power in this region. Through this article, in the beginning, we will try to elaborate on the terms Balkans and Western Balkans, then we will make a short historical review on the Turkish foreign politics towards Western Balkans in the period after the Cold War. Finally, we will try to analyze the Turkish foreign politics towards the Western Balkans under the leadership of Erdogan between theory and practice, by highlighting the main challenges of the mentioned relations.

What is the Balkans?

In ancient times, when the Greeks ruled and they were considered as the main factor in this territory, the Balkan Peninsula was known as the "Greek Peninsula" and a long time after, this region was named as the "Byzantine Peninsula" (Aydoğmuş, 2009, 5). After the Greeks and Byzantines, at the end of XIV and the beginning of the XV century, on the Balkan scene, as the main military, political and economic factor, the Ottoman Empire appeared which named this region as *Avrupa-i Osmani* (Ottoman Europe) and *Rumeli-i Şahane- Rumelia* (Budak, 2006, 165). During the Ottoman Empire's rule, this region was named by Europeans as "European Turkey" (Davutoğlu, 2004, 121-122). At the beginning of the XIX century, parallel with the political happenings on the international scene, these regions were defined by the Europeans with new names, as follows: Balkans and Near (Middle) East, terms which include subjective elements from the European aspect and perception. It should be highlighted that in the political literature, the terms "Balkans" and "Balkan Peninsula" were used for the first time in 1808 by the German geographer August Zeune (Aydoğmuş, 2009, 4; Budak, 2006, 165-166; Davutoğlu, 2004, 121-122; Mazower, 2002). This peninsula, through history, as well as nowadays, has always attracted and is still attracting the interest of the great powers and factors of the international arena.

On the other hand, Slovenian philosopher Slavoj Žižek discusses the meaning of *the Balkans* by analyzing its various meanings based on different perspectives:

> This very alibi confronts us with the first of many paradoxes concerning Balkan: its geographic delimitation was never precise. It is as if one can never receive a definitive answer to the question, "Where does it begin?" For Serbs, it begins down there in Kosovo or Bosnia, and they defend the Christian civilization against this

> Europe's Other. For Croats, it begins with the Orthodox, despotic, Byzantine Serbia, against which Croatia defends the values of democratic Western civilization. For Slovenes, it begins with Croatia, and we Slovenes are the last outpost of the peaceful Mitteleuropa. For Italians and Austrians, it begins with Slovenia, where the reign of the Slavic hordes starts. For Germans, Austria itself, on account of its historic connections, is already tainted by the Balkanic corruption and inefficiency. For some arrogant Frenchmen, Germany is associated with the Eastern Balkanian savagery—up to the extreme case of some conservative anti-European-Union Englishmen for whom, in an implicit way, it is ultimately the whole of continental Europe itself that functions as a kind of Balkan Turkish global empire with Brussels as the new Constantinople, the capricious despotic center threatening English freedom and sovereignty. So Balkan is always the Other: it lies somewhere else, always a little bit more to the southeast, with the paradox that, when we reach the very bottom of the Balkan Peninsula, we again magically escape Balkan. Greece is no longer Balkan proper, but the cradle of our Western civilization (Zizek, 2021).

As far as the term Western Balkans is concerned, it should be highlighted that the countries that are implied by this term include Albania, Kosovo, Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina and North Macedonia. In this context, we should highlight that Croatia too, until its membership in the EU (2013) was treated by the authorities of the EU as a country that is a member of the Western Balkan region. In this context, it should be highlighted that this term was a subject of series of critics from some leaders from the region, like the former President of Croatia, Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic, who emphasized that she is intentionally avoiding using the term Western Balkans: „Unfortunately, the balkanization became a global term with negative connotations as a political instability, insecurity and fragmentation, isolation and ghettoization, therefore I avoid the technical term used by the European Union and NATO… Instead of this term, this region should be named Northeastern Europe, because it is Europe and it should be called like that" (See "Predsjednica objasnila zašto izbjegava izraz 'zapadni Balkan'", 2018).

Turkish Foreign Policy towards the Western Balkans (1990-2002)

In the new strategic-political conjuncture in the 1990s, created as the result of the end of the Cold War, Turkey began putting great efforts in direction of developing of its relations with the Western Balkan countries. In this context, we should highlight that the Turkish-Yugoslavia relations in the period after the Cold War represented an important segment in the relations between Turkey and the countries of this region. One of the most important factors that determined the direction of Turkish-Yugoslavia relations during the 1990s is the act of recognition of Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and North Macedonia by the Turkish state on February 6, 1992, which marked the beginning of a new era of Turkish-Yugoslavia relations, which was characterized with the political crisis. The Turkish support of Bosnia and Herzegovina during the conflict in the period of 1992-1995 provided a new impulse for tightening of these relations. However, with the signing of the Dayton agreement, Turkish-Yugoslavia relations entered a new phase where they decided to raise the bilateral relations on the level of embassies, an act which contributed for the normalization of mutual relations (Akman, 2006, 232). Simultaneously, besides the Bosnian conflict, the Kosovo issue also played an important role in the determination of Turkish foreign politics towards Yugoslavia. However, unlike the Bosnian war, where Turkey was supporting the independence of that country, the stance of the Turkish state towards the Kosovo issue was that this problem represents and the internal issue of Yugoslavia and a permanent solution should be found by respecting the territorial integrity of this country (Aydoğmuş, 2009, 84; Akman, 2006, 232). However, with the beginning of the Kosovo conflict (1998) the normalized political relations Turkey-Yugoslavia faced a new challenged. As the result of this conflict, the NATO alliance decided to carry out a military operation against Yugoslavia (See Murphy, 1996; Orford, 2003; Weiss 2012), to prevent violence against Kosovo civilians made by Serbian military and paramilitary forces. Turkey played an active role in this military operation, followed by another tightening of the mutual relations (Akman, 2006, 232-233).

North Macedonia is considered as a vital country for the strategic interests of Turkey in the Western Balkans, because of the Turkish and Muslim segments of Macedonian society. With the independence of the Republic of North Macedonia in 1991, Turkey was one of the first countries to recognize the independence of this country and the first country that opened an embassy in Skopje. All these stances of Turkey towards the newly established country, besides the real, also had a symbolic meaning, because they were depicturing the level of relations between the two countries.

One of the most important spheres of cooperation between Turkey and North

Macedonia during the 1990s was the defense. In this context, an Agreement for military education and cooperation was signed between the two countries in 1994, whereas in 1995, the Agreement for defense industry and cooperation was also signed. Within the frames of these agreements, Turkey offered great support for the modernization of the Macedonian army. Simultaneously, as the result of the signed agreements, Turkey donated 20% of its military aircraft of American origin, the F-5 model (See "Makedonya'ya Türk F-5'leri", 1998). On the other side, from 1994 to 1995, when North Macedonia was under economic siege of the Greek embargo, Turkey was one of the most important economic supporters of this country (Kır, 2008, 4-23). However, in 1995 with the signing of the temporary agreement between North Macedonia and Greece, Turkish-Greek relations were improved, a process which contributed for the relative weakening of the Turkish factor in this country until the beginning of the 2000s (Akman, 2006, 234).

Bosnia and Herzegovina is considered as one of the most important countries in the Western Balkan region in the strategies of Turkish foreign politics. With the declaration of independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina (1st March 1992), bloody aggression began which brought enormous human and material damages to this Balkan country. In these circumstances, when the Balkans were going through the biggest conflict after the end of the Cold War, through its dynamic foreign politics which appeared after the end of the Cold War, Turkey began to take its position in the equilibriums of the Western Balkans, especially in the newly established situation and conjuncture on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Besides diplomatic efforts within the UN institutions, Turkish authorities also through the Organization of Islamic Conference gave efforts for maintenance of stability and securing the territorial integrity of this Balkan country. Turkish diplomacy also had a role in the membership of this country in the international organization OSCE as a full member and played a vital role in the implementation of the resolution of the UN Security Council (31st March 1993), which foresaw a flight ban in the air space of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Namely, Turkey participated in this international action with approximately 18 military airplanes F-16. Simultaneously, the Turkish navy was a part of international military ships, which observed the implementation of the Adriatic Sea embargo (See "Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri'nin Barışı Destekleme Harekâtlarına Katkıları, 2021)

Simultaneously, we should highlight that turkey took active participation with international peace forces called UNPROFOR, which were led by the UN with the objective of maintenance of peace and stability of Bosnia and Herzegovina. On the other hand, through the establishment of IFOR (later renamed as SFOR – Stabilization

Force), which was under the leadership of NATO and with the aim of maintenance of peace and stability in the post-conflict period, Turkey played an important role with 1500 soldiers for the maintenance of peace and stability in this Balkan country. Simultaneously, as a part of the American strategy for the assistance of the Bosnian army, the Turkish country since 1996 obliged itself to educate Bosnian military cadres (made of Bosnians and Croatians) in Turkish military schools under NATO standards, an act which contributed for further improvement and strengthening of military skills of the newly established Bosnian army (See "Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri'nin Barışı Destekleme Harekâtlarına Katkıları, 2021).

In the post-Cold War period, Turkish-Albanian relations also entered a new phase which was characterized by the development of mutual relations in the political, economic and military spheres. Within the strengthening of relations between Turkey and Albania, in June 1992, an Agreement for friendship and cooperation was signed. One month later, Tirana and Ankara signed an Agreement for military cooperation which gave an additional impulse for the mutual relations. In the period of the 1990s, the Turkish support for Albanian membership in regional and international organizations was a great contribution, like, for example, its membership in the Organization for economic cooperation in the Black Sea and the Organization of Islamic Conference (Aydoğmuş, 2009, 81). In 1995, Turkish-Albanian relations faced the challenge of the growing influence of Greek politics towards Albania. Namely, from this year, by using its EU membership and through an increase of its economic influence in Albania, Greece became an important factor in this country which damaged the strategic interests of Turkey in this region. An important moment for Turkish-Albanian relations is the decision of the Turkish state for sending 779 Turkish soldiers in Albania as a part of the Overtime Limited International Defense Force (ALBA), which was established through the decision of UN Security Council to put an end to turmoil in this country which were created as the result of the bank scandal. In 1998, a protocol was signed by the presidents of the military general headquarters of both countries, which was foreseeing modernization of one military base and building of a Military-Navy academy by the Turks in Albania (Kır, 2008, 4-30).

Turkish Foreign Policy towards the Western Balkans (2002-Present)
According to the new concept of Turkish foreign politics implemented after the seizure of power by Recep Tayib Erdogan in 2003, as the successor of the Ottoman Empire, Turkey is obliged to protect the interests of the Turkish and Muslim minorities in the Balkan Peninsula (Davutoğlu, 2004, 123). Erdogan's meetings with religious and political leaders of Turks during his visit of Western Thracia in Greece in 2010,

the intensifying of support of municipalities from Turkey for Turkish and Muslim municipalities in the Western Balkans, the activities of Turkish diplomacy for stopping tensions in the Sandzak region and his meetings with representatives of Islamic Religious Communities, political leaders and the non-government sector, are only a few of the numerous events which are depicturing the intensity of the implementation of the new vision of Turkish diplomacy.

Simultaneously, according to the new concept, Turkish foreign politics towards the Balkans should balance the strategies of international factors, like the USA, Japan, China and Russia, towards this region. In this context, according to this vision, Turkey is obliged to strengthen the bilateral relations with Balkan countries, especially with those who are already members or the ones that are pretending to become NATO members, with the aim of strengthening of the Turkish position within this political-defense organization. The unreserved support for membership of countries members of the Adriatic group (2008) are some of the most important reflections of the new Turkish politics towards this region (Davutoğlu, 2004, 123, 237-239; Ali, 2010, 151-152).

The principles of the new concept of Turkish foreign politics as safety for all and giving priority to dialogue for solving crisis had their own reflections on the Turkish diplomacy in the Western Balkans region. Namely, Davutoglu, as the minister of foreign politics of the Republic of Turkey, gave huge efforts for overpassing the misunderstandings and strengthen relations and dialogue between the Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian sides. For implementation of this aim, Turkey initiated a series of meetings, out of which we can mention the Istanbul Summit in 2010, where under the patronage of former Turkish president Abdullah Gul, the presidents of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia took part. These meetings, initiated by Turkish diplomacy had their own reflections on the happening in the Balkans, so that, as the result of Turkish diplomatic efforts, in March 2010, the Serbian parliament adopted a declaration which condemned the Srebrenica massacre and the Serbian president Boris Tadic, along with the Turkish prime minister Erdogan and Turkish minister of foreign affairs Davutoglu, took part at the commemoration of the massacre in the above mentioned town. In this context, we should highlight that one of the most important topics on the agenda of Erdogan during his visit of Sarajevo in 2021 was the meeting with the presidency members of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Ali, 2010, 152-153).

During the 2000s, Turkish-Macedonian relations were characterized by development and continuous deepening of mutual political, economic and cultural relations. As a part

of the support for Euro-Atlantic integration aspirations of North Macedonia, Turkey along with the USA gave great support for full membership of North Macedonia in NATO, simultaneously, Turkish stance regarding the Macedonia-Greek dispute about the name was in the favor of the Macedonian side, thus, the Turkish authorities on several occasions highlighted the support of Macedonian stances within this bilateral dispute. At the same time, the cooperation between Turkey and North Macedonia within the South-East European Cooperation Process (SEECP) and the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), represent an important factor for the development of mutual relations. We should not forget the factor of religious affiliation (Islam) of a part of the population of North Macedonia and the factor of the Turkish ethnicity, which represents an important segment for the determination of Turkish-Macedonian relations. Besides the political, the defense-safety aspect also represents an important segment for Turkish-Macedonian relations. The defense-safety support of Turkey towards North Macedonia continued even after the signing of the Ohrid frame agreement, which put an end to the conflict in 2001. Through the NATO forces mission, Turkey had an active role for the disarmament of the members of UCK and the Turkish army was active within the mission called Allied Harmony, which took place until March 31, 2003. The Turkish country through the members of its military forces also took part in the missions Concordia and Proxima, which lasted until 2005. In this last period, we are witnessing the support from the Turkish army for the Army of North Macedonia through the donation of military means and through training of Macedonian officers in Turkey. At the beginning of XXI century, Turkish proactive and multidimensional foreign politics had and still has important reflections on the Turkey-Kosovo relations. Namely, in the last period, we are witnessing a growing positive trend in mutual relations so that Turkey, like other western factors, the USA, EU and NATO, supported the plan of Martti Ahtisaari which was delivered to the UN Security Council in 2007 regarding the status of Kosovo. However, Russia and China were opposed to this plan and they offered support to the Serbian stances, but the Kosovo authorities on February 17, 2008 declared one-sided independence (Kır, 2008, 4-44). Immediately after the declaration of independence, USA and Turkey were on the top of the list of countries that recognized the independence of the newest country in Europe. In addition, besides it recognized the independence of the newly established country, Turkey also undertook activities to increase the number of countries who recognized the independence of Kosovo. Activities of Turkish diplomacy as a part of its relations with the Arab League, the Organization of Islamic Conference and NATO, contributed to the increase of the number of countries that recognized the independence of this country. These are a few examples of the commitment of Turkish diplomacy for support of Kosovo positions in the international community. Simultaneously, the opening of the first diplomatic mission of Kosovo in Ankara and intensifying of mutual

visits of the political elites of both countries is sufficient evidence about the level of mutual relations (Ali, 2011).

Besides the domain of politics, during the military intervention of the NATO alliance in 1999, as well as the post-war period, Turkey played an important role in the defense-security sphere in Kosovo, so as a part of the NATO forces on the 5th June 1999 it joined KFOR forces with 984 soldiers, who, besides having the objective of maintaining peace and secure the safety of this country, had and still have a contribution for the decrease of ethnical problems and surpassing the problems of the local population in the domain of education, health and culture (Zaman, 2006, 62) The same year, from May to September, the Turkish country was a part of the observing mission of OSCE in Kosovo. In addition, besides the G-7 countries, Russia, Greece, China and the Netherlands, Turkey actively participated in the group called Friends of Kosovo, established by the UN General Secretary, which had an objective to adopt and coordinate the decisions for the future of Kosovo (Tangör, 2007, 257). The Republic of Turkey, as a part of the civil authority of UN, UNMIK had sent 207 civilian police officers. Since May 2005, the Turkish country, as a part of the UNMIK – CIVPOL Police Forces, is participating with 128 civilian police officers and 79 observers. Since May 2007, the Turkish army had taken over the Command of the southern forces in Kosovo for one year (Tangör, 2007, 258-259).

Turkish foreign politics in the new period has important reflections on the bilateral economic relations of this country with the western Balkan countries. As the result of the new concept of Turkish diplomacy – which perceives the functional and active economy as a precondition for successful foreign politics – mutual economic relations are deepening every day and are moving upwards parallel with the political relations. Direct Turkish investments in Albania are reaching 2.5 billion dollars (Davutoğlu, 2004, 123-124; Ali, 2010, 154; "Türkiye'nin Arnavutluk'taki yatırımı 2,5 milyar dolar", 2021). These statistics are showing us that, besides the great Turkish-Albanian political relations, bilateral political relations are under the expectations. Simultaneously, Turkey is on the 11th place of the biggest foreign investors in Bosnia and Herzegovina ("Bosna Hersek'le hedef 2 milyar dolarlık ticaret", 2021). The 2000's are witnessing a growth in mutual Turkish-Kosovo economic relations and an increase of Turkish economic investments in this country. Turkish businessmen are also active in the biggest infrastructural projects of this country. Participation in the public calls for the motorway Morina-Merdar and the concession at the Pristina airport are some of the most important business activities of Turkish businessmen in this country. Also, the foundation of the Turkey-Kosovo Commerce Chamber (2008)

and the organization of the Kosovo-Turkish economic forum (2010) in Istanbul are sufficient proof that is depicturing the positive trend on the economic relation Turkey-Kosovo (Ali, 2011a). On the other hand, besides mutual strengthened relations in the domain of politics and security, in the last period, Turkish-Macedonian relations are also characterized with deepening of economic cooperation which was not on the same level as the political relations during the last years (Ali, 2011b). As a part of the strengthening of bilateral economic relations, in 2009, the business forum Turkey-North Macedonia was held in Istanbul, where high representatives of the political and economic authorities of both countries took part. Simultaneously, we should highlight that in North Macedonia, approximately 100 small and middle companies originally from Turkey are active. In this context, we should highlight the investment from TAV for building and reconstruction of the airports in Skopje and Ohrid, the investment of Cevahir Holding for the construction of few solitaires in Skopje, the Limak group investment and other announced investments (Ali 2011b; Ali, 2012, 199-215). Also, as far as economic relations between Turkey and Balkan countries are concerned, it is very important to highlight that in the last period, as the result of the new vision of Turkish diplomacy, economic relations of Turkey with Western Balkan countries is moving upwards. However, the world economic crisis since 2008, as well as the Covid-19 pandemic, which started in 2020 and is still ongoing, had and it still has negative reflections on these relations. At the same time, having in mind the volume of Turkish economy and the level of political relations between Turkey and countries from the region of Western Balkans, we can state that the level of bilateral economic relations is under the expectations and under the mutual capacity. In the last period, Turkey has also begun an educational invasion in the Western Balkans region. Namely, in the last years, besides the increase of the number of Turkish colleges through the Balkan countries, we are simultaneously witnessing the opening of new high education institutions (like the International Balkan University in Skopje, the International University of Sarajevo etc.), a fact that is witnessing the proactive and multidimensional politics of Turkish diplomacy in this strategically vital regions (Kır, 2008, 4-95; Ali, 2010, 155-156).

However, one of the latest and most complicated challenges of Turkish diplomacy in the Balkans and the relations between Turkey and countries from this region is the issue of the Gulen movement. The above-mentioned movement began its activity in this region in the beginning of the 1990s and that activity resulted in the founding of many primary, secondary and high schools in the Balkan countries, as well as two universities. Besides education, they were and still are very active in the field of business, media and non-government organizations. We should remind that the

Gulen movement used to have support from the Turkish country. This support was becoming more intensive, especially during the rule of the AKP party in Turkey. However, after the unsuccessful coup in Turkey, which happened on July 15, 2016, the Turkish authorities claimed this movement as one of the most dangerous terrorist organizations that are endangering Turkish safety under the accusation that exactly this movement is behind the unsuccessful try for a coup in the country. After that date, the issue of the Gulen Movement became one of the biggest challenges for the relations between Turkey and Western Balkans countries. As the result of the above-mentioned, Turkish authorities requested from Western Balkans governments extradition of members of this organization and closure of their active institutions in this region, a request that transformed into one of the biggest challenges between the relations of Turkey and some countries from the region, like Albania, Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia etc.

Through the Maarif Foundation, Turkey decided to begin a new educational offensive in the Balkans through opening new Turkish educational institutions in some countries of the Balkan region, from primary schools to universities (like the example of Maarif - New York University in Tirana, Maarif schools in Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia etc.), with the objective of an alternative of the educational institutions controlled by the Gulen movement (See "Dünyada Türkiye Maarif Vakfı", 2021). Then, Turkey has an intensive activity in the sphere of religion and religious education in the Western Balkans region. Many students from the Western Balkan countries are studying at theological universities in Turkey, and simultaneously the Turkish Diyanet plays an active role in the deepening of Turkish relations with the Muslim population from this region. The Turkish support in the sphere of religious educations is welcomed by the Western Balkan countries, bearing in mind the fact that the countries from this region are dealing with returning fighters from the war zones in the Middle East. (Ekinci, 2017, 12)

Besides the above-mentioned, Turkish soft power in the countries of Western Balkan is manifested through the broadcast of Turkish serial movies, which are characterized by high ratings between the population of these countries. Only in 2010, 70 Turkish serial movies were sold overseas, the majority of them in the Balkans and the Middle East. In the beginning, their price was between 30 and 50 dollars, in 2010 one television serial film was sold between 20,000 and 50,000 dollars. Hasan Jashari, a sociologist from North Macedonia considers that "the coincidence of some values or traditions from Turkish serial movies with our everyday life makes the serial films even more interesting. The characters, topics locations are known to the population. Our cultures

and geography are close, we are closely connected". Broadcasting Turkish serial films in Western Balkan countries, besides it increases the incomes in Turkey, it also increases the influence of this country in the region". (See Турските серии опиум за народот, 2021)

The last manifestation of Turkish soft power in the Western Balkan countries was during the period of COVID-19 pandemic. At the beginning of Covid-19, Turkey provided medical help for many countries in the world, including Western Balkan countries in their fight against the pandemic. During the pandemic, Turkey sent military aircraft in five different capitals of the Western Balkans to deliver medical help to Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Kosovo and North Macedonia.

Table 1 COVID-19 medical supplies from Turkey to WB

Country	Type of Medical Aid for the countries of Western Balkan			
	Protective Masks	Protective Suits	Protective Goggles	Covid-19 Test Kits
Albania	75,000	2,000	2,000	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	50,000	1,000		1,000
Kosovo	50,000	1,000		1,000
Montenegro	50,000	1,000		1,000
North Macedonia (2 times)	125,000	3,000	2,000	1,000
Serbia	100,000	2,000		1,500

Source: Lika, 2020, 9-10

Besides the above-mentioned, Turkish foreign politics also has cultural reflections towards the Western Balkan countries. Namely, in the last period, Turkey is active in the domain of restoring ottoman historical monuments and establishment of educational institutions from the primary up to the high education ones. As examples for the interest of the Turkish country for investment in the domain of historical monuments of the Ottoman Empire is the restoration of the Mihrab on the Stone bridge, the Mustafa Pasha mosque, Hatuncik mosque in North Macedonia, the bridge of Mostar in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Gazi Mehmet Pasha mosque in Kosovo, the Ethem Beg mosque in Albania and many other religious and historical monuments. Simultaneously, the opening of cultural centers known as Yunus Emre in a few Balkan cities and strengthening of relations between Turkish and Balkan municipalities, as well as organization of various cultural manifestations in some cities in this region, are

examples which are depicturing the interest of Turkey for investment in the domain of culture in the Western Balkans region.

Conclusion

In the new strategic-political conjuncture in the period after the Cold War, the Turkish state began a new initiative in the direction of the development of its relations with the Western Balkan countries. Especially after Erdogan came to rule in 2003, Turkish foreign politics towards this region began prioritizing the protection of interests of Turkish and Muslim minorities and giving advantage to dialogue for solving the crisis in this region. Turkish foreign politics in the new period had and still has important reflections also on the bilateral economic relations of this country with Western Balkan countries. As the result of the new concept of Turkish diplomacy, mutual relations are deepening on daily basis and are moving in the upward direction. Although the economic relations of Turkey with the countries from this region after 2003 are moving upwards, however, the world economic crisis since 2008 and the Covid-10 pandemic that began in 2020 and is still ongoing, the new economic crisis happening in Turkey has and still has negative reflections on these relations. Besides the above-mentioned, Turkish diplomacy towards Western Balkan countries in the recent period is differing through the efficient usage of soft power, which is manifested with deepening of Turkish influence in this region in the sphere of culture, religion, education, which is often the subject of discussion between various political and academic elites.

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PART III

ECONOMICS, TRADE
AND COMMERCE

ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL DETERMINANTS OF THE WESTERN BALKANS' PATH TOWARDS EU MEMBERSHIP

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The Western Balkan countries are small open economies that share economic and political history. As former socialist economies, they made the transition from centrally planned to market economies in the past 25 years. The transition process will end once these countries join the European Union, which is their common goal. The countries have made some progress towards EU membership, but they are at different stages. All countries signed stabilization and association agreements, but only Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo are potential candidates for membership. Others are candidate countries. This chapter will focus on the analysis of the two factors that accelerated growth in CEE countries after their accession to the EU in 2004, 2007, and 2013: trade and foreign direct investment. All transition economies must rely on FDI to bring new technology and know-how, open new jobs, increase the quality of products and trade, without which a country cannot be competitive in the EU market. The EU has identified a few factors why the Western Balkans is attractive for investment: the countries have diverse economies, favorable tax rates, educated population, low labor costs, macroeconomic stability, and are close to the EU, which is the region's main trade partner. The six WB states are members of CEFTA, but intra-CEFTA trade is not pronounced. Kosovo even violated the CEFTA rules in 2018 and imposed 100% tariffs on goods from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia. The neighboring countries should have close economic relations, but in the case of the WB region, the political past determines the economic future. The countries are assimilating with the EU slower than expected and it is not anticipated that they will join the Union in the next few years. In order to do that, they have to achieve political

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stability because the current situation discourages investors from investing in the region and encourages the population to migrate to the EU.

Introduction

The Western Balkan countries – Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia – are small, open economies that have been going through the transition process. The transition is a process of transforming from a centrally planned to a market economy and it ends once a country joins the European Union (EU). The Western Balkan countries are following the path of Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries, with which they share a similar economic past. These countries were also in socialism, and they joined the EU in 2004, 2007, and 2013. For some of them, the transition process ended after less than 15 years of transition, while the Western Balkan region is nowhere near joining the EU a quarter of a century later.

In the socialist system, all decisions, including the economic ones, were determined by the central government. The government decided what would be produced according to five-year plans, therefore the industries were developed based on that decision. Companies were supplied with input and they had to produce a certain quota. If the quota could not be fulfilled, the quality of the products had to be sacrificed, which is one of the legacies that still linger in the Western Balkan region. Trade was limited and manufacturers could not sell their products; it was done by specialized companies. Prices were not determined by the law of supply and demand; they were determined by the central government. Prices of some products were artificially low (below the market price) or extremely high for other products (Berend, 2016). Only 3-4% of the economy was privately owned (Ibid, 2016). The companies were state-owned and unemployment was non-existent. Institutions practically did not exist, especially financial institutions.

The transition process started with the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the dissolution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), the Socialist Federal Republic (SFR) of Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia. In the process, more than twenty new countries were created and for most of them, EU membership was the goal. In order to do so, the countries had to fulfill the Copenhagen criteria (1993) and develop a functioning market economy, institutions, and democratic systems.

The Western Balkan countries – all except Albania – were members of SFR of Yugoslavia. The dissolution of the country started when Slovenia and Croatia

declared their independence on 25 June 1991. They were followed by Macedonia (today North Macedonia) on 25 September 1991, and BiH on 1 March 1992. Serbia and Montenegro formed the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia on 28 April 1992. The country was renamed the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro on 4 February 2003. Montenegro declared its independence on 3 June 2006. Kosovo, which was an autonomous province declared its independence from Serbia on 17 February 2008. Kosovo is recognized as a country by twenty-two EU Member States (except Spain, Cyprus, Greece, Slovakia, and Romania). It is not recognized by BiH and Serbia. The break-up of SFR Yugoslavia was followed by wars – in Slovenia (1991), Croatia (1991-1995), BiH (1992-1995), and Kosovo (1998-1999), which delayed the region's transition (Siljak, 2020: 6). Slovenia was the first former Yugoslav republic to join the EU on 1 May 2004, while Croatia joined on 1 July 2013. The Western Balkan countries have made some progress towards EU membership. Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia are candidates for membership; BiH and Kosovo are potential candidates.

The official relations between the Western Balkans and the EU started in 1999. The EU proposed the new Stabilization and Association Process (SAP) for the five countries of South-Eastern Europe – Albania, BiH, Croatia, Former Yugoslav Republic (FYR) of Macedonia, and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. In 2000, the countries were "potential candidates" for EU membership. The SAP was formally endorsed by the EU and the Western Balkan countries in November of the same year at the Zagreb Summit. The new CARDS program, specially designed for the SAP countries, was introduced by the EU in 2001. The EU perspective for the region was confirmed in 2003 at the Thessaloniki Summit. The SAP is a progressive partnership, in which the EU offers a country a mixture of trade concessions, economic and financial assistance and contractual relationships. It serves as a framework for EU negotiations with the Western Balkan countries. The main aims of the SAP are:

- Stabilization of the countries and encouragement of their swift transition to a market economy;
- Promotion of regional co-operation;
- Preparation of the countries for EU membership (Delegation of the EU to BiH, 2021).

The Economy of the Western Balkans
According to the European Commission (2020a), the Western Balkan countries are moderately prepared to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within

the EU. BiH and Kosovo are at an early stage in developing a functioning market economy, which is one of the key elements of the transition process. The existence of a functioning market economy requires that all prices, as well as trade, should be liberalized and that an enforceable legal system, including property rights, is in place (European Commission, 2019: 71). The Western Balkan countries, just like the CEE countries, experienced a transition recession, which included a decline of GDP, hyperinflation, and increased unemployment. The CEE countries went through the transition process faster because of their determination and financial assistance from the EU, something that the Western Balkan region also has access to. There was a concern that there would be trade diversion between the CEE countries and the old Member States of the EU because of the common external tariff that the new Member States had to apply. Instead, there was trade creation. In 2007, almost 80% of all exports of the new Member States went to the rest of the EU, with 19.5% of exports to other new Member States, which is a 6.2 percent increase compared to 1999. 7.5% of the EU15 exports went to the new Member States, compared to 4.5% a decade ago. The CEE countries upgraded the quality of their products and productivity increased. Before the enlargement, it was expected that the new Member States would specialize in labor-intensive products because low wages were their comparative advantage and made them competitive. Instead, they specialized in capital-intensive products (European Commission, 2009). Improvement in competitiveness to a great extent was due to foreign direct investment (FDI) and high globalization (Palankai, 2010: 12). FDI, mainly from the old Member States, has made it possible to increase the technological content and quality of products (European Commission, 2009).

Transition economies must rely on foreign investors to bring new technology, management style, which will increase labor productivity, improve the quality of the products and open the economy to new markets and more trade. Some of the advantages that the region has that could attract foreign investors are macroeconomic stability, diverse economies, favorable tax rates, educated population, low labor cost, and proximity to the EU.

Macroeconomic Stability
One of the key elements required for a market to function well is an existence of a reasonable degree of macroeconomic stability; i.e. low inflation rate, low budget deficit, and low-scale unemployment because stability is good for growth (Perkins et al., 2014). The Western Balkan region is characterized by a relatively high degree of macroeconomic stability (see Table 1).

Table 1: Macroeconomic Indicators of Western Balkan (2019)

Country	GDP growth (%)	Inflation rate (%)	Fiscal balance (% of GDP)	Public debt (% of GDP)	Unemployment (%)
Albania	2.1	1.4	-1.9	65.8	11.5
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2.8	0.6	1.9	32.8	15.7
Kosovo	4.8	2.7	1.0	17.0	26.5
Montenegro	4.1	0.4	-2.0	76.5	15.1
North Macedonia	3.2	0.8	-2.2	40.6	16.4
Serbia	4.2	1.7	-0.2	52.9	9.0

Source: Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies (WiiW) data

Before the Corona pandemic started in 2020, the Western Balkan countries' GDP growth rates ranged between 2.1% in Albania and 4.8% in Kosovo, which was higher than the EU average, 1.5%. The countries converged with the EU in the period 2004-2019 (see Figure 1). The dispersion mostly decreased in the analyzed period, indicating that the Western Balkan countries were catching up with the EU average. Slight divergence (increased dispersion) occurred only in the period 2014-2015. At the beginning of the analyzed period, the average per capita GDP of the Western Balkan countries was only 28% of the EU average and the ratio increased to 35% in 2019. In 2004, the average growth rate in the Western Balkan was 5.4% and it decreased by 1.7 percentage points in 2019, which is the reason why the region does not converge faster. In the EU, the average rate decreased by 1.8 percentage points.

Figure 1: Sigma convergence of the Western Balkan countries towards the EU
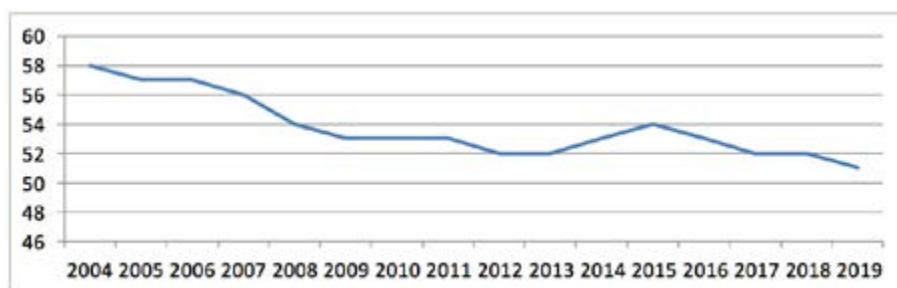
Source: Author's calculations based on World Bank data

One of the characteristics of the centrally planned system was prices artificially determined by the central government. In order to become functioning market economies, the countries had to liberalize prices and most progress has been made in this area (EBRD Transition Indicators, 2021). After a period of hyperinflation during the transition recession, prices in the region started stabilizing in the mid-1990s. In 2019, Montenegro had the lowest inflation rate, 0.4%, while the highest rate was in Kosovo 2.7%. The European Central Bank (2021) defines price stability as "a year-on-year increase in the Harmonized Index of Consumer Prices (HICP) for the euro area of below 2%"; therefore, Kosovo is only slightly deviating from the reference value.

Budgetary positions in the region are also stable. The countries registered either a budget surplus or a budget deficit that is below 3 percent (the reference value from the Maastricht criteria). They also have stable general government debt rates (as a percentage of GDP). Montenegro has the highest debt rate, 76.5%, and the lowest rate is in Kosovo, 17%.

One of the major problems in the Western Balkans is unemployment. The rates have decreased in the previous years, but they are still higher than the rates in the EU. Unemployment did not decrease solely because people found jobs. The labor force decreased because people have migrated to the EU, mostly to Slovenia and Croatia. The first residence permits for Western Balkan citizens were issued by nine EU Member States (European Commission, 2020b).

Diverse Economy

The Western Balkan countries are small, but open and diverse economies. They do not rely on one sector, which is of extreme importance during a recession because they are not vulnerable to asymmetric shocks. Albania, North Macedonia and Montenegro are World Trade Organization (WTO) members, while BiH and Serbia's accession negotiations are ongoing. The countries' main trade partner is the EU, as the region exports 81.5% of their goods to the EU and imports 61.1% from the EU. The main trade sectors are machinery and appliances (24.9% of exports and 21.9% of imports), chemicals (10% of exports and 11.5% of imports), and base metals (11.4% of exports and 9.3% of imports). The region's trade with the world has increased by 192.6% in the period 2010-2020. Imports increased by 175.7% and exports increased by 230.9% (Figure 2) (European Commission, 2021a).

Together with Moldova, the Western Balkan countries are members of the Central European Free Trade Association (CEFTA), which is a trade agreement among non-

EU countries and serves as a transitional organization for the countries that are in the process of joining the EU. CEFTA is a free trade area, indicating that there is free trade among the members of the agreement, but each country retains an individual trade policy towards third countries. Intra-CEFTA trade is not pronounced. The share of intra-CEFTA trade in total trade ranges from 8.5 percent in Serbia to 30.4 percent in Montenegro and neither country has all other Western Balkan countries among its top ten trade partners. On the other hand, Serbia is one of the main trade partners for other countries in the region.

Low Labor Cost

One of the comparative advantages and a source of competitiveness of the Western Balkan region is low labor cost. The average labor cost per hour in the Western Balkans[1] is EUR 3.7, only 14.1 percent of the EU average (EUR 26). The CEE countries' average (EUR 9) is 34.6 percent of the EU average.

In 2016 (the latest data available), the labor cost per hour in the Western Balkans ranged from EUR 2.41 in Albania to EUR 5.84 in Montenegro. The only competitors among the EU countries are Bulgaria and Romania, EUR 4.5 and EUR 5.3, respectively. In the EU, the lowest labor cost per hour was in Bulgaria and the highest was EUR 41.3 in Denmark (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Labor Costs per Hour in the Western Balkans and the EU Member States in 2016
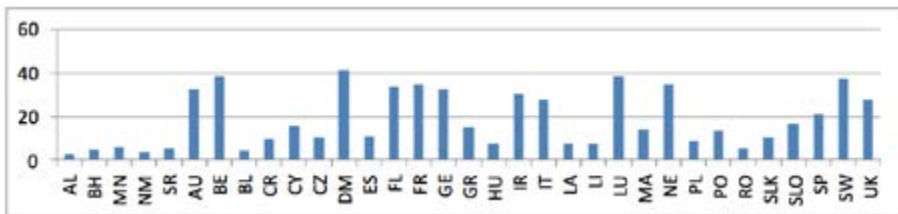
Source: European Commission

Low labor costs are the advantage for the Western Balkans because over 50 percent of the manufactured goods in the region are classified as labor and resource-intensive, compared to 30 percent in the EU (Sanfey et al., 2016). Therefore, low labor costs are important for export-oriented companies and potential investors, as the countries export most of their goods to the EU.

[1]Data for Kosovo are not available

Favorable Tax Rates

A stable tax system and favorable incentives are important factors in deciding on where to invest. The Western Balkan countries have made significant progress in reforming their tax systems and the tax rates in the region have been relatively stable. Corporate tax rates in the Western Balkan region range between 9 percent in Montenegro and 15 percent in Albania and Serbia. In the EU, the rates range between 9 percent in Hungary and 31 percent in France. The Western Balkan countries do not make any difference between foreign and domestic companies. However, non-resident companies are only taxed on their income generated in the host country.

The total tax rate (as a percentage of profit) measures the amount of taxes and mandatory contributions payable by businesses after accounting for allowable deductions, and exemptions as a share of commercial profits (World Bank, 2021a). Even though there are differences among the Western Balkan countries, the total tax rate is lower, on average, than in the EU. The lowest rate is in North Macedonia, 13 percent, while the highest is in Albania, 37.3 percent. In the EU, the rates range between 20.5 percent in Luxembourg to 62.6 percent in France. North Macedonia has one of the lowest total tax rates in the world, mostly because there are no labor taxes. BiH, Kosovo, and Montenegro also have relatively low total tax rates. Albania and Serbia are the Western Balkan countries where total tax rates (37.3 percent and 36.7 percent, respectively) approach the average EU level of 40.4 percent.

The Western Balkan countries have favorable tax rates, but the number of hours to prepare and pay taxes and the number of taxes that need to be paid (244.3 hours per year) is higher than in the EU (170.4). In BiH, it takes 411 hours every year to prepare and pay taxes. Bulgaria is the only country in the EU that exceeds the number with 453 hours per year. North Macedonia's score (119 hours per year) is lower than the EU average. The country has efficiently implemented a so-called "regulatory guillotine" project under which it drastically reduced regulatory burdens and red tape. It is the only country in the region with a successfully functioning one-stop-shop for opening a business (Sanfey et al., 2016).

The total number of taxes paid by businesses in Albania, BiH, and Serbia ranges between 33 and 35, and it is much higher than the EU average, 11.5. Croatia, which is a former transition country, has the highest number of taxes paid in the EU, 35, while the lowest is in Sweden, 6. North Macedonia is the most efficient country in the Western Balkan region. The country has carried out tax reforms. The number of tax payments per year decreased from 43 in 2006 to 7 in 2017.

Strategic Location

One of the most important advantages for the Western Balkan region is its geographical proximity to the EU. The region borders with EU members; Croatia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, and Greece, and it has easy and free access to EU markets. In 2000, the EU granted autonomous trade preferences to all Western Balkan countries. The preferences allow nearly all exports to enter the EU except for duties or quotas, with the exception of sugar, wine, baby beef, and certain fishery products (European Commission, 2021c). All Western Balkan countries, except Kosovo, have signed a free trade agreement with the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), which is the intergovernmental organization of Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland.

Even though it does have a favorable geographical position and borders with the EU, the region, on average, does not attract more FDI than the EU. The region's average FDI inflow in 2019 was 5.6% of GDP, compared to 7.9% in the EU. The country with the lowest FDI inflow is BiH (1.9%), while the highest rate is in Serbia (8.3%) (see Figure 3). The EU Member States are the main investors in the region. Other major investors include Switzerland, Russia, and Turkey. Switzerland invests in all Western Balkan countries, Russia invests in BiH and Montenegro, and Turkey invests in Albania, Kosovo, and North Macedonia. Among the Western Balkan countries, Serbia invests in BiH and Montenegro, and Albania invests in Kosovo (Siljak, 2020).

Figure 3: FDI inflow in 2019 (percentage of GDP)
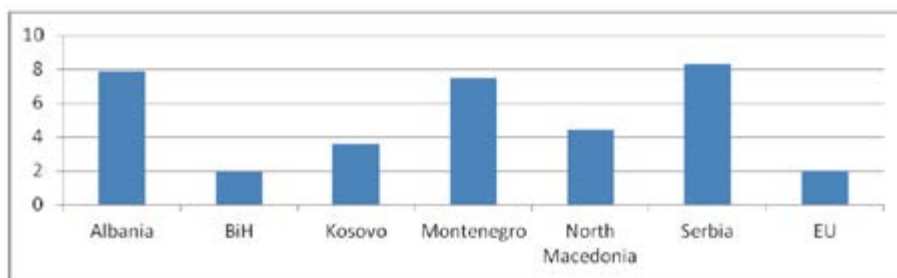
Source: World Bank

Challenges of Attracting Investments

If the Western Balkan countries can offer many advantages to foreign investors, then why is their transition process slow? The answer is inefficient institutions and political instability in the region. Institutions are defined as "the rules of the game in a society or, more formally, are the humanly devised constraints that shape human interaction" (North, 1990: 3). Efficient institutions mean the establishment of private property, a

strong and uncorrupt legal system, efficient markets, and macroeconomic stability with a small and supporting state (Redek and Sušjan, 2005: 1008). The transition process is a process of building new institutions required by a capitalist economy (Ibid: 995). While the new EU Member States benefited from strong institutional change (Aralica et al., 2018), countries that have been in socialism longer have worse property rights institutions and more corruption (Uberti, 2018).

The Property Rights index and the Corruption Perceptions index are used as proxies in the analysis of institutions. Compared to the EU average Index score (77.0), property rights are less protected in the Western Balkans (53.8). The Index value ranges between 44.1 in BiH and 62.6 in North Macedonia. Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) shows that the Western Balkan countries are among the most corrupt countries in Europe. The countries are positioned between 67th (Montenegro) and 111th (BiH and North Macedonia) out of 180 countries. The only countries that are more corrupt are Ukraine, Russia and Moldova.

The Western Balkan region is burdened by its history. Several countries were at war thirty years ago, but the tensions remain to the degree that foreign actors, such as the EU and the United States of America (USA), have to intervene in the dialogue. The Political Stability index shows that the Western Balkan countries are among the least stable countries in Europe.

The tensions in the region are best reflected in the countries' trade patterns. As it was already mentioned, Western Balkan countries are members of CEFTA. The EU does not participate in CEFTA and it cannot help resolve disputes; it can only give recommendations. How the political situation affects the economy of the region was shown in November 2018, when Kosovo imposed 100-percent tariffs on goods imported from BiH and Serbia. The countries have not recognized Kosovo as an independent country. Furthermore, the citizens of Kosovo need a visa if they want to enter BiH.

On its way towards being internationally recognized as an independent country, Kosovo has applied for Interpol and UNESCO membership several times. The last time when Interpol rejected Kosovo's membership (November 20, 2018), Serbia and BiH were among the countries that voted against it. The Government of Kosovo accused Serbia of leading a wild campaign to pressure countries to oppose Kosovo's bid. The first time Kosovo imposed 10-percent tariffs on products from BiH and Serbia was on November 6 2018 because of their "negative behavior towards

Kosovo" (Rudic and Morina, 2018). Just one day after being rejected from Interpol membership, Kosovo imposed a 100-percent tariff on all goods produced in BiH and Serbia. The government stated that the tariffs would be abolished once Serbia recognized Kosovo as an independent country. The economic reasoning for the tariffs is that they will protect local goods and producers (Bacigalupo, 2018), even though tariffs are against CEFTA rules. The EU has asked Kosovo to abolish the tariffs, but the country declined and the tariffs are still in place. Kosovo is not among the main trade partners for BiH and Serbia. On the other hand, the share of Kosovo's trade with Serbia is 5.9% and 1.3% with BiH.

Conclusion

The Western Balkan region consists of small economies that can offer a lot of advantages to foreign investors. However, a lack of competitiveness and lagging behind in developing functioning market economies hamper the region's economic growth and development. They lag behind the EU average and the CEE countries, which should be their role model in how to go through the transition process faster and more successfully. The region does not have an alternative to EU membership. The countries must improve the relations in the region, which will lead to political stability and more investment. Therefore, they have to open their economies to more trade and investment, which are the main drivers of growth and can help countries converge faster towards the EU. However, nothing can be done without building efficient institutions. High levels of corruption and a lack of property rights protection are some of the key areas that negatively affect the transition process. The quality of institutions in the Western Balkans is not sufficient to stimulate economic growth, but it slows it down (Popovic et al., 2020: 173).

The only thing that the countries can do is to put the past behind and try to cooperate. A step forward in regional relations was when Serbia offered to vaccinate against Covid-19 citizens of neighboring countries. For some people, such as citizens of BiH whose government did not purchase one dose at the time, this was the only hope that they would avoid the disease that has killed millions of people. The countries must provide a better place for living because two negative trends have already occurred: low natality and a high degree of migration to the EU, especially among young people. People leave not only because of a lack of economic perspective; they leave because of uncertainty and the constant threat that wars will occur again (Siljak, 2020: 18).

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NEW REGIONAL TRADE ARCHITECTURE IN THE EMERGING BALKANS: CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVES BEYOND CONFLICTS

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Τhis chapter has an ambition to bring more light to the background of the current position of trade architecture in the emerging Balkans, and recent initiatives in trade partner's countries through the Berlin Process that will be increasingly challenged. The emerging Balkans had made several attempts at economic integration within the region. Although export in absolute terms has grown in all countries, it was driven by the rise of exports to the EU market rather than from intraregional trade. Also, our comparative analysis indicates that the emerging Balkans still has a long way to go to reach full trade integration or to boost regional trade integration. The region's intraregional trade remains very low and very disappointing throughout the last decade while trade among countries has a little significant impact on regional economies. The region remains ineffective and economically fragmented, largely due to political tensions between Serbia and its neighboring countries. Unfortunately, politics have played a decisive role in this disappointing record of accomplishments. Enhancing economic cooperation within the emerging Balkans in the context of the Berlin Process is one of the last EU initiative. Although it is still too early to tell how successful the EU initiative will be, the EU financial and political support seems to be stronger than it was ever before.

Introduction

In the last three decades, Central and East Europe countries (CEE) have been transitioning from socialist to market-oriented economies and have undergone a

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variety of transition paths. In fact, at the same time, their transformation to market-oriented economies was accompanied by the applications to join the EU. A number of countries have made significant progress in this process and have been granted full EU membership. The second group of the countries is still on that path of integration into the EU through accession negotiations or continuous process of enlargement, while the remaining transition countries will have to complete the transition process independently of this regional integration.

The disintegration of former Yugoslavia, which began in 1990 in Slovenia and later extended to other neighboring countries, was accompanied by entry into the transition process. In the initial stages, the disintegration of Yugoslavia was accompanied by armed conflicts and escalated wars in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo (Korkut and Mulalić, 2012). It caused severe humanitarian and economic consequences led to the deepest economic recession in a region.

There are no official data and indicators that can give an accurate picture of the interconnectedness of the economies of the Western Balkans, especially in the post-war period. However, experience with the post-conflict level of economic disintegration indicates that income levels are unlikely to return soon to their projected economic path. Much of these differences in income levels can be explained with a very low post-conflict level of economic integration among the region's countries (it might be the lowest level in its economic history) far smaller than during the existence of former Yugoslavia. For example, with the exception of Serbia, most of countries region reached their pre-transition level of GDP of 1990 only subsequently, with Albania reaching that level in 2000, Romania in 2002, Bulgaria and Croatia in 2005, Montenegro in 2008, North Macedonia in 2012, and B&H in 2016 (Ganić, 2021).

Of particular interest to economists have been those aspects of the trade structure of emerging Balkan countries. Some economists argued that they are more "parallel" rather than complementary. Thus, such an economic structure does not encourage and promote growth in trade or intra-regional economic cooperation. However, three decades of following the transition process have raised questions about the effectiveness of their economic policies and models. Also, it was a dilemma whether invested efforts in the accession of these countries to the EU or create any form of a free trade area (FTA). Despite such widespread reservations, the great majority of EU leaders accept the necessity for the creation of a regional market for the emerging Balkans and to unleash the untapped economic potential of the region. This is especially true of the regional market for goods and services, to facilitate trade in agricultural products,

boost the private sector, energy and tourism. Therefore, deeper economic integration at the level of the emerging Balkans is necessary, because a region is faced with continued challenges from weak competitiveness, high unemployment and significant brain drain (European Commission, 2020).

Regionalism: Impetus for Change

Since the collapse of socialism and the end of the Cold War, it has been clear that citizens of the emerging Balkans have been disappointed with the outcome of a series of reforms towards establishing a functioning market economy. There was a widespread perception that trade liberalization is essential for the entire reforms process putting the spotlight on a reshaping of local economies. The primary goal of this reform's efforts is to harmonize the level of domestic prices to the level of world prices and strengthen mutual trade cooperation.

Regionalism does not sound like something new. Regionalism, regional cooperation and regional trade arrangements have been growing features of internal economies after World War II. Today, however, we are facing a new kind of regionalism triggered by the advance of globalization and strengthening regional institutions and the creations of sub-regional ones in Europe. The idea of a free trade area (FTA) had gathered strength by 1999 when the EU launched an advance towards the accession process of emerging Balkans. For example, the EU initially strongly supported the creation of a FTA in Southeast Europe.

Regional co-operation is one of the formal conditions of the Stabilization and Association Process (SAP), launched in May 1999 by the EU to facilitate the accession of the Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, North Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro) to the Union. The SAP also consists of a) trade facilities - the so-called Autonomous Trade Measures (ATM), in force since autumn 2000 for all SAP countries, b) EU financial assistance and c) the Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA), which institutionalizes ATM and obliges EU accession countries to align their legislation with the EU acquis.

Accordingly, the EU has extended autonomous trade preferences for the five Western Balkan countries with a great deal of interest focusing on the SAP. Originally launched in 1999, the SAP is required to actively encourage Western Balkan countries to engage in a dialogue with the EU in developing a wider cooperative established network of bilateral free trade agreements. Interestingly, Western Balkan's trade and economic relationship has evolved considerably since of signing of a Memorandum

of Understanding (MoU) created both opportunities and challenges for the region. For example, the signing of a MoU allowed the abolition of at least 90% of all tariff lines and tariff liberalization created huge opportunities for the rise of intra-trade in the region (The European Institute Foundation, 2004). Furthermore, the MoU required countries to reduce the level of trade protection, customs duties and leaving the policy of high tariff protection including liberalization of trade, privatization of local enterprises, and liberalization of foreign transactions (Drabek and Bacchetta, 2004).

It seems that market access to the EU market is vital for the South East European region. The topic of regional trade integration and its liberalization was intensified with the signing of the MoU in 2001. It was given impetus for further liberalization in a region and facilitating trade under the auspices of the Stability Pact for Southeast Europe. New initiatives aimed at creating a network of 32 bilateral agreements on mutual liberalization of trade in industrial and agricultural products between eight the countries of Southeastern Europe (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro, Macedonia, Moldavia and Romania) at the beginning of the 2000s. But, more importantly, this dynamic of trade integration allowed many of those countries to have preferential status in trade with the EU (Ganić and Branković, 2016).

A summit at the Thessaloniki (Stabilization and Association Summit) in 2003 agreed that each country has been moving step by step towards EU membership by satisfying its obligations under the SAP principles for enlargement. After Romania's and Bulgaria's entry into the EU on 1 January of 2007, in the CEFTA remain seven countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Moldova, Serbia and Montenegro. The agreement opened up markets for both sides and provides an opportunity for reduction and eventual elimination of tariffs on most industrial goods between CEFTA members.

From the economic point of view, a crucial stage in encouraging free trade within the region was the signing of a new Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA 2006), on December 19, 2006 in Bucharest, Romania. The new agreement was in complete compliance with the WTO Agreements, as well as the rights and obligations of the parties, under applicable EU laws and regulations. This agreement replaced the network of 32 bilateral free trade agreements that regulated trade relations in SEE. The main arguments for initiating multilateral agreement (CEFTA 2006) can be summarized as follows (Cvijanović, et. al 2012):

- Further trade liberalization and improved competitiveness of countries in the region;
- Harmonization of rules to increase safety for investors, increasing competitiveness, changing the image of the region;
- Simplification of procedures to encourage both domestic and foreign investment to invest more in the region through various forms of cooperation, such as joint ventures, exchange of professional personnel, technical innovation and joint appearance on third markets;
- Preparation for EU membership (i.e. regional cooperation as a condition for progress in the integration process) and introduction of the acquis communautaire in the sectoral level.

Whither CEFTA 2006 Development?

Thanks to the efforts of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, a number of regional agreements were signed. Among the best known examples of such agreements are: the regional Free Trade Agreement - CEFTA, the Energy Community Treaty in SEE, the agreements in the field of traffic and initiatives in the fight against corruption, arms control and police cooperation etc.

The Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA) was ratified in 2007 and now comprising seven countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia and the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) on behalf of Kosovo. Former CEFTA parties: Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia left their memberships when they became the EU members. The CEFTA sets uniform trade rules across the whole of South Eastern Europe (Western Balkans plus Moldova). The EU is not a party to CEFTA, but it supports the process.

Although the results of CEFTA memberships are varied, a number of weaknesses have been identified. For example, the intraregional trade currently remains low although a share of individual CEFTA-2006 country is higher than average on it. The EU-27 countries were the main export market for all CEFTA members. The high level of dependence on the EU market was the result of special trade preferences granted by the EU and the aspirations of countries in the region to become part of the EU single market. A closer look at the geographic distribution of trade in CEFTA -2006 countries reveals different level concentration. For example, between 2010 and 2019, about 66% of the region's exports are with the EU as the most important trading partner. Experiences vary from country to country. The share ranges from 80.7% in

North Macedonia, 76.8% in Albania, followed B&H (73%) to just 30.1% in Kosovo and 39.4% in Moldova (Table 3). Trade with the rest of the world represents 26% of their total export and 24% of their total import (2019). Figure 1 displays exports, by destination as per cent of total exports of CEFTA 2006 members.

Figure 1 Exports and Imports by destination as per cent of total exports
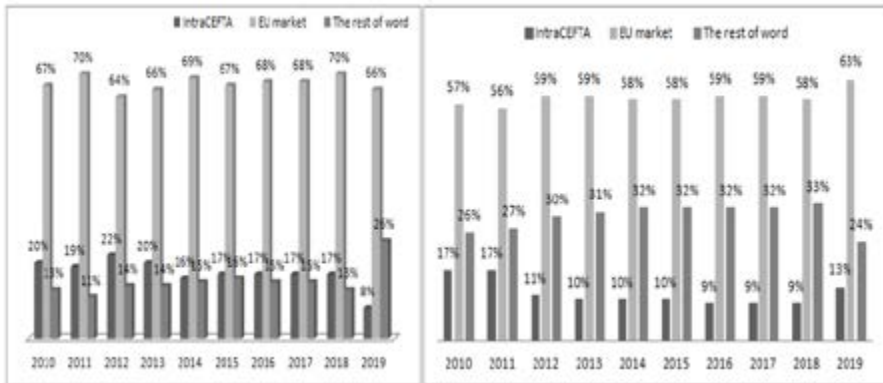
Source: Author's elaboration on CEFTA statistic data

Trade with the EU remains for all countries in the region more important than intraregional trade, in terms of imports and exports. In 2018, or average terms, intraregional exports was very low about 8% of total exports. This figure covers a range from 47.2% in Kosovo to 10% in Albania if we ignore Moldova as the lowest integrated country (Table 1).

Table 1. Exports, by CEFTA 2006 countries

Country	Export		IntraCEFTA		EU market		EFTA		The rest of World	
Albania	2010	2018	9.98	19.1	70.2	76.8	4.24	0.96	15.6	3.6
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2010	2018	20.8	16.6	69.8	73	2.37	2.3	7.24	8.16
North Macedonia	2010	2018	26.2	10	62.9	80.7	0.6	0.16	10	9.14
Montenegro	2010	2018	39.5	40.8	55.33	44.8	0.66	8.79	4.5	6.1
Serbia	2010	2018	37.3	19.4	57.2	65.3	1.83	0.95	3.6	14.3
Moldova	2010	2018	0.44	0.94	47.4	39.4	1.95	2.23	50.2	57.4
Kosovo	2010	2018	22.5	47.2	45.4	30.1	6.02	14.7	26.1	7.96

Source: The author's calculations and elaborations on CEFTA trade statistics

On the import side, we found that intraregional import was 13% in 2019 (Figure 2). The share ranges from 28% in Montenegro and 25.5% in Kosovo to just 0.7% in Moldova and 4.4% in Serbia (Table 2). Between 2010 and 2018, integration across CEFTA 2006 countries through trade flows was slowed by decreasing in intensity, especially on the import side as well as on the export side. By countries, it is visible that comparable shares of intraregional import in total import have decreased in all countries.

With the exception Albania, Kosovo and Montenegro similar trend was found on intraregional export side. In 2018, with the point of comparable shares of the intraregional trade, the two smallest CEFTA 2006 countries Montenegro and Kosovo are the most prominent intraregional exporters and importers. For example, Serbia as the biggest economy of the region exported about 19.4% of total export goods to and imported only 4.4% of total import of goods from the rest of CEFTA-2006 members. B&H as CEFTA's second largest economy was the third intraregional importer and fifth intraregional exporter (Table 1 and Table 2). It remains a relatively low level of integration and the business environment in the region continues to be challenging.

Table 2: Imports, by CEFTA 2006 countries

Country	Import		IntraCEFTA		EU market		EFTA		The rest of World	
Albania	2010	2018	7	7	66.5	60.9	1.6	1.9	25	30.4
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2010	2018	19.8	13.1	76	66	1.18	0.78	3	20.2
North Macedonia	2010	2018	9.4	9	54	62	1.8	1	35	28
Montenegro	2010	2018	40.4	28.5	37.7	48.3	1	1.4	21	21.8
Serbia	2010	2018	7.5	4.4	56	74	1.5	1.6	35	20
Moldova	2010	2018	0.8	0.7	44	48	0.8	1	54.5	50.3
Kosovo	2010	2018	35	25.5	41	43.5	1	1	23.4	30

Source: The authors' calculations and elaborations on CEFTA trade statistics

The volume of import-export between the Western Balkans and the EU is important because Europe remains the largest trading partner of CEFTA-2006 countries. The EU market is essential for the export oriented sector of the CEFTA 2006 countries. Between 2010 and 2018 the share of the EU market in total exports of CEFTA-2006 countries increased in all countries except Moldova and Kosovo, while the share of EU market in total imports of CEFTA-2006 increased in all countries as well, except in Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina. For Albania's and Serbia's market,

the CEFTA 2006 was 2.72 and 4.4 times more significant respectively, as an export market then as an import market, while for Kosovo 1.84 times. Kosovo has had a trade deficit with almost all countries of the region, while it was most pronounced in trade with Albania and Macedonia. Moldova has a marginal share in intratrade with other CEFTA 2006 members.

Compelling Ideas and Continuous Efforts

A transformation of the Stability Pact for South East Europe in the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), between 2006 and 2008 was followed by the channelization of many initiatives for regional cooperation. Building regional cooperation is also a good prerequisite for emerging Balkan countries on their path ahead to EU membership. The EU itself is based on the model of regional cooperation and the same model is set as a mandatory prerequisite for further integration of the region into the EU. The RCC includes the emerging Balkan countries in order to encourage the development of regional cooperation, as well as to promote European and Euro-Atlantic integration processes, covering the main areas of common interest with the priorities of the EU projects.[2]

Also, there are several areas which should be given a special priority, as follows: economic development and strengthening of trade and economic ties, building partnerships in key growth sectors (infrastructure, energy, etc.), and the fight against organized crime and corruption and cooperation in the field of security. The new development strategy the SEE 2020 has been launched by the OECD, and its objectives are derived from the development Europe 2020 strategy.

The strategy sets out key objectives to be carried out in the coming eight years. Each of the five pillars have defined objectives, as well as mechanisms for the further implementation and monitoring of them were dopted at the ministerial conference held in Tirana in 2012. The Strategy includes a series of decisions aimed at streamlining economic development allowing the private sector to create new jobs in the region. The strategy is expected to facilitate the achievement of the following general objectives, which are further elaborated in the framework of development pillars (The South East Europe 2020 Strategy):

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[2] In the strategy of SEE 2020 are included the following countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia.

- An increase in average GDP per capita in SEE countries, compared to an average EU with 36.4% (2010) to 44% (by 2020);
- An increase in total trade of goods and services: from 94.4 billion (2010) to 209.5 billion € by 2020;
- Reduction of the trade deficit in SEE countries: from -15.7% (average for the period 2008-2010) to -12.3% of GDP by 2020;
- Creation of a million new jobs in the countries of the SEE by 2020;
-

Implementation of the objectives of Strategy requires a more comprehensive approach and clearly specified steps to be taken in order to achieve the same. The strategy defines a comprehensive development pattern for the region and seeks to stimulate the key long-term growth factors: innovation, skills and greater trade in the region.

The key pillars of development the SEE Strategy of 2020 are:

1. **Integrated Growth** - implies an increased volume of international trade and investment at the regional level, in a non-discriminatory, transparent and predictable manner. It is expected in the coming period, according to the first pillar: a.) An increase in SEE intra-regional trade in goods by more than 140% and b.) An increase in overall annual FDI inflows to the region by at least 160%. Within the framework of an integrated growth strategy three key dimensions are defined Free Trade Area, Competitive Economic Environment, and Integration into Global Economy).

2. **Smart Growth** - relates to greater commitment to innovation and competitiveness in terms of added value, not higher labor costs. The main goal of this pillar is to stimulate the development of growth based on knowledge in all countries of the region. To achieve this goal, this pillar aims to stimulate innovation, in order to strengthen the competitive advantage. In accordance with the objectives of the Strategy SEE 2020 it is expected to: a) Increase in GDP per person employed by 32% and b) Add 300,000 highly qualified people to the workforce. Within this pillar, we can distinguish the following different four dimensions: Education and Competencies, R&D and Innovation, Digital Society, and Culture and Creative Sectors.

3. **Sustainable Growth** - This type of pillar is capable of supporting the importance of enhancing the competitiveness of the private sector and implementing energy efficiency policy in SEE countries. It covers sectors of Energy, Transport, Environment Dimensions and Competitiveness.

4. **Inclusive Growth** - This type of pillar is characterized by the development of new skills, job creation and creation of a healthy work environment. The purpose of this pillar is to improve the development process of employment through the development of a new skills, job creation and labor market participation of all, including the situation of vulnerable groups in the market place. Accordingly, it is envisaged that the increase in the overall employment rate, as a percentage of the 15+ population, from 39.5% to 44.4%, respectively. In this developmental pillar we can differentiate the following dimensions: "Employment" (e.g. labor mobility, labor market policies, social economy), and "Health".

5. **Governance for Growth** – involves an increase in the capacity of public administration to strengthen the rule of law and support in the fight against corruption, in order to create a better business environment and the provision of public services that are essential for economic development. In accordance with the Strategy, it is planned to improve the government's effectiveness, as measured by the World Bank Governance Index; from 2.33 to 2.9, by 2020. In this developmental pillar the following dimensions can be observed: "Effective Public Services"; "Anti Corruption"and "Justice".

Also, the strategy sets a vision for a new development path for the SEE countries by setting ambitious targets to transform and improve the living standard in the region. An inclusive strategy involves the direct participation of governments from the region, the regional structures and international actors, through establishing mechanisms for its implementation and monitoring. Regional structures will endeavor to ensure direct participation of relevant ministries with a clear mandate and the organization has provided the consultation and ongoing support, including support at the highest political level.

Some of the reasons for the preoccupation with the SEE Strategy of 2020 will be clearer when we look at some of the facts related to the process towards meeting the SEE 2020 targets. The annual report from 2019 prepared by the RCC presents data across all available indicators from the Strategy of 2020. However, the progress differs across the countries. Although progress continues to be made, it remains unlikely that 2020 targets for the region will be met. In fact, made progress is still not rapid enough to meet the targets.

Table 3: Progress towards meeting the SEE 2020 targets

SEE 2020	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2020 Target	Prog. from baseline towards target
Headline Indicator	(Base-line)										
Overall Strategic Goals											
1. GDP per capita relative to the EU average (in PPS), %	32.8	33.4	33.5	35.1	34.9	34.7	35.2	35.3	35.8	38	44%
2. Total trade in goods and services (EUR million)	54407	62758	63412	66853	69954	72922	78391	88235	97857	129500	58%
3. Trade balance, trade in goods (% of GDP)*	-22.9	-24	-24.6	-20.1	-20.5	-19.5	-18.5	-19.30	-19.50	-20.80	94%
Integrated Growth											
4. Intra-regional trade in goods (% of GDP)*	9.6	9.9	9.5	9.1	9.3	9.1	9.1	9.7	9.6	14.3	0%
5. Overall FDI Inflows (EUR million)	3,611	5,863	3,021	3,721	3,624	4,618	4,550	4,985	6,606	7,300	81%
Smart Growth											
6. GDP per person employed (EUR)	27,869	30,144	30,635	30,818	30,924	31,221	30,395	30,088	31,030	36,300	26%
7. No of highly qualified persons in the workforce (mil)	1.18	1.24	1.29	1.37	1.49	1.56	1.62	1.67	1.59	1.44	156%
Sustainable Growth											
8. Net enterprise creation (no. of companies)	27,568	41,977	39,339	37,996	42,854	83,449	58,473	51,632	29,335	26,790	109%
9. Share of Renewables in Gross Final Energy Consumption	23.9	21.5	23.2	25.3	25.7	25	24.9	23.4	n/a	30.7	-7%
Inclusive Growth											
10. Employment rate - age group 20-64, %*	50.3	50.4	49.5	49.8	51.6	52.9	55.5	58.9	57.1	57.9	89%
Governance for Growth											
11. Government's effectiveness, WGI (scale 0-5)	2.2	2.23	2.28	2.3	2.47	2.42	2.42	2.45	n/a	2.65	54%

Source: South East Europe 2020- RCC Annual report on implementation for 2019.

For instance, the progress in increasing the growth and convergence as Target 1 stood at 35.8% of EU average (2018) or 44% throws the progress made towards meeting targets for Target 1. It ranges from Kosovo (71%) and Serbia (70%) as frontrunners with closest to reach their respective 2020 targets to Albania (12%) and B&H (27%) that lagging behind the rest of the countries. Progress has been higher in expanding trade (Target 2) with reaching 58% of the set target 2020 except Albania (28%) and B&H (43%) and generally the region is not on track to meet this target soon. Only Kosovo (82%) and North Macedonia (86%) as frontrunners are on track to meet this target soon. However, the region is close to meet Target 3: Trade balance- trade in goods (% of GDP) reaching 94% of 2020 target.

When it comes to Intra-regional trade in goods (% of GDP) the current rate of progress is stagnated and to far below the needed to reach the 2020 target. Despite the existing free trade arrangement the region made almost no progress from the baseline. Out of the six countries Montenegro, Serbia and North Macedonia scored the highest and already reached the Target 5 about FDI inflows while Albania and Kosovo are too far below the needed to reach the 2020 target. Despite some efforts and commitments to reach Target 6, the report states that many governments have not take the serious steps and reforms of their economy. For example, the progress in increasing GDP per person employed almost have been stagnated over the years with 26% of 2020 target and reaching better living standard by 2020 remains a mirage.

Data for target 7 shows that the region considerably increased the number of highly qualified persons in the workforce reaching this target before 2020. When it comes to increase net enterprise creation the region was already above target 2020 (109%) compared to baseline (Target 8).

On the share of renewable energy, the region made enough progress to be ahead of the indicative trajectory towards the aimed 20% share of renewable in final energy consumption (Target 9). For example, B&H and Montenegro are scored highest although the entire region is significantly above the EU average 2020 target of 20%. Progress so far on the implementation of the Inclusive Growth has been uneven in some countries as North Macedonia, Albania and Serbia indicate positive trends in the labor market and a steady increase in newly created jobs. According to this target of 2020, the best-ranked country is Albania (161%) followed by Montenegro (144%) and Serbia (120%). Other top performers include North Macedonia (85%) B&H (82%), Kosovo (67%) on track to meet this target soon.

Public administration reform remains also not ended process. Obviously, progress is necessary for some areas and the region will need to redouble its efforts to strengthen governance at all levels, improve the quality and accountability of administration, increase of professionalism, de-politicization and transparency.

The issue of regional co-operation has become inevitable not only for assessing the progress of the Western Balkans (WB-6) on their path to EU integration but also for strengthening their regional economic integration. One of the newest initiatives launched by the Berlin process proposes also a creation of a common regional market to start integration better economically among WB-6 countries (B&H, Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo, Albania and Northern Macedonia) and with the EU (Sofia Summit of the Berlin Process, November 2020). Future regional cooperation in the region should be based on EU rules and standards as a condition for their European integration path. It aims to move a region closer to the EU in order to create the preconditions for full integration.

The common regional market project was previously called "Mini Schengen". It was originally based on the idea that B&H, Serbia, Montenegro, Albania, Kosovo and Northern Macedonia would prove their readiness for mutual co-operation, as is expected of them when and if one day they become members of the Union (BPRG, 2021).

For now, the focus of the project is on the transport and economic dimension, ie on creating preconditions for the free movement of people, goods and capital in the region. The Multi-Annual Action Plan for the Regional Economic Area (MAP REA, 2017) was developed at the request of the Prime Ministers of the Western Balkans. The aim of this plan is to enhance economic cooperation within the Western Balkans in the context of the Berlin Process, which was subsequently adopted at the Trieste Summit in 2017.

However, the implementation of MAP REA has faced many challenges, while bilateral disputes in the region have affected overall implementation. After the so-called Mini-Schengen initiative, a Common Regional Market (CRM) was developed to address similar issues, especially those related to the "four freedoms", and then supported by Western Balkan leaders at the Berlin Summit in Sofia, Bulgaria, in November 2020. The goal is to create a regional market based on EU rules and procedures to move forward on the EU path and bring the Western Balkans closer to the EU single market.

Regional co-operation remains a constant condition in all EU progress reports, strategies or communications with the WB6. As such, regional cooperation is vital to the EU integration process and should not be seen as an individual effort. Recently, the Economic Investment Plan worth 9 billion Euros was adopted by the European Commission as part of the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans. It aims to spur the long-term economic recovery of the region, support a green and digital transition, foster regional integration and convergence with the European Union, (European Commission, 2020).

Conclusion

The emerging Balkans is characterized by a large number of small economies which are highly dependent on neighboring EU countries. It presents the significant reason for the need for deeper economic and regional integration. Also, our comparative analysis indicates that Western Balkan still has a long way to go to reach full trade integration. As noted above, an intraregional trade remains very low in the Western Balkan and less concentrated. In 2019, seven countries represent only 8% of total regional demand in comparison to 20% in 2010 for intraregional exports. Although export in absolute terms has grown in all countries, it was driven by the rise of exports to the EU market rather than from higher intraregional trade.

Country-level and regional findings on Progress towards meeting the SEE 2020 targets indicate that:

- All Western Balkan countries have made progress in the SEE 2020 target from 2010 while Serbia, North Macedonia and Montenegro have progressed the most.
- B&H and Kosovo have been stagnated or in some areas of interest regressed the most.
- The greatest progress has been towards the SEE 2020 targets: 7 (No of highly qualified persons in the workforce), 8 (Net enterprise creation) and 10 (Employment rate).
- The least progress has been seen against SEE 2020 targets: 4 (Intra-regional trade in goods) and 6 (GDP per person employed).

However, many of the regional initiatives that have been established in the Western Balkans so far and continue to emerge every few years are generally not being fully implemented. One of the reasons is the lack of bilateral relations and the lack of internal capacity. This has had a limited impact on regional cooperation. Moreover, the governments of the Western Balkans rarely consider regional cooperation as a

political priority and less as part of its economic agenda. However, unresolved conflicts and bilateral disputes have led to prevailing and significant mistrust in the region, which is sometimes a source of instability, undermining cooperation and progress in regional initiatives. High transport costs and technical barriers impede progress in the region, while public and private sector incumbents safeguarding local markets excluding greater market contestability.

The Yugoslav wars were a difficult lesson for all actors in dividing the region, diverting focus away from the economy and effective regional solutions. We hope that all countries in the region have learned something from their past experiences. It should be expected that the emerging Balkans countries will expand their mutual trade cooperation in the future. Today it is difficult to imagine this region without regional cooperation, political stabilization and economic recovery. Regional economic integration is the economic foundation of global trade liberalization, which encourages universal economic competitiveness, which can benefit consumers throughout the world.

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EU'S ENGAGEMENT WITH THE WESTERN BALKANS: FOCUS ON THE EU'S NEW TRADE POLICY

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This chapter analyzes the EU's economic and trade relations with the Western Balkans and discusses the declining interest of the EU in the Western Balkans in the last decade and the reasons behind it. Moreover, it demonstrates the volume of the actual EU-Western Balkans trade. Although it seems that the EU politically sidelined the EU accession of the Western Balkans countries, the Balkans region still appears to be important in the EU's new trade policy. The new EU strategy, which was announced in February 2021, focuses on closer cooperation with regard to the green and digital transitions. The EU plans to modernise its trade and investment relations with the whole world as well as with the Western Balkan countries that are interested in more integration with the European Union. Hence, the green and digital transformation prospect of the EU will move the accession process of Western Balkan countries to a new phase. If Western Balkan countries can adopt, this will further green and digital transformation of the Western Balkans and turn them into more modern, environment-friendly and sustainable economies.

Introduction

The European Commission declared a long-term vision for the sustainable development of the Western Balkans in 1999. In 2000, the EU announced to support the "fullest possible integration of the Western Balkan countries into the political and economic mainstream of Europe through the Stabilisation and Association process, political dialogue, liberalisation of trade and cooperation in Justice and Home Affairs" (European Parliament, 2000: 11). By this Council, the Western Balkan (WB) countries

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are recognised as potential candidates for the EU and the EU promised to support their pre-accession process. EU confirmed the position of the WB countries in 2003 and recently in May 2018 in Sofia.

The Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP) was introduced in June 1999 to define the European Union's policy for the Western Balkans and to support their perspective of the EU membership. Western Balkan countries engaged in a partnership relation for several reasons, one reason was to stabilise the region and the other to create a free-trade area. The SAP shaped trade relations, financial assistance to WB countries and regional cooperation among the countries in the region.

The EU has signed bilateral FTAs (Stabilisation and Association Agreements - SAAs) with all WB countries from 2009 till 2016. The SAAs aims to strengthen economic development and achieve politically stable WB while at the same time constituting an affinity between the EU and WB. These SAAs help the WB countries' adoption of the EU's legal system and their integration into the EU market. It has been expected that duties and non-tariff restrictions will be eliminated gradually. Moreover, issues regarding competition and customs, protection of intellectual property rights, government procurement, legislative approximation, standardisation and provisions about services and establishment are also included in these SAAs (European Commission, 2021e).

At the end of 2007 and the beginnig of 2008, the European Council once more confirmed that "the future of the Western Balkans lies within the European Union" and it declared the EU's determination to speed up the EU-accession of these countries and support their European perspective.

The European Commission has supported the reform and cooperation efforts in the WB region by implementing the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) program, which coordinated global financial institutions and donors to finance the region's modernisation and development. EU's objective is to help Western Balkan countries meet the entry conditions into the EU by supporting the rule of law, stable democratic institutions, a functioning market economy and good neighbourly relations within the region. Although the Western Balkan countries have enthusiastically focused on the integration into Euroatlantic structures as part of their long-term transition process (Communication of the European Communities, 2008: 2), the emergence of new challenges such as the Eurozone and migration crisis as well as Brexit have turned the EU's attention from the Western Balkans to other priorities. Russia, China, Turkey,

United Arab Emirates and China have increased their engagement in the region (Bieber, 2020).

EU's Declining Engagement with the Western Balkans

Western Balkans includes Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia. Missing competitiveness, high unemployment levels, human development and problems in labour markets, insufficient infrastructure and social cohesion are stated as the major challenges in this region in the EU documents. In order to stabilize these economies and support their reforms, the EU cooperates with International Financial Institutions, focuses on micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises and provides assistance to develop their labor markets. Issues of "state building, good governance, administrative and judicial reform, rule of law, the fight against corruption and organised crime, reconciliation, socioeconomic development, and civil society development" are key reform priorities of the EU set for the Western Balkans (European Comission, 2018: 3).

Establishing contacts between the Western Balkans and the EU citizens provides the people from the WB with knowledge about the EU, its values and norms. To achieve this aim, the EU implements some instruments such as liberalisation of travel, scholarships for students and academic staff from the Western Balkans, organises scientific and research activities, brings people together from different fields such as education, culture, youth and media. Partnerships are built and networks are developed consequently (Communication of the European Communities, 2008).

Although the Western Balkan countries followed the full integration perspective after Kosovo War in 1999 and initiated many reforms for their transformation into liberal democracies and market economies; their integration did not advance as planned and declared by the EU. The 2008 crisis, the Eurozone crisis, the refugee crisis and Brexit shifted the attention of the EU to other priorities and postponed the EU accession of these countries.

It is claimed that the EU's disengagement from the Balkans lead to the non-democratic actions of the leaders in the Balkans towards their society and press. The decline of the EU's attention has also coincided with the greater interest of non-Western powers in the Balkans such as Russia, China, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates. Their interest in the region ranges from economic and infrastructure investment to political support and media engagement. China and United Arab Emirates mostly invest in economic relations with no political objectives, Turkey and Russia try to develop

societal and political relations but have only limited economic participation (Bieber and Tzifakis, 2020). Turkey is considered to be late in developing commercial and economic relations with the Balkans, although it has geographically, culturally and historically close ties with the region. The region is in the sphere of influence of the EU countries in general. Turkey's cultural and historical ties with the Balkan countries are expressed in meetings, but there is only a restricted positive impact of these ties on investment and commercial relations (Nuroğlu and Nuroğlu, 2019).

According to Dabrowski and Myachenkova (2018), although Russia has a share in the energy supply in several countries in the WB, it doesn't play an active role in the region. Current shares of China and Turkey are also not high, but they tend to increase over time. One of the two big regional infrastructure investment enterprises in the WB is China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which supports construction projects of almost EUR 7.8 billion in loans in the region. China finances mostly the construction of coal-fired power plants, and with this policy, it stands against green energy-related projects of the EU which aim to achieve a shift towards a low-carbon or carbon-neutral economy in 2030 and 2050 (Holzner and Grieveson, 2018).

As the EU concentrated on other priorities rather than the Balkans, its reputation started to suffer among the people in the region. A study carried out in 2018 shows that 28 percent of those surveyed in the WB do not want to join the EU anymore and 42 percent think that WB should follow the perspective of the EU membership further. Hänsel and Feyerabend (2018) state that the EU has an "image and credibility problem" in the region. Therefore, some governments and societies in the region started to turn towards other actors. However, the COVID-19 pandemic made it clear that the Western Balkan countries need European solidarity more than anything. At the start of the pandemic, EU assistance failed and this caused frustrations among citizens in the WB countries. The COVID-19 pandemic has also shown that the EU's engagement and attention in the WB should be revitalised. The EU membership perspective has been a major motive for reforms in the region and the reduced EU engagement might harm the reform process and overall progress in the region (Gabidzashvili, 2021).

The European Commission never closes the doors to the Western Balkan countries and it stresses that their EU membership is "in the Union's very own political, security and economic interest". The EU sees enlargement with the Western Balkans as "a geostrategic investment in a stable, strong and united Europe based on common values" (European Comission, 2018: 1). However, the European Union authorities state that the Western Balkan countries can join the European Union only when they

meet the criteria of Article 49 of the Treaty on European Union and unfortunately none of these countries meets these criteria yet. The EU requires reforms especially in three areas, which are the rule of law, strengthening the economies and their competitiveness, and regional cooperation and reconciliation. According to the EU, Western Balkan states do not have a functioning market economy yet and they need to develop ore to overcome the competitive environment in the Union. Although WB countries show some progress in implementing reforms, they have many unsolved problems that affect their labour markets and employment opportunities negatively. In addition to these problems, WB countries face now the new challenges of digital and green transformation as all other countries in the World.

The EU-Western Balkans Trade

The EU has given precedence to improve economic connectivity to solve political problems in the WB in the past 20 years (Holzner and Grieveson, 2018). Trade relations have been used as an instrument to ensure peace and stability and to improve economic conditions in the region. Although it seems that the EU politically sidelined the accession of the Western Balkans countries in the last decade, the WB region plays an important role in the EU's trade policy. According to European Commission (2021d), the EU is the biggest trade partner of the Western Balkan countries. 70% of the WB region's trade is carried out with the EU but the region's share in the EU's total trade is just 1.4%. According to Table 1; the region's trade with the EU has grown by almost 130% from 2010 to 2020 reaching the highest volume of EUR 54,8 billion in 2019. The Western Balkans have recorded an increase in their export volumes to the EU of 207% in the last 10 years.

Table 1Total Goods Trade: EU Trade Flows to Western Balkans

Period	Imports		Exports		
	Value Mio €	% Growth	Vlue Mio €	% Growth	Total Trade
2010	9,762		17,77		27,532
2011	11,525	18,10	20,256	14	31,781
2012	11,536	0,10	21,297	5,1	32,833
2013	13,549	17,50	21,357	0,3	34,906
2014	14,853	9,60	22,487	5,3	37,339
2015	15,891	7,00	23,524	4,6	39,414
2016	17,419	9,60	24,896	5,8	42,314
2017	19,885	14,20	28,089	12,8	47,973
2018	22,271	12,00	30,604	9	52,876
2019	22,981	3,20	31,902	4,2	54,883
2020	21,318	-7,20	29,263	-8,3	50,581

Source: Eurostat, 2021

In 2019, the EU imported machinery and appliances (23.1%), base metals (12.6%) and chemicals (10.1%) from Western Balkans. On the other hand, the EU exported to the Western Balkans mainly machinery and appliances (20.6%), mineral products (11.1%) and chemicals (10.5%).

According to Montanari (2005), EU's trade with the Balkan countries has considerable room for growth but only trade with Bulgaria and Romania is close to the potential trade, which is estimated by the gravity model. Hence, there is still a large room for improving trade volumes.

Trade agreements and treaties are the means to increase trade and investment relations between the EU and the Balkans. Grieveson et al. (2021) analyze the influence of such agreements between WB and the EU on the foreign direct investments (FDIs) and exports in the region. They find that SAAs have a highly significant impact on FDI flows from the EU to WB states. The SAAs promote exports from the WB countries to the EU as well since they tend to increase the integration between WB and the EU. The Banks in the Western Balkans play a significant role in this relationship, too. They are parts of the European banking groups such as Austria's Raiffeisen Bank, Italia's Intesa Sanpaolo, National Bank of Greece, UniCredit, Societe General and Nova Ljubljanska Banka. These daughter banks ease the way of doing business for the European companies with the countries in the region.

Reiter and Stehrer (2021) state that potential EU membership and SAAs affect the forward linkages for the WB countries and support their exports -either directly or indirectly- to other countries. Therefore, WB countries need to concentrate on the maximum level of economic integration with the EU until they get accepted to become real EU members. This high level of economic integration might include that WB states enjoy a higher share in the EU budget, they take part in the EU Customs Union or extend the scope of existing SAAs. Increased level of investment in regional infrastructure could also make near-shoring from the EU to the WB easier in the post-COVID-19 world.

In order to improve the Western Balkans in economic terms, "a co-ordinated big push in investment in infrastructure" is suggested by Holzner and Schwarzhappel (2018). Grieveson and Holzner (2018) suggest to make investments in non-traditional infrastructure sectors such as water, productivity and competitiveness in the region to support the transition of these countries. EU governments need to support WB countries more strongly to achieve this long-run objective. If this support fails, other

global players tend to increase their sphere of influence in the Western Balkans, which might destroy the plans of the EU in the region.

Western Balkans in the New EU Strategy: Green and Digital

The new EU strategy, which was announced in February 2021, focuses on closer cooperation with the WB countries in support of the green and digital transitions. European Commission (2021a: 11) states that the EU's trade policy has three aims: "supporting the recovery and fundamental transformation of the EU economy in the framework of the green and digital transformation, shaping global rules for a more sustainable and fairer globalisation, and increasing the EU's capacity to pursue its interests and enforce its rights". To achieve these aims, the EU plans to focus on six areas. These areas are "(1) reforming the World Trade Organization, (2) supporting the green transition and promoting responsible and sustainable value chains, (3) supporting the digital transition and trade in services, (4) strengthening the EU's regulatory impact, (5) strengthening the EU's partnerships with neighbouring and enlargement countries and Africa, (6) strengthening the EU's focus on implementation of trade agreements, and ensuring a level playing field" (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Six Critical Areas to achieve the EU's New Strategy

Source: European Commission, 2021a: 11

As Figure 1 shows, the European Commission (2021a) plans to focus on cooperation in green and digital transitions to deepen trade and economic connections with the WB and the Economic and Investment Plan provides the framework for this cooperation.

In the new EU strategy, the sustainability plays a big role. The EU plans to make production processes more efficient, develop green technologies and become the leading power in green goods and services. The Paris Agreement is designated as a major axis in the EU's agreements and having certain targets about climate neutrality will be a pre-condition for them. Imports have to also meet the EU regulation and standards. In addition to the objective of climate neutrality, supporting Europe's digital agenda is another redline in the EU's new trade policy. The EU's ultimate objective is to be the leader in digital trade and in technology areas.

It is important to see that sustainability has been a central pillar of the EU's trade policy for the first time. The EU wants to benefit from its power and strong trade relationships to increase the awareness of its trade partners about climate change and to force them to take the necessary actions for zero carbon emissions (European Commission, 2021b). The economic and Investment Plan for the WB promised to provide €9 billion of funding for investment in transport, energy, green and digital transition to create sustainable growth and jobs (European Commission, 2020a).

'Leaving no-one behind' is the motto of the EU in the green transition. Western Balkans is also included in this transformation plan as a geographic part of Europe. The European Commission has published guidelines to implement the Green Agenda in the Western Balkans. This guide focuses on "(1) climate action, including decarbonisation, energy and mobility, (2) circular economy, addressing waste, recycling, sustainable production and efficient use of resources, (3) biodiversity, aiming to protect and restore the natural wealth of the region, (4) fighting air, water and soil pollution and (5) sustainable food systems and rural areas". Digitalisation is seen as the key enabler for these five areas and Westerns Balkans' natural resources potential is planned to be used in the best way. Western Balkan countries heavily use coal, therefore to achieve the 2030 and 2050 goals of the EU, Balkan countries also need to transform their energy sources into clean and renewable ones. Western Balkans have a high record of air pollution in Europe and this directly affects all the EU citizens' health (European Commission, 2020c). Therefore, the EU has a special green agenda for the Western Balkans.

The Balkans region has many advantages for the European countries. These advantages, which pave the way to nearshoring in the Balkans, are mainly low labor costs, improvement in institutional and political stability after the wars and the prospect of EU membership. In addition to these, Balkan states are geographically close to some EU countries and this gives an advantage in shortening supply chains. The qualification

and language learning ability of human resources and rising education standards in these countries make this region a good choice for nearshoring (Cutrini and Francesca Spigarelli, 2012; Djuric, 2016; Meyer, 2006).

From 1 July 2021 on, "Roam Like at Home" regime in the Western Balkans entered into force to eliminate all roaming costs within the region. This regime is interpreted as a stepping-stone in the digital transformation of the region. In 2019, the Western Balkan leaders signed the Regional Roaming Agreement to eliminate roaming charges within the region and to improve connectivity. The first phase of the implementation was introduced on 1 July 2019 and gradually reduced the roaming charges by over 80%. This led to a significant increase in data traffic in the whole region. According to the EU, setting up a roaming free zone is a significant step for the Western Balkans in adopting to the EU Digital Single Market principles and practices (European Commission, 2021c) 'Initiative for a Digital Agenda for the Western Balkans' aims to support the development of e-Government, e-Procurement, e-Health and digital skills in the region. Private sector development is one of the important headlines of the EU including support of start-ups as well as smart specialisation and digitalisation of industries in WB (European Commission, 2018). The green and digital transition agenda of the EU provides the WB states a good opportunity to modernise their infrastructure, societies and economies.

Modernized EU Trade and Investment Relations with the Western Balkans

The European Green Deal is designated as the "EU's new growth strategy" which results from the recent global trends such as rising global uncertainty, political and geo-economic tensions, growing unilateralism, and acceleration of global warming. The EU plans to be a climate-neutral and resource-efficient continent by 2050. It aims to reduce greenhous gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030. The EU defines green and digital 'twin transitions' as the driving force of its competitiveness and revises its trade policy accordingly. The EU plans to use its trade policy as an instrument to serve its interests when dealing with its trade partners (European Commission, 2021a). It means, the EU will modernise its trade and investment relations and agreements with those countries in the neighbourhood that wish to integrate more with the European Union, and WB are no exception.

The global corona crisis has shown to all countries as well as the European countries how important the management of supply chains and their security is. Therefore, it could be a great opportunity for the Balkan states if the European countries reconstruct their supply chains, establish more production locations in Europe, and nearshore

or reshore them to the Balkans, which are competitive in terms of the availability of well-qualified human resources and relatively lower wages. Gaber (2020) states that if European countries reconsider localization strategy for industrial production after Corona crisis, then this crisis could become a great opportunity for the Balkan countries.

Holzner and Grieveson (2018) emphasize the importance of the infrastructure investments by the EU in the Balkans to support green transition in the region. More European funds should be supplied to increase investments in the environment, society, health and education institutions for the green transition. This will result in improvements in standards of living, social equity and solve environmental problems.

According to the EU's Circular Economy Action Plan (2020b) "transition to a sustainable economic system" is an essential part of the new industrial strategy of the EU. Countries with an EU accession perspective have to adapt to this transition which will, in turn, provide new business and employment opportunities. The European Commission is highly determined to promote the circular economy and green transition in the accession talks with the Western Balkans and set the twin transitions as an indispensable additional requirement in any possible platform. It appears that the current conjuncture in the EU will force the Western Balkan states to change their methods of production, ways of living and trade habits to meet the conditions of the EU. Although it is a long and challenging journey, it is a great opportunity to transform into more modern, environment-friendly and sustainable societies.

Conclusion

The EU recognizes the Western Balkan (WB) states as potential candidates for almost two decades and confirms their position in every possible platform. SAAs are used as means for the adoption of WB countries to the EU's legal system and their integration into the EU market. However, missing competition, problems in their labour markets and inadequate infrastructure are seen as the major challenges in this region which prevent their progress into the EU membership. According to the EU, the states of the Western do not have sufficient capacity to withstand the advanced level of competition in the Union. Inspite of all these obstacles, the EU membership perspective is one of the major motives for reforms in the region which shouldn't be lost. Studies prove that the maximum possible level of economic integration should be established for the economic and social development of the Western Balkans.

In addition to the existing problems, WB countries face now the new challenges of digital and green transformation. The new EU strategy focuses on closer cooperation with the WB countries in the framework of the green and digital transitions. The EU is ready to change many rules of the game in accordance with these twin transitions, and its trade with the partners is no exception. Digital and green transformation are defined to be the core elements of the EU's new trade policy. From now on, any economic or trade relationship between the EU and its partners will have a pre-condition which is to target climate neutrality.

The EU has already renewed its documents regarding the Western Balkans by giving precedence to green and digital transition. WB countries are at a historical turning point. On the one hand, they have many advantages for the European countries in terms of their geography, location, facilities and human resources which make them special for the EU countries. They have to take benefit of this position and their proximity to the industrialized Europe. On the other hand, they face the challenge of transforming their economies and societies following the green and digital transition and adapt to the EU's new growth strategy.

The World and Europe are taking a new shape with digital and green transition, and Western Balkan countries should use this window of opportunity by adapting these changes by using European funds and guidance. If they adopt, this surely will ease their accession into the EU and improve the standards of living in the whole region as well as in Europe.

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THE IMPORTANCE OF FDI AND INSTITUTIONS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE WESTERN BALKANS

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Foreign direct investment and efficient institutions are essential for the economic growth of every country. The same is true for the Western Balkans economies – Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia. Using a panel data analysis for the 2000-2019 period, the study shows that both FDI and institutional development significantly negatively affect economic growth. When interacted, the results reveal no impact of FDI, institutional development, or their interaction term on economic growth. A lack of FDI inflows in recent years and low levels of institutional development could be attributed to such results. This calls for urgent actions on the part of policymakers if they want to turn this situation in their favor.

Introduction

Throughout history, the Western Balkans region – Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia – played a central role in world affairs due to its strategic position within geopolitical and geoeconomics relations. At the end of the twentieth century, the region was exposed to several military conflicts – in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992–1995), Kosovo (1998–1999), and Macedonia (2001) – and various sanctions[1] that affected its overall development. Since the 1990s, the region was also subject to significant structural changes as it moved from a socialist or

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[1] In addition to wars, several countries were under embargos: For instance, during 1992–1996 and 1998–1999 periods, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (later known as Serbia and Montenegro) was under severe UN and EU sanctions. Similarly, North Macedonia was under economic sanctions imposed by Greece (Estrin & Uvalić, 2016).

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planned economy to a market economy. This process is still ongoing as these countries are considered transition economies.

Due to their transitional nature, these countries are undergoing significant institutional reforms. However, their institutional development is not meeting the European Union (EU) standards. A high level of corruption, lack of rule of low, and a large but inefficient local, regional, and state administration are but few persisting problems faced by the Western Balkans countries (Popovic et al., 2020). These factors affect the foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows and economic growth of these countries.

The Western Balkans countries in particular and transition economies, in general, are in dire need of FDI inflows that would support infrastructural and other developmental projects that could boost economic growth. The main objective of this study is to look at the effect of FDI and institutional development on economic growth, focusing on the Western Balkans countries.

The rest of the chapter is structured as follows. *Section 2* provides an overview of the Western Balkans regions. *Section 3* briefly discusses the existing body of literature on the topic. *Section 4* describes the data, methodology, and a brief discussion of empirical results. Finally, *Section 5* provides concluding remarks.

The Western Balkans in Numbers: An Overview
As pointed earlier, the Western Balkans countries faced several impediments during the 1990s due to military conflicts that led to political and economic sanctions. The prevalence of nationalist ideologies contributed to inefficient development and policy implementations. Positive trends in the form of macroeconomic improvements, economic reforms, and rapid growth started with the new millennium (see Figure 1). Furthermore, the region witnessed significant improvements in international trade within the region and with the EU following trade liberalization and privatization. This also led to a rise in the region's FDI inflows, which was not the case before 2000. Besides the FDI inflows from the EU countries, the region attracted significant investments from Russia, Turkey, Norway, and Canada. Unfortunately, instead of these funds being directed into manufacturing sectors, the majority went into non-tradable services such as banking, telecommunications, retail trade, and real estate. As a result, FDI inflows contributed to economic growth only slightly (Uvalić, 2010, 2013).

Table 1: GDP per capita growth (annual %)
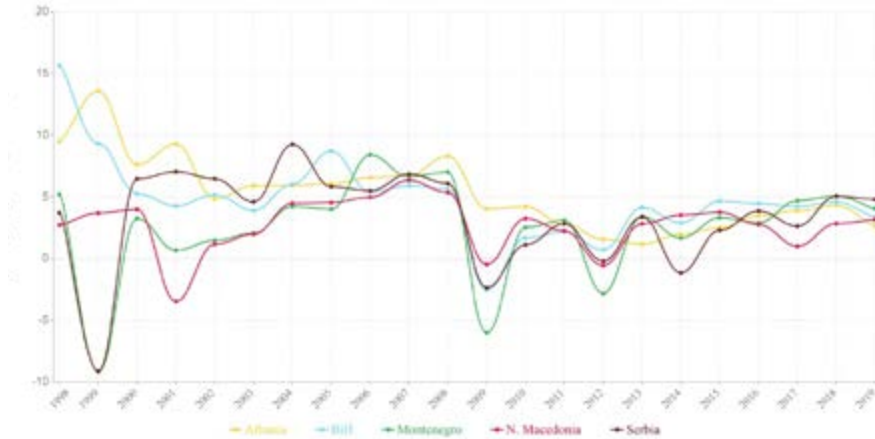
Source: World Development Indicators

These positive trends came to a halt in 2008 with the emergence of the global financial crisis that exposed all weaknesses and structural issues of the countries. Consequently, the region experienced an economic slowdown and started its recovery only in 2010-11. However, prior privatization led to the integration of the Western Balkans region with the EU. This, in turn, led to another round of recession caused by the eurozone's sovereign debt crisis (Uvalić, 2013).

All of this contributed to the already difficult situation in the region. Several structural problems dominate, such as increasing current account and trade deficits due to inefficient policies, infrastructure, and non-competitive enterprises on global markets (Estrin & Uvalić, 2016). Furthermore, throughout the study period, the region faces low employment rates far higher than in EU member states. For instance, the highest unemployment rate was in North Macedonia, where it was 33.70% for the 2000-2004 period and going down to 22.13% for the 2015-2019 period. During the same period, the unemployment rate went down from 16.62% to 14.14% in Albania, from 27.65% to 22.09% in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and 30.54% to 16.28% in Montenegro. The unemployment rate of Serbia was on the rise since the 2000-2004 period when it was 14.58% but started decreasing after 2013 and was 14.36% for the 2015-2019 period (see Figure 2 for details).

Table 2: Unemployment rates of the Western Balkans countries (% of the total labor force)
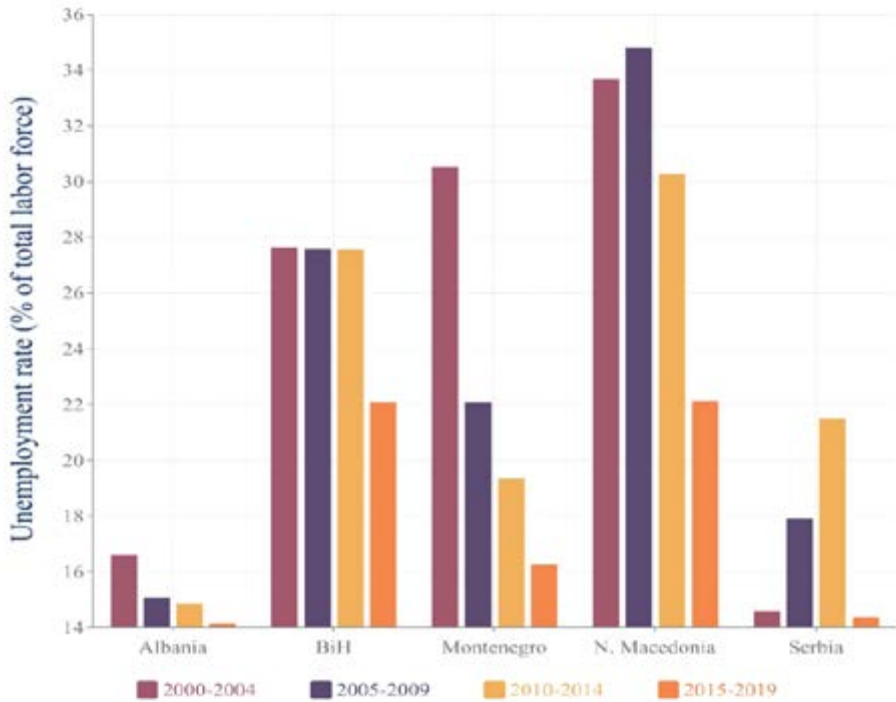
Source: International Labour Organization, ILOSTAT database.

While the Western Balkans countries have been undergoing significant institutional changes over the years, these processes and conditions of these countries differ significantly. Even though many changes and reforms have been done (some of which have been sponsored and supervised, to some extent, by EU representatives and institutions), there are still numerous institutional issues that are detrimental to FDI inflows and economic growth (Popovic et al., 2020). Figure 3 shows a steady improvement in the institutional development of the Western Balkans countries, with North Macedonia being the leader. According to the Heritage Foundation's overall score for institutional development, the lowest point (36.60) was recorded in BiH in 2001 and the highest in North Macedonia (71.30) in 2018, with the region's average score being 58.07. During the same period, the lowest point (47.30) among the EU member states was recorded in Bulgaria in 2000 and the highest (82.60) in Ireland in 2007 with 67.86. However, it is worth noting that the gap between the EU and the Western Balkans states is narrowing down if we focus on the last ten years alone,

indicating significant convergence of institutional development between the two regions.

Table 3: Institutional development of the Western Balkans(the overall score)
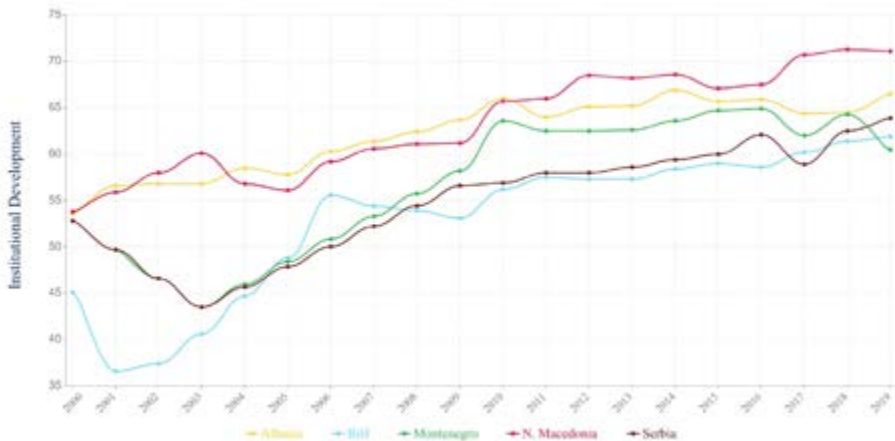
Source: The Heritage Foundation.

Although the region witnessed a relative improvement in the overall institutional development, as pointed briefly above, this did not help the region attract FDI for its further development. Low growth rates and competitiveness of the region, combined with high unemployment (Popovic et al., 2020) and lack of efficient institutions and the overall infrastructure, are some of the main reasons for the lack of investments inflows in the region. Foreign investors are also reluctant to invest in the region as the business environment is not investment-friendly. According to the latest Doing Business Index published by the World Bank, North Macedonia (17) is ranked the best, followed by Serbia (44), Montenegro (50), Albania (81), and Bosnia and Herzegovina (90).[2] Figure 4 shows the trend of foreign investments in the region. Since 2007, Serbia has attracted more FDI than the other countries together. However, there has been a sharp decline in the FDI inflows in the region from 2013. Since then, FDI inflows in the Western Balkans have been very low (below 9% of GDP).

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[2] For details see: https://www.doingbusiness.org/en/rankings?region=europe-and-central-asia.

Table 4: Net inflows of FDI (in millions of USD)
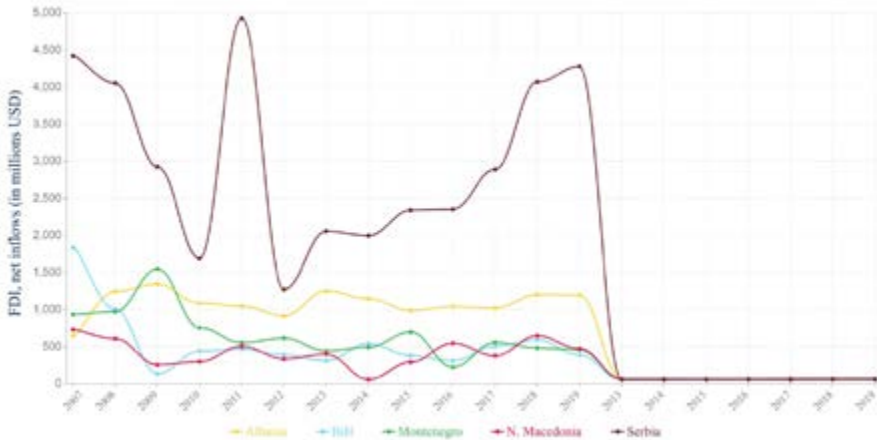
Source: International Monetary Fund, Balance of Payments database.

Literature Review

There is a significant amount of research on the growth-FDI and growth-institutions relationships. In recent studies, researchers are investigating the combined effect of the FDI and institutions on economic growth. In the following paragraphs, the study will discuss the main findings of these studies. In short, the results offered by these studies are inconclusive.

FDI–economic Growth

Given its advanced economies and institutions, the developed world attracted most international FDI inflows in the past. In recent years, however, the World Investment Report points to a changing trend. According to the Report, the global FDI flows decreased by 13% to $1.3 trillion in 2018 (from $1.5 trillion in 2017). This marked the lowest FDI flows since the 2008 global financial crisis. At the same time, developing countries recorded the highest share (54%) of the global FDI with an annual 2% steady increase (UNCTAD, 2019).

The existing empirical studies offer no clear conclusions when it comes to the topic of this study. For instance, (1992) FDI inflows (measured as a percentage of GDP) positively correlate with GDP per capita across developed countries. They find that FDI inflows are more beneficial for countries with higher per-capita income levels than those with lower per capita income levels. This is due to insufficient technological and human capital levels in emerging countries, making them less competitive and

less attractive to large corporations (Blomstrom et al., 1992). Similarly, Bengoa & Sanchez-Robles (2003), Zhang (2001), Elboiashi (2015), and Borenstein (1998) find that FDI inflows are highly significant only in economies that meet minimum requirements of human capital needed, i.e., that the economy is absorbent enough to use and efficiently utilize FDI.

A long-term relationship between FDI and the real GDP is found in Estonia, transforming itself from a planned- to the market-based economy within a short period (Kisswani et al., 2015). Focusing on ten European transition economies, Asteriou et al. (2005) find that a ratio of FDI net inflows to GDP has a positive and significant impact while the ratio of the net portfolio investments to GDP has a negative but insignificant effect on economic growth.

However, the impact of FDI on economic growth can also be damaging. While FDI contributes to the technology, know-how, skills transfer, and efficient resource allocation, it reduces local firms' comparative advantage and labor productivity (Lutz & Talavera, 2004; Minović et al., 2021). Further, Anetor (2020) finds that FDI is significantly negative while portfolio investment has a positive but insignificant impact on sub–Saharan African countries' economic growth–contrary to Asteriou et al. (2005) mentioned above.

In addition, the studies by Carkovic and Levine (2002) and Lyroudi et al. (2004) find no significant relationship between FDI and economic growth. The former focused on 72 developed and developing economies, while the latter focused on 17 transition economies (Central and Eastern Europe).

Several studies are investigating this relationship in the case of the EU and the Western Balkan countries. For instance, Angelopoulou and Liargovas (2014) examine the FDI-growth relationship using several sample groups. In particular, focusing on 27 EU, 16 EMU member states, and 18 transition economies, they found no evidence for causality between the two. Lyroudi et al. (2004) report similar results. Similarly, Estrin & Uvalic (2016) report the insignificant impact of FDI on value-added, employment, and exports of manufacturing sectors of the Western Balkan countries

Institutional Quality and Economic Growth

The relationship between institutional development and economic growth is subject to significant scientific scrutiny as well. Different authors used different proxies such as property rights, freedom of the press, bureaucratic procedures, democracy

levels, political stability, business environment indices, and others for institutional development measures. Conventional wisdom says that well-functioning institutions have a positive impact on economic growth. However, institutional development itself depends on several factors. For instance, institutional efficiency that leads to the economic growth of Pakistan depends on efficient government and functional democracy (Murtaza & Faridi, 2016). Similarly, an institution's impact on economic growth depends on the public debt level (Sani et al., 2019) and entrepreneurship (Urbano et al., 2019).

At the same time, bureaucratic quality, property rights, and political stability of nations contribute to economic growth and investment (Knack & Keefer, 1995), while corruption decreases economic growth (Easterly, 1999; Minović et al., 2021). Economies with higher political, civil, and economic freedom are almost twice as efficient and productive as societies with lower degrees of freedom (Scully, 1988). Furthermore, economies with selected few or 'elite' that holds political authority and controls institutions and regulations will use those for their benefits (Nigar, 2015). Such an environment results in inefficient resource allocation (concentration of wealth among the rich people), undermining economic growth (Sonin, 2003). This ability of the politically powerful individuals to take advantage of weak institutions and utilize resources for their benefit is explained through a lack of democracy reflected in political and wealth inequality (Sonin, 2003; Nigar, 2015).

FDI, Institutional Quality and Economic Growth

Recent studies support the theory that both FDI and institutional quality individually and jointly contribute to the overall economic development. By improving the overall institutional quality, a country would be able to improve its economic growth. This would further attract FDI inflows that would also contribute to additional economic growth (Van Bon, 2019; Hayat, 2019; Raza et al., 2019). This, however, does not apply to all countries. Hayat (2019) reports that this is true for the low and middle-income countries, but not for the high-income countries where it is found that FDI inflows decrease economic growth.

Furthermore, the complementary role of institutional quality on economic growth through financial development (Haini, 2020) and FDI inflows (Kutan et al., 2017) is also evident. Nevertheless, this complementary role of institutions has its limitations. Jude and Levieuge (2015) show that institutional development needs to reach a certain threshold for FDI to impact economic growth. This is also confirmed in the case of the sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries, MENA, Europe, Asia, and America regions (Trojette, 2016).

Contrary to the theory and the above studies, no impact of either FDI or institutions on growth is found in SSA countries (Agbloyor et al., 2016). Not only that, the complementary role of institutions on FDI is not confirmed either. Focusing on the same countries, Asamoah et al. (2019) found a positive effect of institutional quality and a negative impact of FDI on economic growth. Furthermore, although institutional development contributes to growth, Nguyen et al. (2018) found that it hinders the positive effects of FDI and trade openness on growth.

Data, Methodology, and Analysis

Data and Methodology

To investigate the impact of FDI and institutional development, individually and jointly, on the economic growth of the Western Balkans countries, we use the following two models, in line with Azam and Ahmed (2015):

$$Y_{it} = \alpha + \beta FDI_{it} + \delta ID_{it} + \theta X_{it} + \varepsilon_{it}$$
$$Y_{it} = \alpha + \beta FDI_{it} + \delta ID_{it} + \theta X_{it} + \varepsilon_{it}$$

(1)

Furthermore, to see whether the FDI-growth relationship depends on institutional development, we introduce an interaction term to equation *(1)* as presented in equation *(2)* below:

$$Y_{it} = \alpha + \beta FDI_{it} + \delta ID_{it} + \vartheta(FDI_{it} \times ID_{it}) + \theta X_{it} + \varepsilon_{it}$$
$$Y_{it} = \alpha + \beta FDI_{it} + \delta ID_{it} + \vartheta(FDI_{it} \times ID_{it}) + \theta X_{it} + \varepsilon_{it}$$

(2)

where for country i (the cross-sectional dimension) at time t (the time dimension), Y_{it} is the annual real per capita GDP growth rate, FDI_{it} represents FDI inflows, ID_{it} is a measure of institutional development, $FDI_{it} \times ID_{it}$ represents the interaction variable, X_{it} is a vector of all control variables, and ε_{it} is a random error term that captures all other variables.

For this purpose, we use annual time series data of the selected macroeconomic indicators, namely: the real per capita GDP growth (GDP) as a measure for economic growth; net FDI inflows as a percentage of GDP as the foreign investment indicator; and institutional development is measured by overall institutional quality (control of corruption, political stability, and the rule of law) from the Heritage Foundation. As for control variables, we use gross capital formation, trade openness, labor force, and inflation. All data are sourced from the World Bank's database and cover the

2000-2019 period. Furthermore, two panel techniques are used to estimate the results: pooled ordinary least squares (POLS) and fixed effect (FE) estimates with Driscoll and Kraay's (1998) standard errors. The Hausman test (Hausman, 1978) is used to choose between POLS and FE models.

Analysis of Results

Models (1) and (2) of Table 1 provide the estimated results based on *Eq (1)*, while models (3) and (4) provide results based on *Eq (1)* using the POLS and the FE estimators with Driscoll-Kraay standard. The R-square results reveal that our models explain from 77.1 to 77.8 percent of variations in economic growth.

Based on the Hausman test, we should rely on the results provided by the POLS estimator when looking at the results from *Eq (1)*. In general, our results indicate that both FDI and institutional development have a significantly negative impact on economic growth in the Western Balkans countries. In other words, foreign investment and institutions are impediments to the economic growth of these countries.

As for interaction models (3) and (4) based on *Eq (2)*, we rely on FE estimation results based on the Hausman test. In short, introducing interaction terms in our models makes the majority of our main variables insignificant. It seems that neither FDI nor institutional development affects the economic growth of these countries. Furthermore, the results indicate the FDI-growth relationship does not depend on institutions, and the institutions-growth relationship does not depend on FDI either. This is no surprise as we know from earlier analysis that foreign investment has been insignificant since 2013 and that institutions are still undergoing significant structural changes. Furthermore, earlier studies indicate a threshold for institutional development to affect either growth or FDI-growth relationship (Trojette, 2016).

Table 5: FDI-Institutions-Growth nexus

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	POLS	FE	POLS	FE
Foreign direct investment inflow (FDI)	-0.085**	-0.138**	-0.650	-0.126
	(0.030)	(0.048)	(0.408)	(0.309)
Institutional development (ID)	-0.177**	-0.039	-0.225***	-0.038
	(0.045)	(0.049)	(0.043)	(0.055)
Interaction term (FDIxID)			0.010	-0.000
			(0.007)	(0.005)
Gross capital formation	5.475**	3.719**	5.648**	3.699**
	(1.558)	(0.823)	(1.481)	(1.033)
Trade openness	-1.436	1.769	-1.062	1.786
	(0.692)	(1.440)	(0.763)	(1.398)
Labor force	-0.016	2.587	0.105	2.597
	(0.282)	(5.252)	(0.300)	(5.425)
Inflation	-0.428*	-0.394*	-0.274	-0.396*
	(0.169)	(0.174)	(0.215)	(0.184)
Constant	4.744	-48.978	-	-48.209
	(8.077)	(70.975)	-	(74.839)
Year Dummy	YES	YES	YES	YES
Obs.	88	88	88	88
No. of groups	5	5	5	5
R²	0.771	0.778	0.777	0.778
F-stat.	138.350	3930.461	61.283	5399.392
F-stat. p-value	(0.000)	(0.000)	0.001	0.000
Hausman	-	1.872	-	1.762
Hausman p-val.	-	(0.282)	-	(0.302)

Note: Regression with Driscoll-Kraay standard errors. Standard errors in parentheses. Significance level *** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.10$.

Conclusion

Foreign investments and efficient institutions are essential ingredients for the economic growth of every country. While foreign investments are needed for infrastructural and institutional improvements and developments, institutional development is necessary to attract foreign investments. This study investigates the importance of

foreign investment and institutional development for the economic growth of five Western Balkans economies – Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia. Over the years, these countries experienced structural and institutional changes that altered their socio-political environment. The region is still facing significant structural issues that impede its economic development.

Given the existing challenges, it is no surprise that our investigation reveals that foreign investment and institutions deteriorate the region's economic growth. Once the foreign investment interacts with institutional development proxy, the results indicate that both, including the interaction term, are negative but insignificant for economic growth. Keeping in mind that the foreign investment inflows in the region are minimal lately and that institutions are below the EU standards, these results are expected. As a result, policymakers need to improve the overall infrastructure and make necessary improvements within their economies to attract more foreign investments in the region that would help further institutional and infrastructural development.

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DETERMINANTS OF TURKISH OUTWARD FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT TO THE WESTERN BALKANS

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The Western Balkan countries, including Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia, achieved significant growth and economic improvements over the past two decades. Still, these countries remain among the poorest ones in Europe. Increasing the Foreign Direct Investments into these countries would help finance their large trade deficits. The Western Balkan countries share strong trade and investment ties with Turkey, among other regions. The main goal of this paper is to research the determinants of Turkish Foreign Direct Investment to Western Balkan countries based on the data-covering period between 2000 and 2020. The study employed a Fixed effects model as it was found to be a better fit for the data using the Housman test. Results of the study indicate that the level of GDP per capita in the host county, natural resources, level of exports, the exchange rate and the inflation rates are all statistically significant at least at 5% significance level. The political risk, technological advancement and imports from Western Balkan countries to Turkey were not statistically significant at any conventionally accepted levels of significance. In addition, the country dummy variables indicate that Albania and Montenegro are a better fit for Turkish OFDI than Bosnia and Herzegovina is, while Bosnia and Herzegovina is advantageous over Serbia and North Macedonia. The time variable indicated a significant and positive trend in Turkish OFDI to Western Balkan countries for 2000-2020.

Introduction

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania, and Kosovo

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are undeveloped countries, collectively referred to as Western Balkans (WB), that are not European Union (EU) members. As such, they still have no access to EU cohesion and structural funds, which motivated them to turn to other large emerging players and investors- primarily Russia, Turkey and China. One of the several commonalities these countries share is their history with Turkey, as they were all part of the Ottoman Empire. To this day, the relationship between Turkey and these countries remains an important one. Although the EU remains the most significant trade partner and investor to WB, these countries trade with and receive significant amounts of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) from Turkey. FDI is of huge importance for all of them as it helps finance their large trade deficits. Examples of FDI from Turkey to WB are numerous, and some of the more recent ones include building a new Sarajevo – Belgrade highway, other, completed, as well as ongoing projects include several bridges, factories, and mosques in Serbia, Montenegro, Albania, North Macedonia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. After one of the biggest earthquakes in this region in 2019, Turkey drafted an agreement with Albania to recover the most affected buildings. The repairs will include 522 apartments, 37 business areas, and 375 parking lots in a single city- Lac. In addition, Turkey also realized the Devoll HES project in Albania in the period of 2013 to 2018- an investment valued at 260 million USD, and it included various tunnels and hydropower plants. The connection between Turkey and Kosovo also includes large projects, one of which is the Pristine - Skopje 65 km highway, which has already been completed in the second half of 2019. Another significant Turkish investment in Kosovo is a wind farm in Kitka city which is also one of the biggest renewable energy projects in Europe. The development of a coal plant in Kosovo is another one of their future projects. There have been several significant investments in North Macedonia as well. The largest one started in 2012 and it included City Mall, residential and office space – a project that provided at least 450 new jobs. Another investment includes the Oslomej solar power station, which should produce 10 MW of electric energy. The investments in Montenegro mostly come in form of various construction projects like hotels, buildings, and production plants. Projects that are still in progress are Port Bar, Ironworks, and potential investment in the airport. These are just a few examples that are in focus nowadays. Still, these examples serve to demonstrate that Turkey invests in the WB region and that, as similar as WB countries might be, they actually compete for those investments. There is a public perception, fueled by the media that, for example, Serbia is receiving significantly more investments than Bosnia and Herzegovina. Through examination of what drives Turkish FDI, we may gain a better insight into why certain countries attract Turkish FDI more than others.

The Western Balkans Economies

In 2020, the region experienced the worst recorded recession, with the economy contracting by 3.4%. Although Western Balkan countries share many similarities and are often observed as coherent, there are certain variations among them in terms of economic indicators. The GDP growth of all Western Balkan countries is above the EU27 average, which is to be expected as they are developing countries. In 2018 Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Serbia recorded levels of development above the Western Balkan averages. On the other hand, Kosovo, Montenegro, and Serbia developed faster than the rest of the region in 2019. The differences between the countries were even more pronounced during 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. While Montenegro was hit the most with a 15.2% contraction in the economy, Serbia was affected the least, with only 1% decrease in economic activity. Montenegro is the only country in the region that was affected more severely by COVID-19 than the average EU27 country.

Table 1 GDP growth

	2020	**2019**	**2018**
MNE	-15.2%	4.1%	5.1%
KOS	-6.9%	4.9%	3.8%
MKD	-4.5%	3.2%	2.9%
BIH	-4.3%	2.8%	3.7%
ALB	-3.3%	2.0%	4.1%
SRB	-1.0%	4.2%	4.4%
WB6	-3.4%	3.6%	4.0%
EU27	-7.0%	1.8%	2.0%

Source: National authorities and the World Bank.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the unemployment rates across Western Balkan countries declined in 2020, except for Montenegro and Albania, as shown in the table below. The average unemployment rate in WB decreased from 13.5% in 2019 to 12.9% in 2020. However, it is crucial to emphasize that the average youth unemployment rate increased from 32.2% to 33.6%, meaning that the youth was affected disproportionally adverse by the job losses in 2020. This ended a 5-year declining trend in the WB youth unemployment. Montenegrin government provided wedge subsidies and cash transfers that prevented an even higher increase in the unemployment rate. Similarly, the government of Kosovo passed certain policies aimed at helping those affected

by the COVID-19. However, according to their administrative data, these policies contributed to increases in the unemployment rate as many entities operating in the informal sector decided to officially register as unemployed to be eligible for the help provided by the government. While the unemployment rate in Serbia reached a record high in 2020, the youth unemployment rate increased significantly, reaching 32.4%. However, Serbia is the only country where the unemployment rate decreases were not a result of rising in inactivity i.e. shrinking labor force caused by people emigrating abroad, giving up the search for the job due to low prospects or retirement.

Table 2 Basic Economical Overview

	GDP per Capita (PPP)	Unemployment Rate	Inflation Rate
MNE	20,567	17.9%	-0.3%
KOS	11,368	24.4%	0.2%
MKD	16,927	17.2%	1.2%
BIH	15,612	15.9%	-1.1%
ALB	13,818	11.7%	1.6%
SRB	19,231	9%	1.6%
WB6	-	12.9%	0.9%

Source: National authorities and the World Bank. Note: GDP per Capita is expressed in USD.

On the other hand, in terms of GDP per Capita, Montenegro recorded the highest amount (20,567 USD), followed by Serbia (19,231 USD) and Macedonia (16,927 USD). Kosovo has the lowest GDP per capita in the WB region, which is not surprising given that according to World Bank reports, Kosovo is the second poorest country in Europe, right after Moldova.

The Net FDI inflows were also affected by the crisis. In the case of most countries, the Net FDI as a percentage of GDP decreased slightly in 2020 compared to 2019, while Montenegro and Kosovo even experienced increases. These increases are the result of decreases in the outward FDI coupled with dividend repatriation. For most countries, FDI remains the main source of external financing and covers the largest CAD share. In addition to FDI, remittances are also an important source of external financing. Given that the COVID-19 affected FDI and remittance inflow negatively, the countries are relying increasingly more on external borrowing.

Table 3 Net FDI to GDP ratio in percent of GDP

	2020	**2019**	**2018**
MNE	11.20%	7.5%	8.8%
KOS	3.7%	3.6%	4.0%
MKD	2.50%	4.4%	5.1%
BIH	1.1%	1.9%	2.9%
ALB	6.9%	7.9%	8.0%
SRB	6.20%	7.8%	7.4%

Source: National authorities and the World Bank.

The COVID-19 pandemic caused disruptions in the supply chain and the decrease in the demand for goods, which negatively affected the trade. The countries with manufacturing sectors primarily dependent on the global supply chain, such as North Macedonia and Serbia, were affected to a more considerable extent. However, as the global supply chains re-opened, the trade in these countries recovered, which helped in narrowing their trade deficits. On the other hand, countries like Montenegro, Kosovo, and Albania predominantly depend on the service industry - tourism and tourist-related industries such as entertainment, food, and retail services. Mainly the number of COVID-19 infections and the restrictions imposed by governments affects their trade. Given that the pandemic is still ongoing, trade recovery in these countries is taking more time.

Table 4 Trade Flow by Country

	Export (%GDP)	**Import(%GDP)**
MNE	25.8%	60.5%
KOS	22.0%	54.7%
MKD	58.1%	70.9%
BIH	34.3%	48.9%
ALB	23.2%	38.1%
SRB	48.0%	56.9%

Source: World Bank (2020).

Foreign Trade Exchange between Western Balkans and Turkey

Although the EU is the largest trading partner of the Western Balkan region in terms of all, export, import and investments, China, Russia and Turkey have a growing interest

in the region in terms of trade and investment as well. The total imports from Turkey to all Western Balkan countries in 2020 amounted to 1.8 billion USD. The total exports from Western Balkan countries to Turkey for the same period amounted to 1.3 billion USD. That means that the total foreign trade between Western Balkan countries and Turkey is 2.8 billion USD. The countries are natural competitors for the investments from Turkey and their differences may come to light when Turkey chooses which one of the Western Balkan countries to invest in. The comparison of the data presented in the table below clearly shows that Serbia was Turkey's most significant trading partner from the Western Balkan region (totaling more than 1.8 billion USD) in 2020. The second most significant trade exchange was with Bosnia and Herzegovina (649 million USD), closely followed by North Macedonia (547 million USD), Kosovo (537 million USD), Albania (508 million USD) and Montenegro (121 million USD). According to the World Bank's index ease of doing business (2020) North Macedonia is ranked at 17th place, Serbia at 44th, Montenegro at 50th, Kosovo at 57th, Albania at 82nd, and Bosnia and Herzegovina at 90th place out of all world economies. The ease of doing business in a country is not a good predictor of Turkish FDI inflow. This raises the question - what motivates Turkish FDI inflow?

Table 5 Trade overview between Western Balkan countries and Turkey

	Import	Export	Balance
MNE	103.15	18.02	-85.13
KOS	337.2	199.9	-137.3
MKD	415.94	130.73	-285.21
BIH	446.58	203.07	-243.51
ALB	475.39	33.59	-441.8
SRB	1.38	445.91	-934.09

Source: Trading Economics (2020). Note: All amounts presented in the table are stated in millions of USD except for export to Serbia which is stated in billions of USDs.

Foreign direct investment is a vital tool for financing the national economies, especially in underdeveloped countries. The inflow of FDI helps stabilize the Balance of Payments for the countries. The current account deficits worsened in all WB countries except for Serbia during 2020. The current account balances (as a percentage of GDP) are presented in the table below. The current account deficit lessened in 2020 only in the case of Serbia. That is due to the lower outflow of company net income as well as the lower trade deficit. The deterioration in the current account balance in the case of Kosovo was marginal. This is likely due to a rise in secondary income coupled

with a drop in imports which together offset the decrease in exports almost entirely. Deterioration in the current account balance in the case of Kosovo was marginal. This is likely due to a rise in secondary income coupled with a drop in imports which together offset the decrease in exports almost entirely. The current account balances of Bosnia and Herzegovina and North Macedonia were also marginal. In the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina possible reasons for slightly worsening current account balances include a fall in the service balances and remittances. The WB countries are competing for FDIs as that would help finance their significant and, with COVID-19, growing current account deficits. For countries to understand how to attract more FDI they need to understand what are their most important characteristics that attracted the FDI in the first place. This way, they can move on and work on developing or enhancing these characteristics.

Table 6 Current account balance % of GDP

	2020	**2019**	**2018**
MNE	-26.0%	-15.0%	-17.0%
KOS	-5.70%	-5.50%	-7.60%
MKD	-3.50%	-3.30%	-0.10%
BIH	-3.40%	-3.20%	-3.50%
ALB	-8.90%	-8.0%	-6.80%
SRB	-4.30%	-6.90%	-4.80%

Source: World Bank (2020).

There is a noticeable gap in the literature related to Turkish FDI inflow to WB region as most studies focus on the trade and investment relationships with the EU or within the region itself. This chapter aims to close that gap by investigating the determinants of Turkish FDI to Western Balkan countries. The most recent data will be used and it includes the period of 2000-2020. Given that the countries of the region are often perceived as similar, there is a public sentiment that they are competing for the same investments. As a result, the public interest in this topic is high and it increases with every new investment coming to the region. Offering an empirical perspective of the situation will be of interest to the general public, potential investors, scholars and policy-makers alike.

Data, Hypotheses and Methodology

To define the determinants of the Turkish OFDI five Western Balkan countries were included in the study (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia). The data was collected from several relevant sources. The main source of data was The Turkish Ministry of Commerce, while secondary sources included the Statistical organizations of Turkey, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, North Macedonia, Albania and Montenegro and data published by Central Banks of respective countries. In addition, the World Bank database was used as a source of data for characteristics of countries that attracted the most Turkish OFDI. Unfortunately, Kosovo was excluded from the analysis due to the unavailability of data.

Currently, Turkey is considered one of the large emerging economies outward investors. A substantial increase in its outward investment had been noticed at the beginning of the new century (Aybar, 2012) thus, the sample for the portion of the study that aims to define the determinants of Turkish outward investment includes observations from the last twenty years including 2000 to 2020. This results in a sample size of 105 observations as 5 countries are included in the study for 21 years.

Determinants of Foreign Direct Investment and Research Hypotheses

The characteristics of the host countries that attract the FDI inflow i.e. the independent variables include *market-seeking motive*, *political risk*, *natural recourse endowment*, *gaining access to advanced technologies and know-how*, *cultural proximity*, *exchange rate* and *inflation rate* of a host country, *geographical distance* and *trade relations* between countries.

Market- seeking motive entails that the market size is one of the important factors driving the outward FDI decisions of a country as documented by Taylor (2002), Buckley et al. (2007), Pradhan (2009), Ramasamy, Yeung and Laforet (2012). The idea is that the size of the economy of the host country acts as a pull factor for the investment. On the other hand, the companies are motivated by seeking new markets. The GDP per capita is used as a proxy for market size. Following that, the first hypothesis is:

H1: GDP per capita is a significant and positive determinant of Turkish OFDI to Western Balkan countries.

Political risk drives „*the rules of the game* "in business and as such naturally poses a very important determinant of FDI. The host country can change those rules which

imposes risk for the country of origin. (Butler & Joaquin, 1998). This may motivate countries to resort to safer solutions, such as exports instead of engaging in FDI. The proxy for political risk is the Political Risk Index constructed by Political Risk Services. The index takes into account factors such as voice and accountability, political stability and absence of violence, government effectiveness regulatory quality rule of law and control of corruption. The second hypothesis is outlined as:

H2: Political risk is a significant and negative determinant of Turkish OFDI to Western Balkan countries.

The FDI is often driven by the motivation of *gaining proximity to natural resources* (Buckley and Casson, 2007) which may include various items such as chemicals, petroleum, coal, natural gas etc. The proxy for measuring the proximity to natural resources is the ratio of ore and metal to merchandise exports of the host country. Consequently, a country with large amount of natural resources attracts more FDI which defines the third research hypothesis of this study:

H3: The natural resources are the significant and positive determinant of Turkish OFDI to Western Balkan countries.

Gaining access to advanced technologies and know-how, was another distinguished motive of FDI (Erdilek, 2008), because of that the technology-seeking motive was included in this model. The companies may be motivated by gaining access to patterns, brands, local distribution etc. This may be achieved through greenfield or through acquisition. As a result, it is to be expected that the technologically advanced economies with intellectual capital will attract more FDI. The proxy for measuring the technological advancement of the country is the annual patent registrations in the host country. Thus, the fourth research hypothesis is outlined as:

H4: The technological advancement and intellectual capital are the significant and positive determinants of Turkish OFDI to Western Balkan countries.

Trade relations between countries are demonstrated through their *exports* and *imports*. As it is said in previous researches, exports may serve as a market-seeking motive of the host country while the imports can be understood as a proxy for resources that may be internalized using FDI (Buckley et al., 2007). More precisely, the proxy for measuring the trade relations reflects through two variables, first, Turkey's annual exports to the host country and second, Turkey's annual imports from the host country.

This results in two research hypothesis:

H5: Turkish exports to Western Balkan countries are the significant and positive determinants of Turkish OFDI.

H6: Imports from Western Balkan countries to Turkey are the significant and positive determinants of Turkish OFDI.

The exchange rate can be a contributing factor to FDI as the appreciation of the Turkish lira against the currency of some other country can result in increased attractiveness of Turkish investment to that country (Aybar, 2016). As a result, the exchange rate will be used in this study as a control variable, or put differently:

H7: Appreciation of Turkish lira against host country's currency is the significant and positive determinant of Turkish OFDI.

Operating in a stable economy was identified as one of the main push factors of Turkish investment to foreign countries (Erdilek, 2008) meaning that the Turkish companies seek to operate in an economy where *inflation rates* are stable and low. For that reason, another control variable used in this study is the inflation rate leading to the eight research hypothesis.

H8: Increase in the inflation rate of the Western Balkan countries is a significant negative determinant of Turkish OFDI.

The factors such as cultural proximity and geographical distance are often cited as significant determinants of FDI as well. However, due to low variation in cultural characteristics among Western Balkan countries as well as their geographical distance from Turkey, these factors were not included in the study.

Model

This study is designated to detect the determinants of outward FDI of Turkey to the Western Balkan region. Consequently, the Turkish outward FDI to Western Balkan countries is the dependent variable while the characteristics that commonly affect the FDI inflow of are its independent variables. The independent variables include the characteristic that commonly influences FDI attractiveness of a country, which were outlined previously. The dependent variable of locational outward FDI was modeled using the log-linear OLS regression model as defined by Aybar (2016):

$$lFDI(Turkey) = \alpha + \beta \; (5 \; host \; countries)$$ (1)

The data takes logarithmic form as data is expected to be non-linear, based on the previous research (Buckley et al., 2007; Ayber, 2016; Kalotay & Sulstarova, 2010) of this type. This model served to detect the most important drivers of locational decisions for the OFDI of Turkey.

Previous studies (Aybar, 2016) detected a certain degree of correlation between the residuals in regression models that estimated OFDI. To account for that possibility and choose the most suitable model i.e. the model that fits the data best F test, Lagrange multiplier – LM test and Hausman tests were used. To be precise, the results of these tests will help choose between pooled ordinary least squares (POLS), fixed effects (FE) or random effects (RE) models.

As a solution, the equation above has been estimated using two distinct models, pooled ordinary least squares (POLS) and the random effects (RE) generalized least squares technique. Later on, the Lagrangian multiplier (LM) test has been employed to determine which one of the two models fits the data better. As the value of LM test was 36.1284 and was significantly different than zero, it can be concluded that the RE model is preferred to POLS.

Table 7 Selection of the Model

Hypotheses	F test	LM test	Hausman test
H0	POLS	POLS	Random effect
H1	Fixed effect	Random effect	Fixed effect
	F = 2.9887**	LM = 21.6317***	Hausman = 32.3182***
Conclusion	Fixed effect	Random effect	Fixed effect

Source: Authors' calculation.

Based on the results presented in the table above, the F test results indicate that the null hypothesis of POLS can be rejected, meaning that the Fixed effect model is superior to POLS for the dataset in question. Next, the LM test is also statistically significant, indicating that the null hypotheses of POLS can once again be rejected, meaning that the Random effect model is also superior to POLS. Now that it is obvious that both, the Fixed effect and Random effect models are superior to POLS it is necessary to determine which one of the two is a better fit for the data. It is precisely for that purpose that Hausman test had been used. The results of the Hausman test is also

statistically significant, meaning that the null hypothesis can be rejected and the Fixed effect model is superior to Random effect. In conclusion, the Fixed effect model was used for estimation as it fits the data best.

Data Analysis and Results

Data

Among the Western Balkan countries, solely Albania is found among the top 10 countries of choice for Turkish FDI in the last 21 years. Based on the information provided in the reports by the Turkish Ministry of Commerce Bosnia and Herzegovina was 20th on the list in 2020 and 23rd in both 2019 and 2018, while Serbia was listed as 30th in 2020 and 44th in 2018. In 2017 Serbia did not make it to the list of top 30 countries. The exact information on the level of OFDI to Western Balkan countries is presented in Table 8 below.

Table 8 Turkish OFDI to Western Balkan Countries (2016-2020)

	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Albania	751,679,350	614,944,238	610,358,398	491,561,339	50,786,068
B&H	252,622,144	236,661,890	226,394,631	196,575,128	192,993,803
Montenegro	60,584,051	48,858,106	48,730,160	39,298,516	51,411,640
North Macedonia	210,894,781	158,545,604	127,859,358	119,494,727	103,411,963
Serbia	178,153,631	178,153,631	2,900,000	76,737,948	45,706,622

Source: Authors' compilation based on the data collected from The Turkish Ministry of Commerce Foreign Direct Investment Report 2020, 2019, 2018, 2017, 2016 and 2015. Note: all numbers are expressed in USD.

Based on the information presented above, it is obvious that of all Western Balkan countries, Albania is receiving the highest level of FDI from Turkey by far, followed by Bosnia and Herzegovina and North Macedonia as a close second and third. Serbia and then Montenegro receive the least amount of FDI from Turkey. This balance has been maintained throughout the years.

Table 9 Summary Statistics of Turkish OFDI drivers 2000–2020

	Mean	SD	n
GDP per capita (USD)	32,504	26,341	100
Political risk	3.51	2.34	100
Exchange rate (%)	2.31	1.63	100
Openness	0.007	0.003	100
Export from host (in billions)	3.81	2.35	100
Import from host country (in billions)	5.62	3.21	100
Natural resources	3.20	2.8	100
Patent	18,432	1,647	100
Inflation rate (%)	4.12	2.41	100

Source: Authors' compilation based on the data collected from the World Bank database.

The descriptive statistics presented in the table above reveal some, although not significant standard deviation in the variables. However, this is to be expected as we can notice that there are some differences in these indicators among the Western Balkan countries. The correlation matrix for each variable has been examined, and no multi-collinearity among variables was detected.

Diagnostic Tests

Before preceding the model estimation and the analysis, the data characteristics were examined using various diagnostic tests. To test for a spurious relationship that would bias the results of the model, the unit root test was conducted. More precisely, the Levin–Lin–Chu – LLC (2002) and Im, Pesaran and Shin -IPU panel unit root tests were employed. As shown in the table below, the results of both LLC and IPU tests suggest that all variables are stationary, at the high significance level.

Table 10 Panel unit root test of OFDI

	None	With drift	With drift and time trend
	LLC unit root test		
lnOFDI	-9.2351***	-8.3473***	-6-6173***
lnGDPC	-7.3472***	-6.1978***	-6.5716***
POLR	-7.3517***	5.3879***	6.7319***
lnNR	-9.8343***	-6.7134***	-5.0493***
lnPTNT	-10.1846***	-6.3789***	-6.9143***
lnEXP	-9.7392***	-4.7319***	-4.1682***
lnIMP	-12.8796***	-10.2964***	-11.4731***
lnEXCH	-14.68134***	-12.9438***	-13.0374***
lnINF	-8.1725***	-4.7364***	-4.6733***
	IPS unit root test		
lnOFDI		-10.6397***	-10.7431***
lnGDPC		-9.0130***	-9.1124***
POLR		-5.6414***	-5.7332***
lnNR		-7.4209***	-7.1353***
lnPTNT		-8.4112***	-8.9245***
lnEXP		-4.5113***	-4.7125***
lnIMP		-12.4412***	-11.7437***
lnEXCH		-13.3540***	-11.5703***
lnINF		-5.4877***	-5.6147***

*Note: The "***" indicate significance of 1%.*

Source: Authors' calculations.

Hypothesis Testing

Following the results of the F test, LM and Housman test the Fixed effects (FE) model has been estimated. The results are presented in the table below.

Table 11 Results of the Fixed Effects (FE) Model

Variable	Coefficients	Parameter Estimate	t value
lnGDPC	β_1	0.5998***	2.89
POLR	β_2	0.0120	0.67
lnNR	β_3	0.4323**	2.51
lnPTNT	β_4	0.0073	1.12
lnEXP	β_5	0.1325**	2.24
lnIMP	β_6	0.1435	0.78
lnEXCH	β_7	0.0348**	2.41
lnINF	β_8	-0.0423**	-2.13
D_a	β_9	0.2353**	2.31
D_m	β_{10}	0.1216**	2.36
D_{nm}	β_{11}	-0.1207**	-2.22
D_s	β_{12}	-0.0093***	-2.92
T	β_{13}	0.0079***	3.61
Intercept	β_0	3.8714***	13.49
R^2	0.3987	Adjusted R2	0.3412
F stat	14.05***	White test	3.15
Durbin-Watson	2.312	Breusch-Pagan test	3.72

*Source: Authors' computation performed using the STATA package. Note: the number of starts indicate the level of statistical significance with * indicating 10% significance level, ** 5% significance level and *** 1% significance level.*

The results of the FE model indicate that the level of GDP per capita in the host county (lnGDPC), natural resources of the host country (lnNR), level of exports (lnEXP) and imports (lnIMP) of the host country, the exchange rate (lnEXCH), and the inflation (lnINF) rates all are statistically significant with at least 5% significance level. The model has an adjusted R^2 value of 34%, meaning that it explains 34% of the variation in OFDI of Turkey.

With regards to the research hypotheses, based on the results the first null hypothesis (H1) can be rejected with at least 90% confidence level. To put it differently, based on these results, we can support the hypothesis that the GDP per capita (lnGDPC) of Western Balkan countries is a statistically significant and positive determinant of Turkish OFDI. That is supported at 1% significance level. It is no surprise that the size of the economy is a relevant factor for FDI inflow. Even in the case of Turkish OFDI

to Western Balkans, Turkey is seeking to invest in countries with larger markets and larger economies. The third research hypothesis (H3) can also be supported, meaning that based on the results presented here, it can be stated at 5% significance level that the natural resources (lnNR), are a statistically significant determinant of Turkish OFDI to Western Balkan countries. That means that exploiting the resources in Western Balkan countries is an essential motivator for Turkish FDI. The richer the country is in natural resources, the more FDI it may invest. Given the information presented previously, Turkey started various projects involving wind plants, coal plants, and hydroelectric power plants, and this result is in line with the expectations. Regarding the fifth research hypothesis (H5) it can be stated at 5% significance level that Turkish exports (lnEXP) to Western Balkan countries are the significant and positive determinant of Turkish OFDI. That is an exciting finding as it means that the Turkish exports to Western Balkan countries act as complementary to their exports. Put differently, the exports, on average, do not act as a substitute for FDI. It also means that, on average, it pays off for Turkey to export the inputs to the host country to produce the outputs there. Moving the production abroad may reduce the exports of that good at first. However, it may also increase the demand for certain raw materials or intermediate goods that will ultimately be exported from Turkey again. The eighth hypothesis (H8) is also supported at 5% significance level, thus the appreciation of the Turkish lira (lnEXCH) against host country's currency is a significant and positive determinant of Turkish OFDI. Currencies of several Western Balkan countries are relatively strong, particularly in the case of Montenegro, which uses the euro as their currency, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, which implements the currency board where the Bosnian Convertible Mark is pegged to euro. That helps attract the FDI, but it can also have the opposite effect, especially with Turkey. In the last several years, Turkey experienced significant political and economic distress causing its exchange rate to depreciate significantly against USD and EUR, and ultimately the currencies of Western Balkan countries. Finally, the ninth hypothesis (H9) is supported at 5% significance level. The coefficient is negative, meaning the inflation rate (lnINF) of the Western Balkan countries is a significant negative determinant of Turkish OFDI.

The variables that are not statistically significant based on the results of this model include the level of political risk in a country (*POLR*). This means that the level of political risk in a country in the Western Balkan region is not a relevant factor for Turkey when making its investment decisions. Of course, that is not to say that the countries are free of political risk. On the contrary, the likely reason for this variable to be insignificant is that the level of political risk is at a very similar level in all Western Balkan countries included in this research. Due to the lack of variation in the

variable, the coefficient is not significant. To put it simply, the levels of political risk are so similar that it merely does not sway the investment decision in any direction for any country in that region. In addition, the level of innovation in a country is measured as the number of registered patents (*lnPTNT*) is also not statistically significant at any conventionally accepted significance levels. That is probably again because innovativeness is similar for all countries included in the sample. Western Balkan countries are economies in transition. Typically, these kinds of countries are not expected to have high levels of innovativeness. Finally, the exports (*lnExp)* from Western Balkan countries to Turkey is not a statistically significant factor in relation to Turkish OFDI. That is probably because none of the Western Balkan countries make up a substantial portion of Turkish imports, as it could be noticed from the information presented in the paper previously. As a result, the second (H2), the fourth (H4), and the sixth (H6) hypothesis cannot be supported, based on the results of this FE model, meaning that there is no sufficient evidence to support the statement that the level of political risk, innovativeness of host countries, and exports from host countries to home the country has a statistically significant influence on the level of Turkish OFDI to Western Balkan countries.

Each country dummy variable is statistically significant, at least at the 5% significance level. While Albania and Montenegro have positive coefficients, North Macedonia and Serbia have negative ones. The dummy for Bosnia and Herzegovina was used as a benchmark, thus Albania and Montenegro appear to be a better fit for Turkish OFDI than Bosnia and Herzegovina, while North Macedonia and Serbia are not. Finally, the trend variable used to capture the change in OFDI through time is positive and statistically significant at a 1% significance level. That means there is a noticeable trend, and the level of overall Turkish OFDI to Western Balkan countries has been increasing over the period observed in this study (2000-2020). The table above also presents the results of post estimation robustness tests as well. Namely, the Durbin-Watson statistic, White-statistic and Breusch-Pagan test, all of which indicate no autocorrelation or heteroscedasticity in the estimated residual, respectively. With Durbin-Watson statistic of 2.3. which falls in the range of 1.5 to 2.5, it can be stated that there is no autocorrelation in the estimated error term. In addition, both, White statistic and Breusch-Pagan test have the null hypotheses of homoscedasticity. Given that neither of them is statistically significant, the null hypotheses cannot be rejected, meaning that the estimated error terms are homoscedastic.

Conclusion

The primary purpose of this chapter was to define the determinants of Turkish OFDI to Western Balkan countries. The results of the LM test indicated that using the RE model rather than POLS is more efficient. The results of the RE model showed that GDP per capita, natural resources, exports and imports, exchange rate, and interest rate have a statistically significant impact on the level of Turkish OFDI. The political risk, technological advancement and imports from Western Balkan countries to Turkey were not statistically significant at any conventionally accepted levels of significance.

In addition, the country dummy variables indicate that Albania and Montenegro are a better fit for Turkish OFDI than Bosnia and Herzegovina is, while Bosnia and Herzegovina is advantageous over Serbia and North Macedonia, based on the criteria used in the model. However, it is important to note that these findings are based on spast data and what hold true now may not necessarily be true in the future.

The time variable indicated a significant and positive trend in Turkish OFDI to Western Balkan countries for 2000-2020. It will be interesting to follow up if this trend will continue i.e. will Turkey remain one of the main powers the Western Balkan countries can turn to as an alternative to the EU. However, the implications of the results go beyond its contribution in understanding the determinants of Turkish OFDI to Western Balkan countries. Any government that seeks to improve the level of FDI coming from Turkey can use the results. The results indicate which characteristics are essential and by how much. Making improvements in the level of political risk and technological development in all countries can attract a higher level of FDI from Turkey.

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PART IV

SOCIO-CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL TRANSITIONS

SERBIAN FOLKLORE AND BELGRADE POLITICS: KUMSTVO AND ITS BETRAYAL

Prof. Dr. Keith Doubt*

A mong Orthodox Serbs, *kumstvo* has a strong cultural significance, social organization, and moral expectations. The cultural tradition plays an invisible role in advancing political agendas becoming what is known as what Eugene Hammel calls *cigansko kumstvo*. Leading politicians in Serbia, who have strong nationalist ideologies, are connected to one another not only politically but also familiarly through the kinship structure called *kumstvo*. One example is Ivan Stambolić, who was president of Serbia before the succession wars that started in 1992 with the rise of Serbian nationalism. Stambolić was *kum* to Slobodan Milošević. After the war, Milošević and his wife had Stambolić killed. There are more examples of treachery among Serbian politicians. The objective here is to have a fuller understanding of the cultural, historical, and political significance of the role of the ritual kinship in Balkan politics and how it functions within the context of nationalist politics resulting in what could be called state capture. Conceptual literature used will be Steven Lukes' concept of "mobilization of bias," Pierre Bourdieu's concept of "the aristocracy of culture," and Florian Bieber's concept of "institutionalizing ethnicity."

Introduction

In *Serbia Through the Ages*, Alex Dragnich (2004) reviews the strengths and weaknesses of the Serbian princes Karađorđe Petrović and Miloš Obrenović during the Serbian uprisings against Ottoman oppression from 1804 to 1815. Karađorđe used forcefulness; Miloš used diplomacy. Karađorđe was a lion; Miloš was a fox. Machiavelli wrote, "A prince being thus obliged to know well how to act as a beast

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must imitate the fox and the lion, for the lion cannot protect himself from snares, and the fox cannot defend himself from wolves. One must therefore be a fox to recognize snares, and a lion to frighten wolves. Those that wish to be only lions do not understand this" (1921, 69-70). Karađorđe could not protect himself from the trap set for him by Miloš ("Karađorđe" 2021).

Serbian folklore circulates stories of treachery about the princes. Karađorđe was Miloš' godfather or *kum,* as the honored witness at Miloš' wedding. Using this relation, Miloš set a treacherous trap for Karađorđe. When Karađorđe returned from exile in Austria to Serbia, Miloš persuaded Vujica Vulićević (who was Karađorđe's *kum* and honored witness at Karađorđe's wedding) to murder Karađorđe. Folk lore circulates two versions: Either Vulićević arranged for someone to kill Karađorđe or Vulićević himself assassinated Karađorđe while he slept as a guest. in his cabin. Using *kumstvo* as the trap, the fox snared the lion.

The exact details surrounding Karageorge's death will never be known, but academic historians believe Miloš played an integral role. In *Serbia*, L. F. Waring (1917, p. 102) writes:

> There are many versions of the fate of Kara George. It is said that Milosh informed the Pasha of his return and his political connection, and that the Turks said they would have his head or that of Milosh himself. The Serbian chiefs then deliberated about what was to be done, and one rose and said; 'Gospodar, we must do with Kara George as with the lamb on Easter Day.'

Waring reports that the Serbian chiefs found it necessary to sacrifice Karađorđe as the lamb on Easter day for the future of Serbia during the uprisings against Ottoman oppression. Miloš, it seems, persuaded Vulićević (Karađorđe's *kum*) to murder Karađorđe (Miloš' *kum*) taking advantage of the trust Karađorđe felt toward Vulićević. Later, out of regret and atonement, Vulićević built a parish church for what he had done, which became a monastery in 1954 and is called Pokajnica Monastery ("Pokajnica Monastery" 2021). "We may make him worthy by a subtle kind of poetic justice, in making the sacrificial vessel 'too good for this world,' hence of the *highest* value, hence the *most perfect* sacrifice (Burke 1989, p. 295). While eliminating the lion Karađorđe, to do so the fox Miloš maligned the honor of the kinship heritage known as *kumstvo*.

Kumstvo

Kumstvo is a fictive or, better, ritual kinship. It is fictive only in the sense that it is a kinship neither by blood nor by marriage. *Kumovi* (the plural for *kum* and *kuma*) names several types of kin for South Slavs. *Kumovi* may refer to a best man at a wedding, a male or a female witness at a wedding, a godparent at a baptism, a witness at a circumcision, a witness at a child's first communion, a sponsor at a child's first hair cutting, a person who names a family's child, and a woman who nursed a child who was not her own. *Kumovi* give agnatic kinship a horizontal structure in the larger community. The Yugoslav ethnographer Milenko Filipović (1963, p. 77) wrote, „Ritual kinship of various forms was of great importance among South Slavs in the past, because it widened the circle of relatives beyound the family, the clan, and the tribe." South Slavs is inclusive, encompassing Bosniaks, Croats, Serbs, Montenegrins, Macedonians, as well as others.

Kumstvo, the collective noun for *kumovi*, has social prestige, cultural organization (*kumovi* cannot inter-marry), and ethical expectations especially among Orthodox Serbs. Vera Stein Erlich reported that the *kum* at a Serbian Orthodox wedding (which Karađorđe was to Miloš and Vulićević to Karađorđe) is the one who declares, "Ja ih vječavam." "Ja ih vječavam" means not so much "I marry them" but "I would let them be married" or "I make them to be married." One saying that points to the *kum's* status is: *Bog na nebu, kum na zemlji* (God in Heaven, the *kum* on earth). In time of personal trouble, the *kum* is called upon to be a savior. Another saying is *Kad kum dolazi u kuću i zemlja ispod praga se trese*) (When the *kum* comes into the house even, the ground under the threshold trembles). Another *is kum nije dugme* (the *kum* is not a button). The *kum* cannot be used and lightly tossed away [sayings cited and translated in Hammel 1968, 79].

In "Serbia in a Broken Mirror," Miloš Vasić (1994) writes, "The Church teaches us that the institution of godfather goes back to times when the Christians were persecuted: there were no baptismal books, so that it was necessary to have a sponsor at baptism before God and before men." The *kum* played a crucial role during times of persecution in the Serbian Orthodox Church in the preservation of the faith. Vasić (1994) cites Ivan Kovačević as saying, "The institution of godfather is an important one in Serbia's history. It is an important and lasting channel of social links, sometimes stronger than family relations."

In *Serbian Orthodox Fundamentals: The Quest for an Eternal Identity* Christos Mylonas (2003, 94) writes, "*Kumstvo* is probably the most prominent and enduring

form of Serbian quasi-kinship relation, propagated by cultural, religious and historical traditions." Mylonas (2003, 94) adds, "While the secularising pressures of communism contributed to the decline of formalised rituals in Serbia, the practice of *kumstvo* retained a position of social and cultural prominence." Against the secularizing and modernizing pressures of Yugoslav communism *kumstvo* held together and protected the Serbian identity.

The Betrayal Syndrome

The historians Dragnich and Waring do not mention on the way in which folklore narrates the assassination of Karađorđe, nor the treacherous betrayal of a ritual kinship *kumstvo*. This folklore, however, assumes historical significance. Alan Dundes writes, "Folklore reflects (and thereby reinforces) the value configurations of the fold, but at the same time folklore proves a sanctioned form of escape from these very same values" (2007, 59). The *kum* is Janus-faced, that is, a savior and betrayer or, to put it another way, a Christ figure and Judas figure in Serbian folklore. The contrasting roles become one, and the conflicting faces result in treachery.

We witness the depiction of the betrayal trope in Emir Kusturica's film, *Underground*, which won the Palme d'Or at the 1995 Cannes Film Festival. Although the film juxtaposes the turmoil and life of different periods in Serbia's modern history (World War II, the Yugoslav era, and the advent of the secession wars), the dominate story is the betrayal syndrome in the ritual kinship of the two male leads, Marko and Blacky (*Crni*). Marko is a wild, powerful figure not unlike Karađorđe. Blacky is a shady, treacherous figure much like Miloš. Marko is a lion, Blacky a fox. Marko is Blacky's *kum*, and Blacky betrays and cuckold his *kum*. The treachery is repeated in each epoch and holds the film together, albeit in a negative way. The film ends with a nationalistic fantasy in which a small piece of land (where all the characters are joyously and celebrating a wedding) separates slowly from a river bank. The betrayal syndrome, which gripped the film's guiding story, is for a moment transcended.

Today, the betrayal trope is found not only in Serbian folklore and contemporary cinema but also in the political alliances between nationalist politicians in Belgrade. Serbian politicians act out and repeat the betrayal syndrome found in Serbia's folk history and cultural narratives, and the betrayals are sensationalized in tabloids online and in print. This study examines the mimetic relation between Serbian folklore and these political alliances in which the betrayal trope becomes a sanctioned form of escape from the positive value of *kumstvo* emphasizing its opposing pathos of betrayal.

Serbian Politics and *Kumstvo*

Kumstvo has become a feature of political alliances between Serbian leaders and wealthy business men. Leading politicians in Serbia, who have strong nationalist ideologies, are connected to one another not only as allies, but as kin. "Although folk theory warns strongly against close contact or business dealings with the sponsor, the relationship is often exploited in so-called *cigansko kumstvo* (gypsy *kumstvo*)" (Hammel 1968, 9-10). When converted into utilitarian calculus and instrumental function, a valued cultural kinship heritage is deformed and its value configuration stained. Traditionally, the value orientation of *kumstvo* is independent of utilitarian functions, and it is morally compelling for this reason. Today, however, Serbian politicians protect themselves and advance their careers and fortunes by offering and accepting *kumstvo* from one another. Political relations become as treacherous and as fatal as the relation between Karađorđe and Miloš.

Consider the relation between Ivan Stambolić, president of Serbia till 1989 and Slobodan Milošević, who ousted Stambolić and served as President of Serbia from 1989 to 1992 and within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia from 1992 to 1997, and then as President of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia from 1997 to 2000. Stambolić had not been a Serbian nationalist. He had wanted to hold Yugoslavia together after Tito's death and resisted the emerging nationalist politics led by Milošević as its figurehead. Milošević manipulated the Serbian people into wars in former-Yugoslavia and subsequently was indicted for war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. During his trial, he died of a heart attack.

Stambolić was *kum* to Milošević. Stambolić served as witness at the wedding of Slobodan Milošević and Mirjana Marković. They were quasi-family. In the Communist Party, Stambolić was Milošević's supporter. In 2000, Stambolić was murdered, and it was Milošević and Marković who arraigned to have their *kum* murdered, mirroring the betrayal trope in folk history when Miloš arraigned to have Karađorđe killed. The assassination perpetuates the betrayal trope that lives in the consciousness of the Serbian people as a part of their national narrative. The betrayal trope from folk history is repeated, and this memesis sanctions the amoral aggression. Vasić (1994) describes the digression of morality and of *kumstvo*'s traditional honor:

> American ethnologist Eugene A. Hammel, is the author of one
> of the most exhaustive studies of the institution of godfather or
> godparenthood in these areas. In his book "Alternative Social
> Structures and Ritual Relations in the Balkans," he studies
> the stability of the institution of godparenthood in Serbia and
> Montenegro. Hammel has reached an interesting conclusion: the
> institution of godparenthood is stable in stagnant, remote and poor
> environments; it deteriorates in mercantile, economically active
> and politically active environments.

Milošević was a powerful Serbian leader because he was a fox as well as a lion. He arraigned for Stambolić, his *kum* and mentor, to be assassinated. "A prudent ruler ought not to keep faith when by so doing it would be against his interest, and when the reasons which made him bind himself no longer exist" (Machiavelli 1921, 69-70). The advantage of this evil, as Machiavelli explains, is that Milošević retains his stature as a Serbian prince among the Serbian people. Milošević acted out Miloš' legacy.

A second notable example of *kumstvo* as the bond of an important political alliance is the relation between Aleksandar Ranković and Josip Broz. Ranković was *kum* at the wedding of Josip Broz and Jovanka Broz. Ranković "fought alongside Tito during the war and was devoted to him" (Judah 1997, 143). Even though Ranković was Tito's heir apparent, in 1963 Tito ousted Ranković for various political reasons and ordered him into retirement in Dubrovnik. Serbs had seen Ranković as their spokesperson in the inner circle of Yugoslav communism and the protector of their ethnic interests. Tim Judah (1997, 144) writes, "It is impossible to underestimate the effect of the fall of Ranković." Judah, however, does not formulate the effect of the fall within the context of *kumstvo*. While Ranković lived in obscure retirement in Dubrovnik after his fall in 1963, his funeral in Belgrade twenty years later in 1983 was an awakening for Serbian nationalism. "Everyone was taken aback, then, when tens of thousands turned out to mourn him, some of them shouting nationalist slogans such as 'Serbia is Rising!'" (Judah 1997, 157). Tito was a Yugoslav/Croat; Ranković a Yugoslav/ Serb. Their *kumstvo* was intra-ethnic rather than interethnic, representing the ethos and modern idea of multi-ethnic socialism.

Think of the phrase, *kum nije dugme* (the kum is not a button). The *kum* cannot be used and lightly tossed away. In the eyes of nationalist Serbs as well as some Yugoslavs, this is what Tito did to Ranković. Ranković became a martyr much like the lion Karađorđe. To the mind of Serbian nationalists, Tito's betrayal exposed the

flaw of multi-ethnic socialism. The Serbian State Security Service subsequently proclaimed Ranković as one of its founding fathers and "introduced a ritual of bowing before his grave" (Čolović 2002, 169). In this way the Serbian State Security Service redeemed Ranković for the Serbian nation much as Vulićević redeemed Karađorđe for the Serbian nation when he built a parish church now called Pokajnica Monastery. There are numerous examples of *kumstvo* in treacherous political alliances among Serbian politicans. We will mention a few. First, Vuk Drašković, a leading advocate of Serbian nationalism throughout his career, is *kum* to Vojislav Šešelj, another leading and even more powerful advocate of Serbian nationalism. Šešelj was found guilty of war crimes at the ICTY and remains a popular vote-gatherer in Serbian elections. Although allies at the start, Drašković and Šešelj had a vindictive falling out that was sensationalized in Serbian tabloids.

To mention a second, Šešelj, a convicted war criminal, is *kum* to Aleksandar Vučić, the president of Serbia, giving Šešelj an honorific and dominate position over the Serbian president, an office Šešelj himself covets. Politicians accept *kumstvo* with one another for transparently instrumental reasons. The betrayal of the revered kinship becomes a political spectacle, and the traditional kinship is deprived of its moral meaning. Politicians use, misuse, and abuse a tradition that has deep, moral roots in everyday life and folk culture. When transformed into an instrumental tool of power, the culture becomes disfigured.

Exploiting *kumstvo* nationalist politicians establish a kinship structure that promotes corruption. State-decision making processes serve private, business interests. Nationalist politicians engage in state capture. *Kumstvo* is a background factor in politics that at the same time stands outside the state organization and national government. The kinship relation envelopes government functions, giving political actions a traditional and charismatic function rather than a modern and rational function. The kinship relations lead to a fluid patronage system, and the elite kin network provides a tight grip on power.

A recommendation for future research is a network analysis of the kinship alliances between Serbian politicians and wealthy business men. In the social sciences a significant body of literature on network analysis in the context of political power exists. Such a study would demonstrate the matrix that implicitly structures and informs political behavior. Searches of tabloids and interviews would discover these relations; network analysis would explain their connections and variables empirically.

A more fruitful track to take at this point, however, is to consider the relevant literature in the social sciences that provides "terministic screens" through which to understand these kinship alliances in Belgrade politics and their relation to Serbian nationalism. "We *must* use terministic screens, since we can't say anything without the use of terms; whatever terms we use, they necessarily constitute a corresponding kind of screen; and any such screen necessarily directs the attention to one field rather than another" (Burke 1989, 121). Following Kenneth Burke's model of rhetorical analysis, we use three different terministic screens. We review how Pierre Bourdieu's concept of the aristocracy of culture, Steven Lukes's theory of the mobilization of bias, and Florian Bieber's analysis of institutionalized ethnicity direct attention to one field rather than another and say something particular about the significance of ritual kinship alliances among nationalist Serbian politicians.

The Aristocracy of Culture

Pierre Bourdieu's anthropological notion of the aristocracy of culture is the first terministic screen. Nationalist politicians invite the Serbian people to judge and measure their conduct according to the traditional authority of *kumstvo*. The authority of *kumstvo* assumes an aesthetic character that is charismatically persuasive. Bourdieu formulates the principle behind the persuasiveness as "the absolute primacy of form over function." Political actions, whether they be betrayal, assassinations, slander, or graft, achieve the status of a work of art, which ordinary Serbs are asked to judge in these terms. Aesthetics structures the grammar of judgement. Serbian tabloids become windows through which the nation gazes at their aristocratic politicians and accept their claim of absolute power. The reification of *kumstvo*'s honor and integrity in this aesthetic manner moves *kumstvo* apart from the people and everyday life and makes it an exclusive and distinctive heritage of the "aristocratic" politicians. *Kumstvo* is deformed; paradoxically, it becomes both morally beautiful and spiritually grotesque, each side undercutting the other. This negative dialectic nationalist politicians create insists that the Serbian nation defer to their authority through the aristocratic simulation of *kumstvo*'s moral and spiritual authority. The aristocracy of culture is a terministic screen that directs our attention to one field rather than another.

The Mobilization of Bias

Steven Lukes's concept of the mobilization of bias is a second terministic screen through which to examine the function of *kumstvo* in the kinship alliances of Belgrade politicians. First, Lukes (1975, 302) describes the position of the neo-Durkheimians, which he then critiques.

> What exactly do these neo-Durkheimian analyses claim to be the role of ritual in contemporary politics? They turn out on inspection to make a number of distinct claims: (1) political ritual is an *index* or evidence of (pre-existing) value integration (it indicates 'deep-eated values and commitments' and provides 'evidence of 'primordial religious commitment'); (2) it is an *expression* of such integration ('society reaffirms the moral values which constitute it as a society'); (3) it is a mechanism for bringing about such integration (serving to 'mobilize deep levels of personal motivation for the attainment of national goals'); and (4) it itself *constitutes* such integration (consisting in 'the progressive integration and symbolic unification of the group' and functioning 'periodically to unify the whole community'). Thus these various relations are claimed to exist between ritual and value integration.

This neo-Durkheimian position seems to apply. *Kumstvo* appears as an index of pre-existing value integration in Serbian society. It appears as an expression of such integration. It becomes a mechanism for bringing about such integration. And, finally, it itself constitutes such integration. *Kumstvo* bonds political alliances in a quasi-religious manner and takes on a mythological air. The reification empowers nationalist politicians, and political integration appear to be strengthened.

While this neo-Durkheimian position is tempting, Lukes (1975, 303-308) discourages us from being seduced by its non-critical nature. The neo-Durkheimian of analysis is idealistic and not connected to the political realities embedded in "a class-structured, conflictual and pluralistic model of society." The ritual kinships do not serve "to unite the community but to strengthen the dominate groups within it." They do not promote value integration but are "crucial elements in the 'mobilization of bias.'" The 'mobilization of bias' promotes aggression and intolerance toward others. By triggering the 'mobilization of bias,' nationalist politicians appear to be the most powerful leaders and the strongest fighters for the nation.

Christel Lane explains the process in a critical way. He shows how the functionalist account exposes a dysfunctional dynamic.

> Legitimating values acquire force by their association, and even fusion with, strongly felt interpersonal values that bind the individual to his family and his local community. The new ritual consciously utilizes the strong ties of solidarity towards the small local collectives and tries to rechannel them towards the large and more impersonal political collective.

When the political elite co-opts the cherished rituals of the non-elite, the mobilization of bias occurs. Nationalist politicians rechannel the ties of traditional solidarity within a small local community towards the large and more impersonal political collective with nationalist aims.

Over-institutionalized Ethnicity

Florian Bieber's (2014) analysis of institutionalized ethnicity is a third terministic screen to explain the role of *kumstvo* among nationalist Serbian politicians. For modern democracies participation in government is a key instrument and moral imperative to overcome group exclusiveness. The impact of *kumovi* relations between nationalist politicians, however, establishes ethnic privilege and sustains ethnic entitlement. Although *kumovi* relations exist independently of government functions and institutions, *kumovi* relations often control and fuel government decisions as well as institutional practices, especially critical ones that come up in time of crises. The result is what Bieber (2014, 15) describes as over-institutionalized ethnicity where institutions serve ethnic particularity and government is confined to an ethnic heritage. Over-institutionalized ethnicity results in state capture (Hertel-Fernandez 2019). Ethnic identities do not wither away under the sun of modernity; they blossom under the aesthetic light of a cultural custom that is co-opted in the kinship alliances of nationalist leaders. Bieber argues that modern democracies and government need to break from the past, but the tacit presence of *kumstvo* enables nationalist politicians to cling to the past as a way to maintain their grip on power. This utilization of *kumstvo* holds democratic institutions captive and prevents the realization of democracy's modern promise.

Conclusion

In this study, culture, the culture of a traditional kinship heritage, is a variable for understanding how nationalism sustains itself in Serbia today. In 1975, Andrei Simić made a prescient comment.

> The cultivation of family and kinship ties can be said to constitute a "national vice" among South Slavs . . . many Yugoslavs themselves have characterized this behavior as an impediment to the rationalization of economic and bureaucratic life.

As anthropologists show, kinship ties are fundamental to a healthy ethnic identity and genuine social solidarity. The cherished relations are essential to community and nation. At the same time, these ties may become an impediment to social progress and enlightened government. In "Serbia in a Broken Mirror: The Role of "Kum" in Serbian Politics," Vasić (1994) imagines an evolutionary solution: "The institution of godparenthood, as an act of taking on responsibility for someone's spiritual life and a substitute for blood relationships, is older than Christianity and the Serbs, and as such will probably survive all our follies." The question is if a laisse faire approach will loosen the grip nationalist politicians have on the state and its inhabitants. Will a non-interventionalist approach resolve the political problems created by nationalist Serbian leaders through what Serbs pejoratively refer to as *cigansko kumstvo*?

Another way to loosen the grip that nationalist politicians have to maintain power in Serbia is to reflect on the following paradox: Milica Bakic-Hayden (1995, 297) writes, "The Serbian attitude toward Muslims is more ambiguous due to what I call a 'betrayal syndrome.' A somewhat simplified example of this condition occurs when Serbs treat Muslims as that part of themselves which betrayed the "faith of their forefathers." Mandić develops Bakic-Hayden's point: "A particular label, *poturica*, was coined for Christian converts to Islam, and literally means 'Turk-convert' (or Turkified)." Just as Serbian folklore depicts the betrayal of *kumstvo* and its traditional values, prejudices among some Serbs toward Slavic Muslims assumes that Slavic Muslims betrayed the faith of their forefathers (Mandić 2021; Bieber 2000). Notice that the other reflected in this betrayal trope is also a projection of an inner self and its relation to the betrayal trope. What would loosen the kinship grip nationalist politicians have over the Serbian people and dissolve the prejudice among some Serbs toward Bosniaks would be if the betrayal trope were recognized not as a paradox but as an irony, as Kenneth Burke (257-258) wisely formulates: "True irony, humble irony, is based upon a sense of fundamental kinship with the enemy, as one *needs* him, is *indebted* to him, is not merely outside him as an observer but contains him *within*, being consubstantial with him."

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THE TRANSITION OF BOSNIAN SOCIETY FROM SOCIALISM TO DEMOCRACY: A CASE STUDY ON THE VILLAGE OF TRZANJ

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The research primarily aims to examine to what extent the daily life rituals of the Trzanj community have transformed and adapted to the new political and social systems. The main research question will be examined within three different periods such as the Socialist-Yugoslav period (1945-1991), 1991-1995, the war period (1992-1995) and the post-war period (1995-present). The methodology applied in this research is ethnology with a participant observation model of data collection from March 2020 to March 2021. The participant observation method used in the research has revealed that the radical transformations of political and social systems were experienced quickly and caused struggle for survival in people's daily life practices, behavior and way of thinking. In the Socialist regime, the community was organized down to the finest veins controlled by the one-party regime but excluding themselves from the political life and acting according to the principles of the brotherhood and unity. In the crisis period that came with the start of the war, as a village society, people displayed solidarity to protect themselves and survive. A sense of unity and brotherhood, in general, was replaced by a sense of unity with their Muslim identity. With the semi-liberal system that came after the war, human relations began to be more individualistic by denying the importance of social relations and even reducing their relations with each other to a minimum and finally reached the peak of individuality. Moreover, the study re-evaluated the existing literature on the transformation period of community in three different processes especially related to everyday life concepts from an ethnography perspective.

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Introduction

The research is developed by two scholars of Turkish origin aiming at investigating reflections of social and political change structures on daily life practices, behavior, and sense of community of Trzanj village located in the municipality of Hadžići, in different periods that have not been ethnographically explored before. Dr. Topcu has always emphasized that social science is a method of storytelling; consequently, instead of forcing all analytical and methodological information to the reader, the research is designed as storytelling in an ethnographic method with participant observation method. Furthermore, the study is designed to investigate to what extent the community of Trzanj has adjusted their daily life during these three social and political drastic transformation processes in the country because between 1996 and 2021, all political and social cycles involving Bosnia and Herzegovina have caused direct or indirect profound changes in the political and social structures.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has continued to preserve its existence in history since the establishment of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Wachtel, 1998). Ultimately, Bosnia and Herzegovina, which became a symbol of courage by declaring its independence on March 1st, 1992, was recorded as a country that witnessed war, genocide, war crimes, and tyranny in the pages of history between 1992 and 1995. The war ended with the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Dayton Peace Agreement - DPA) signed in December 1995 (Cvitković, 2017). Defying all these political and social changes, Bosnia and Herzegovina continues to consist of three founding peoples, Bosniaks, Croats, and Serbs. To avoid generalization of the daily life practice analysis at the macro level, the community of Trzanj was selected to reflect perspectives of people's daily life practices, behavior and a sense of belonging in a micro-level analysis of a small community. It also aims to explore, and in-depth investigate, how the community's everyday interactions and daily life routines gradually transformed from communist political order orientation into war and conflict with neighboring Serbian villages and co-workers and, in the end, welcomed the process of democratization in the country even though revolutions mostly completed the transformation period from communism to democracy. Bosnia and Herzegovina has experienced this transformation process more violently and bloodily than most other countries.

Trzanj is a community that obeyed and accepted the strictly organized central power of socialist Yugoslavia under the ideology of brotherhood during the Socialist regime. In the crisis period, which started in 1989 and brought the war, solidarity in the community of Trzanj to protect themselves and survive reached its peak; people did

everything together. A sense of unity and brotherhood, in general, was replaced by the unity with their Muslim identity. With the semi-liberal system based on DPA (Ramet, 2006; Sloan, 1996) or post-war democracy that came after the war, the ideology of Yugoslavia changed and caused changes in its political union structure. Numerous daily life practices, such as visiting each other, a sense of solidarity and unity have gradually transformed into something new or lost their previous impact; therefore, human relations and interactions within the Trzanj community began to be more individualistic.

While addressing the central research questions probing the socio-cultural and community adjustments of the Trzanj community, the ultimate purpose of the study is to provide a holistic and detailed account of unique experiences and sketches of the two Turkish scholars instead of reaching generalizations through quantifying as it is underlined by Glesne (2011). The researchers aim to interpret the way people ascribe meaning to their interactions and experiences in their daily lives to contextualize and interpret these realities as the main objective of investigating the culture of individuals or societies (Glesne, 2011).

Ethnography and Participant Observation: Dynamics of Trzanj Village
Mrs. Fišo, a Turkish bride and a co-author of the research, has shown interest in conducting participant observation of daily life rituals, commemorations, and rituals in the Trzanj community for the last ten years by interacting with the community members of its oldest and the most known families: Fišo, Kazić, Tufo, Nikšić, Čekrlija, Šabović, Golubić, Selimović and Oputa.

As a result, two researchers densified their research interests to investigate empirical material collected through participant observation with community members (Creswell & Creswell, 2017; Fetterman, 2009, p. 29). As Gregory (2005) mentions, "ethnographic research is to analyze for those who are ordinary and make visible these ordinary lives of people whose stories are not often told and be understood" (Conteh et al., 2005); in this context, the study is structured to explore the ordinary Trzanj community that has experienced extraordinary daily life rituals during three political structures.

Since March 2020, the Fišo family and Dr. Topcu have, during numerous visits explored the caravan route through Prehulja hill and the war monument. Thus, researchers in the capacity of ethnographers have explored the cultural group by conducting fieldwork and completely immersing themselves in that culture for a prolonged time (Fetterman, 2009). Moreover, as Wolcott (1999) states, "a good ethnography requires a prolonged stay at the research site" (Creswell & Poth, 2016; Wolcott, 1999).

According to the participant observation, all information were collected from March 2020 to March 2021, either using interviews or daily conversation methods as data collection. To make it clearer, the study coded the participant observations for the narrated parts as MM1 indicating MaleMember1 and FM1 indicating FemaleMember1 in the text.

Ethnographic History of the Trzanj Village

Trzanj is a homogenous local community with a population of 399 Bosniaks (2013 Census; Perry, 2013, Alađuz et al., 2019), located on the way to Mostar, in the southwest area of Tarčin, the municipality of Hadžići. According to the sketches of Skarić (1928), the village was settled around the square, and today, the village is located around the mosque which is currently also located in the square. According to Alađuz, Abdi-beg Korča had originally built the mosque in Odžak in 1758/59 (Alađuz et al., 2019, p. 361).

The village has retained its centuries-old name clearly visible in V. Skarić's sketch from 1928, along with the layout of houses, the intersection of roads, and especially the village square (Alađuz et al., 2019, p. 41). The meaning of the word trzan, trzanj, or trzno /-a had a limited geographical use only in the area of 'true Bosnia'. Proto-Slavic provenance origin was brought to this area by an Old Slavic tribe. In the present time, the Muslim origin habitus uses the word Trzanj, while the Orthodox origin habitus uses Trzna version of the word (Skaric, 1928; Lubor Niderle, 1922; Alađuz, 2016, p.40-41). The name Trzanj confirms its centuries-old existence by being mentioned in different historical periods (Filipović, 1965; Hadzijahić & Hadžijahić, 1974). Written sources in literature and narratives from the community confirm that the name of Trzanj was also in the Ottoman documents (Alađuz et al., 2019) because the caravan route passes through Trzanj to Prehulja and descends to Bradina (Anđelić, 1957; Šehić, 1980; Skarić, 1928).

The Yugoslav Period and the Village of Trzanj

As a political system, SFRY was divided into districts, counties, and local municipalities. Hadžići as a local government included the following villages: Tarčin, Kasetići, Mokrine, etc. The Tarčin local government included the following villages: Luke, Vukovići, Trzanj, Vrbanja, etc. The village of Trzanj was part of the local community of Duranovići (The local community (*Mjesna zajednica*) is the smallest administrative unit). The name of Trzanj was recorded in the Presidium of the National Assembly (Allcock, 2000).

Mjesna zajednica (as village representatives) was actively controlled by the community of Duranovići, where the majority of the population were Serbs, and Muslims had not shown any interest in politics. The Trzanj community with its homogeneous structure existed among closely linked Duranovići and Odžak communities, and in the 1960s, Odžak changed its demographic structure to a completely dominated Orthodox population. As a result of this demographic change, the Trzanj congregation demanded to relocate the mosque:

> Muslims needed to walk 300m away for their daily prayers, and, the mosque was so old... but the Serbs were unhappy with the decision...because they were superstitious about the mosque. They had believed that thanks to the mosque it was protected from natural disasters like flood, strong wind, and drought. However, ...all roof tiles of the mosque were transferred from hand to hand from Odžak to 300m above the village Trzanj by the villagers in 1965. On September 11, 1966, the mosque officially opened the door for its congregation of approximately six hundred people from nearby villages of Duranovići, Korča, Vukovići, Raštelica, Orahovica, and Trzanj (MM1, 2020).

Although the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Djokić, 2003; Banac, 1988, p. 328), which brings the concept of "unity" to the forefront, the picture obtained from the presented narratives divided image details about Yugoslavia in the Trzanj community: "invisible border always existed between the villages and villagers" (MM2,2021; MM3, 2021).

The Muslims living in the Trzanj village and the Christian families living in Odžak did not frequently visit each other; the village children developed friendships during school time, but these friendships did not last as long as the friendships with other Muslim classmates, as narrated, "everyone went their own way anyway, everyone started thinking about survival and work to support their families" (MM1, 2021). On days of great importance for a family, such as weddings, births, illnesses, or deaths, they also visited each other, although not very often. It was considered a great shame not to go to the house of mourning in case of a death. Whatever the unity and brotherhood idea was aimed at, while it was successfully implemented in the public spheres, such as schools or hospitals monitored by the government, it failed in most other places.

Against all this heterogeneous structure, it would not be wrong to say that the homogeneous attitude of the communities continued in patriarchal attitudes. Having a patriarchal structure in both segments, men continued to exhibit an attitude that kept women at homes: "Men started to work after graduating from school whenever they found a job. Women looked after children at home, elder family members, and the cow, the women used to not work very hard before, there were women who were working, but this was a small number of them" (FM1,2020; MM, 2021). Other daily life rituals during Yugoslavia, like visiting each other or coffee visits, have played a significant role in socialization of female members of the community. Besides home visits as daily life practices of married women, taking care of children and elders, cleaning and cooking, protecting and teaching Islamic values and norms to children fell on women's shoulders. However, according to community members, coffee visits made among women in the village have lost their importance today. On the other hand, male community members often spend time outside the village after work to have a drink and sit in *kafana* (a coffeehouse) listening to folk music.

Apart from all these serious topics, the researchers enjoyed hearing great Bosniak humor, reflecting another reality dynamics of the community related to politics, economics, and society. For example, when one of the villagers talked about the time of prosperity and going to Iraq for work and earning money by working for the Saddam regime but then the 1980s arrived and *dinar* lost its value and its economic strength, another one jumped into the conversation to narrate a well-known joke: "When American astronauts reached the Moon, they saw Sujo and Mujo here. After they greeted each other, Americans continued with the mission. While preparing to return, they asked Sujo and Mujo to board with them but they answered: 'No need, we just sit on dinar and we go straight down'. The inflation was so high" (folk humor narrated by MM2). *Dinar* fell, lost its value, no products to buy, but it became a surprise for researchers to hear that there was always alcohol: "all kinds of alcohol products were available in abundance" (MM1,2021; MM4,2021).

The War Period in the Village of Trzanj: The Battle of Prehulja
Researcher Fišo has attended more than thirty commemorations of these martyrs from the Battle of Prehulja and witnessed this great collective memory transition at the micro-level as Wolynn (2016) states, "those who witness suffering in the region of violence, war, and oppression keep their traumas in their memories and reverberate in their minds and continue in a spiral, transforming into a complex and difficult phenomenon that is transmitted not only from generation to generation but from society to society" (Punamäki et al., 1997; Wolynn, 2017).

War has never been easy for people, and the war period 1992-95 has been remembered as a hard time for all Bosniaks. While there are 46.800,000 results about the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the search engine, the Battle of Prehulja cannot even be found in search engines because this was a battle known only by the locals. It took place during the war period 1992-1995; this was the battle where people from the Trzanj community fought and died. This was the battle that was later turned into an object by local politicians to be abused for their election propaganda. Furthermore, for the Trzanj community, it was a battle for burying the ideology of unity and brotherhood.

Some days before the battle, Serbs from Odžak came to the village for a meeting as narrated by the young generation, and the old generation narrated that these Serbs prowled the male villagers about what they possessed. Still, they did not attempt to attack their neighbors from the nearby villages. "After one meeting in the evening, a JNA fighter jet came and dropped bombs on a place near Pazarić, and the second one (since they were flying in pairs) came and dropped bombs near our village. We don't know what exactly was the aim of that attack, but in a way that attack united us in our way" (MM2,2020-21).

While the war caused heavy destruction and hunger all around Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Trzanj community continued normally with their daily life practices. Today, adults, but yesterday children of the Trzanj community still remember some scenes from that time. However, most of them do not remember the details. However, there are survivors who do remember. That is especially related to their survival of the battle of Prehulja; hence, it was not surprising that all these explorative hiking in the region turns into informative classes related to warplanes, bombs, and war strategies:

> It was a sunny day of 13th May 1992. A group of villagers from Korča were looking after their fields…They returned to the village as soon as possible and a man came to Trzanj carefully (because Serbs also lived in his village) to say 'Četniks are on Prehulja'. It was a sentence which spread around very quickly causing great fear and uncertainty. The police units of Tarčin and Pazarić were informed, all local military units in that time called Territorial Defense were informed. People started to prepare for the battle... From Trzanj to a field on the way to Prehulja, members of Territorial Defense drove WWII military truck GMC CCKW 2½-ton 6×6 truck… the truck was carrying some young people, full of enthusiasm to defend their motherland. Since not all of them had a rife, or a pistol

> (it was around 1 rifle on 5 men), the unarmed stayed behind as a backup... An elder community member was a guide armed with a stick and a long military knife attached to it. Later on, people were joking – he was top equipped for the Battle of Kosovo…The house was captured, soldiers were Serbian villagers, some of them were captured, some of them got killed, a lot of them ran away… In the village of Trzanj, people were outside: mothers, old people, kids… waiting to what was going to happen next. They were aware that our army would defend us, but as the bad news from Eastern Bosnia kept coming, in our minds, chances for our guys were equal to none. The realistic expectations were – we will be slaughtered the same night. In one moment, we heard a voice above the village: HEEEEEYYY… SVI SMO!!! (heeyy… we are all here) …and we were so proud on them (MM2, 2020-21).

Therefore, a strong sense of solidarity and unity in the war appeared in the Trzanj community under the threat of the attack, the threat for their survival, and during the distribution of humanitarian aid. When aid packages arrived in the village, they were recorded in notebooks and distributed equally among the villagers, however, these notebooks do not exist today (MM1, MM3). The Trzanj community agrees that the solidarity during the war period does not exist anymore. With the democratic process, they noticed a decrease in the significance of visiting each other. The community members narrated that all this chaos after the war makes them completely individualistic and capitalism, liberation, and the democratization process make them more demand treasures of the world.

The End of Unity and Brotherhood
Topcu (2019) begins one of her analyses about happiness by narrating this folk story from Russia:

> One day, a good angel came to a Russian villager and said, „Ask whatever you want from me”. While the villager was thinking about what he could wish for with excitement, the angel set a condition: "Whatever you wish, I will give your neighbor twice as much". As such, things changed, and a rush took the villager. He finally found what he wanted and said, "take out one of my eyes". What matters to most people is to be in a better position than others. Comparison is an important learning tool that makes people unhappy. When it

> is compared, and if they are better off than others, it gives them a certain sense of satisfaction, even if it does not make them happy, but they are unhappy if they are worse off (Topcu, 2018).

The most important change with the new system reflected in the political structure was related to the dynamics of the local political community where most of the population are Muslims. This governmental structure change in the micro-community shows how the power-held position re-modelled horizontally from one community to another with the change of political structure from the one-party political system - socialism to the multiparty political system - democracy.

Then, the important dissolution within the community was seen in different layers; it mostly came out with fighting stories between neighbors. While fighting within the community rarely happened before the war, it started to occur more often right after the war. When the researcher listened to a fighting story related to 'the road' and told them this folk story, they told her back the Bosniak version of this folk story (just instead of an eye, they use testes. It sounded to her like a reflection of the patriarchal system). "After the war, people became opportunists. As the folk story said, they do not wish only to have more than others, they have also wished for others not to have more than them" (MM1, 2020; FM1, 2020).

These fights were generally related to land division, road passages through a piece of land, and water issues between neighbors, rooted almost 25 years ago and still currently creating a great dissolution within the community. The researcher has never witnessed public fights between the members. However, numerous passive-aggressive tactics have been witnessed, like not greeting each other, turning heads from each other, using bad and inappropriate words, rumors, and gossip.

Another common daily life practice that the community has adopted is that the meeting point for men transferred from *kafana* to the bus station in the center of the village. While the bus station hosts the older adults of the community during the daytime, it turns into a place where the young men gather for fun and drinks during the night; they continue this activity by listening to loud music from their cars and drinking alcohol. Sometimes, although not very often, girls from the community are included these groups of young men.

Conclusion

In a nutshell, the Trzanj community has been living with their Serbian neighbors during these historical processes in the nearby settlements, sharing their daily life dynamics parallelly, even though their territorial places where they live are not the same. However, regardless of their religious and ethnic background, all of them were suddenly thrown into three sharp political and social transformations. Hence, the dynamics of their daily lives also experienced the unpreparedness they found themselves in during these transformation and adaptation processes.

In the 1945-1991 period of Socialism, which was the first sharp political and social transformation process, the Trzanj community continued its life under intense government surveillance in the same way as the rest of Yugoslavia. The majority of Serbs enjoyed and actively attended most of the political and social life, however, the Trzanj community developed passive resistance by not being interested in politics and not following the political and social mainstream. The community developed resistance against the socialist period regime passively, and not actively, they just focused on their own business and rejected to actively record their experiences in the memory.

During the second sharp political and social transformation of the war 1992-1995 period, solidarity among the Muslims due to the rising hostility from Serb neighborhoods increased and reflected on all daily life practices. Thus, the main aim of the Trzanj community sharply transformed from existence to survival; as a reaction to surviving and not to being offended by Serb neighbors, they found the meaning in creating strong solidarity and unity with their Muslim identity.

The semi-liberal system adopted the Dayton Peace agreement in 1995 starting the third sharp transformation process and opened the eyes of the community. Still, this erosional solidarity disappeared among Muslims, and they began to keep their neighborhood relations on a superficial level, which affected their mutual solidarity as well. This social transformation not only reflected on their daily life rituals, but it also reflected on the institution of the family, which has evolved from an extended family to a nuclear family because women of the Trzanj community have become more active as the workforce of the village. The easily reachable capital of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina has become one of the major centers where women of this small community work.

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DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF THE WESTERN BALKANS EU INTEGRATION PROCESS

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Different socio-political, economic and legal analyses have been made on the Western Balkans EU integration process. However, such conventional studies often neglect discourse analysis as a theoretical framework, which significantly considers the relationship between the main concepts, messages, and discursive contextual practices. This approach additionally explains the validity of political behavior and expressed messages within a particular context. Discourse analysis and causal relationship between concepts, messages, and contextual practices could demonstrate the soundness of developed concepts, strategies, ideas, declarations, and sincere dedication of the Western Balkans leaders and policy-makers in fostering the EU integration process. Such analyses demonstrate to what extent is the Western Balkans on the EU enlargement agenda and how local political elites and leaders have responded to the EU enlargement agenda, strategies, and reforms. By employing discourse analysis this chapter explores main strategies and documents on the Western Balkans EU integration process. Then, another objective is to interpret the differences in language usage and interpretation by the political leaders and policy-makers in their linguistic, discursive, and socio-linguistic choices of the message regarding the integration process.

This chapter uses the linguistic theory of critical discourse analysis to assess the linguistic, discursive, political and socio-linguistic choices by the political leaders and policy-makers. Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is the study of the relationships between language and ideology. In this regard, linguists mostly examine language objectively by focusing on "what" language is rather than "why" and "how" of the language (Lewis, 2006, 373-379). Fairlclough (1989) at the same time argued that it is

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important to look into the social and historical background of the discourse. Language is also interpretative and denotes the relationship between signs, meanings and social and historical conditions. Therefore, language, thought, symbolic interpretative meanings and discourse are interrelated. Although the language is first and foremost a means of communication, it is not its only purpose. Language forms and shapes identities, ideologies and power relations. Therefore, CDA is interested in how written and spoken language influence social inequality, domination, and abuse of power in the social and political context. CDA's fundamental view is that language is first and foremost a social practice; therefore CDA doesn't isolate language from the discursive context (Fairlclough, 2001, 25-41; Van Dijk, 2001, 95-120).

Fairclough's Critical Study of Language
Fairclough argues that CDA concentrates on implicit use of language and its effect on the consciousness of the reader and that the reader in general, is not conscious of underneath massages in the language expressed by different users (Fairclough, 2005: 2). A key element is also the statement of authority. Namely, an authoritative person possesses credibility towards the reader. For instance, a person who has completed medicine is the only legitimate person to make decisions about the mode of treatment of a particular patient. Thus, the doctor is the one who has control over treatment, he/she is the person the patient is consulted about receiving therapies and ultimately, to whom the patient entrusts his/her health. The politician certainly is an authoritative person, and his/her statements are crucial when addressing the public, because he/she may be the person to whom the citizens entrust the duty of governance. Therefore, the author's goal is to find assumptions about how language affects the patient (reader, potential voter) and how complete trust is gained through language versus authority. Fairclough (2005) cites a key assumption - an ideology, which is closely associated with power. Ideologies can organize social behavior as well behavior change, which they do exclusively indirectly. Likewise, ideologies are closely associated with language, because language is, as the author says, the most common form of social behavior.

The great importance of language is pointed out by Bourdieu (1991), Foucault (1972), and Habermas (1984, 1987). They agree that language has become the primary medium for establishing control and power over social behavior. Therefore, it is impossible to study the connection between power and modern society, while ignoring the use of language (Fairclough, 2005: 3). Thus, it is important to study the language because it is narrowly related to the notions of ideology as a mechanism for the establishment of power, and whose consequent action is important to observe in the light of modern

society. The policy is partly composed of the debates and struggles that take place through language. Fairclough (2005) declares the method as transdisciplinary and gives some tips on how to find it most easily patterns in the use of language as a tool to achieve goals (p. 16). Fairclough (2005: 21-22) provides three basic steps in text analysis. The first step refers to the description of the text, its properties and elements. Another step is interpretation, which he calls the process of interaction with the text and the state of analysis. This step refers to seeing the text as a production process and as a source in the process interpretations. The last step is an explanation - the connection between interaction and the social context or social determination of the production process, interpretation and their social effects, consequences (Fairclough, 1995, 70-85).

The structure of the discourse, being studied, is changing as the networks of power change at the level of institutions and generally at the level of society (Fairclough, 2005: 25). The order of discourse is in line with the current ideology that is, on the other hand, at the social level, that is in line with the everyday accepted human action. The way the discourse is constructed and the ideology embodied by a particular discourse is determined by connections (networks) of power in specific social institutions and society as a whole (Fairclough, 2006: 26). Then, Fairclough (2004: 17) argues that the text as an element of social events causes certain effects. First of all, bring about a kind of change. Thus, a particular text or spoken language in the reader can cause a change in attitudes, beliefs, values, and behavior in the community in which he/she is located. In this context, one of the effects, which is, a very important aspect of research based on critical discourse analysis is certainly infusion, maintenance or change again - ideology. Ideologies are "representations of aspects of the world that may contribute to the establishment, maintenance or changing social ties of power, domination and exploitation or exploitation" (Fairclough, 2004: 18). This is a "critical view" of the ideology modality of power, which means that it can be viewed from several different aspects – from social status, behavior, beliefs and so on. Ideological representations can be identified in the text, but only in the sense that they are representations whose purpose contributes to social ties of power and domination. Fairclough (2004: 18) suggests that there is a need to frame good research with this notion of the role of ideology, due to some other effects which text can generate. Furthermore, if ideologies are primarily representations, they can contribute to social action and be integrated into the identities of social agents. Important is to keep in mind that when approaching the text as an element of social events into account we must take not only the text as such but also, as Fairclough (2004: 19) put it, interactive process of creating meaning. According to Fairclough (1989), the linguistic analysis requires descriptive, interpretive and explicative analysis.

Without further interpretation and explanation mere observation and enumerating linguistic manipulative strategies within a discourse simply does not make sense. So what is the goal of critical language analysis? The first step is to discover and demystify certain (negative) social processes. Then, the explicit and transparent mechanisms of manipulation, discrimination, demagoguery and propaganda would follow consequently. In the second step, data is collected and analyzed as much as possible, whereby an ultimate objective is to explain how reality is constructed and why certain processes occur. The third step includes the practical and political action, which is used to eliminate or change negative practices (Billig, 2007, 35-46; Wodak, 2011, 623-633).

The Western Balkans Integration Process

In June 1993, the so-called Copenhagen Criteria set clear accession and membership criteria for any country that aspires towards EU membership, including the countries of the Western Balkans. The Copenhagen Criteria, in general, included democratic, economic and legal responsibilities and obligations of aspiring countries. In 1995, based on the so-called Madrid Criteria the administrative capacity was added as another accession and membership criteria to aspiring countries. In this regard, the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (2007-2014) was introduced for public administration reform and strengthening of the rule of law. The EU introduced specific conditions to foster *democratic, economic, legal and administrative reforms*. Then, the Western Balkans countries have to ensure the free return of refugees, regional cooperation, settling of bilateral disputes and cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY). Although the Western Balkans countries must fulfill specific obligations all of them must satisfy six thematic clusters that treat *public administration reform, judiciary, fight against corruption, fight against organized crimes, freedom of expression and economic criteria*. Each year the *European Commission* (EC), *Freedom House* and Transparency International evaluate and rate the compliance and fulfillment of the set criteria (Sekulić, 2020, 23-48; Zhelyazkova, et. al., 2019, 15-37).

On the path of the EU enlargement, the West Balkans countries have to cope with different issues and challenges. Namely, different countries are facing political and economic decline on different levels. Some countries would proclaim that they want to join the EU, however, they are not seriously working on the reforms and in many cases, politicians are consciously blocking their own country to join the EU. The Western Balkans countries have problems related to freedom of expression in media, independence of judiciary, democratization, corruption, and socio-economic reforms.

For joining the EU these countries have to work in synchrony, all together to progress on its European agenda, whereby they must comply foster *democratic, economic, legal and administrative reforms* (Mandić and Joksimović, 2018, 15-27; Hoxhaj, 2020, 143-172). In addition, the EU integration process of the Western Balkans countries has been conditioned by "the historical legacy, ethnic and religious issues, border issues, return of refugees, secessionist movements, the rise of nationalism based on ethnic differences, the strength of national identities, contested states, limited statehood, weak state capacities, clientelism, corruption, organized crime, as well as the dysfunctional economy" (Vučković, 2016, 37).

The EU promises Northern Macedonia and Albania to open the EU accession talks. These countries are putting a lot of effort into meeting the conditions. Northern Macedonia, by rejecting its name, has managed to achieve a historic reconciliation with Greece in 2018. After the settlement of this challenge, Bulgaria began to block North Macedonia on the path to the EU. According to the *European Commission Report* (2021) North Macedonia has maintained a steady pace in implementing EU reforms. The country has been determined to work in key areas such as the rule of law and fight against corruption (Daskalovski, 2019, 63-73).

Albania applied for the EU membership on 24 April 2009 and since June 27, 2014, has been an official candidate for accession. Besides many other conditions such as progress in the judiciary, fight against corruption and public administration reforms, Albania has also launched a painful vetting process demanded by the EU, involving the vetting of all judges and prosecutors (Bakiasi, 2021, 1-9). However, EU members are not honoring their 2018 promises and are once again delaying the start of accession negotiations. Of course, there are many good reasons for this, especially the current state and constitutional crisis in Albania, again calling into question the progress made so far. However, despite that, the EU was able to stand behind its promise and start negotiations. That would be just the initial signal in one long process, which will surely drag on for years! Although Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama argued that there is no alternative to EU integration, he promoted the "Open Balkans" as a way to achieve European integration faster by implementing the freedom of movement of people, goods, services and capital.

The *European Commission Report* (2021) and *Freedom House* (2021) indicate that the political tensions and ineffectiveness of the state institutions have slowed down Montenegro's compliance with the EU criteria. Montenegro has moderate results in

government effectiveness, fight against corruption, public administration reforms, the effectiveness of the judiciary, and advancement of fundamental rights. After the 2020 elections, the new parliamentary majority struggle to maintain a parliamentary majority, which has affected the adoption of laws and decisions. For instance, the major challenge is the *Law on Freedom of Religion* and judicial appointments (Davidović, 2021, 743-746). In addition, political polarization has intensified and issues related to national identity overshadow real political and economic issues. Since 2012, Montenegro opened 33 chapters, out of which only 3 were closed, including chapters 25, 26 and 30. On 30 June 2020 Chapter 8 – Competition policy was last opened chapter (Đurović, 2016, 100-110).

Serbia signed the Stabilization and Association Agreement with the EU on April 29, 2008. In 2012 Serbia gained a candidacy status for the EU membership. The first chapters with the EU were opened in 2015 and until today 22 chapters were opened and two were closed. Some critics argue that Serbian fast journey to the EU has been conditioned by the regional cooperation and the negotiations with Priština (Muharremi, 2021, 1-7). According to the *European Commission Report* (2021) Serbia's political climate has been polarized with limited progress in public administration, judicial reform, and the fight against corruption and organized crime. Then, the democratization process, reconciliation, good neighbourly relations, free and transparent electoral processes and impartiality of the media have deteriorated in the past decade. In this regard, Serbia undermines the security in the Western Balkans, especially in Montenegro, Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina (Petrović and Wilson, 2018, 49-68).

For Bosnia and Herzegovina, one cannot even think about starting negotiations with the EU (Bassuener and Mujanović, 2017, 99-111). Bosnia and Herzegovina as a state capture is a symbol of the Western Balkans corruption, organized crime, ineffectiveness of the system of governance, public administration and the rule of law (Weber, 2017, 10-15; Ruge, 2020, 25). Unfortunately, B&H is treated as a country in transition from a post-conflict state to democracy, whereby peace, stability and security shape both internal and external affairs. B&H has been in a permanent state of conflict and crisis (Piacentini, 2020, 1-14). Although B&H has strong aspirations towards EU membership, the integration process has been long, turbulent and undefined. Since, 2015 and the signing of the Stabilization and Association Agreement between B&H and the EU, very little has been accomplished. Therefore, Bosnia and Herzegovina has a potential candidate status and has not even started the opening of the chapters with the EU.

Kosovo as the youngest state in Europe, which declared its independence on February 17, 2008 after full compliance with *Ahtisaari Plan*, has been struggling on the path to the EU primarily because of political reasons. Since 2015 and the signing of the Stabilization and Association Agreement between EU and Kosovo small progress has been made (Bashota and Dugolli, 2019, 125-149). According to the *European Commission Report* (2021) Kosovo and Serbia dialogue is major precondition for these two countries to progress in the EU path.

Political Discourse Analysis of the Integration Process

This chapter analyzes different socio-political, economic and legal conventional aspects of the Western Balkans EU integration process. However, such analysis often neglects discourse analysis as a theoretical framework, which significantly considers the relationship between the main concepts, messages, and contextual practices. This approach could be used to additionally explain the validity of political behavior and expressed messages within a particular context. Discourse analysis and causal relationship between concepts, messages, and contextual practices could demonstrate the soundness of developed concepts, strategies, ideas, declarations, and sincere dedication of the leaders and policy-makers towards fostering the Western Balkans EU integration process. Such analysis will clearly demonstrate to what extent is the Western Balkans on the EU enlargement agenda and how local political elites and leaders have responded to the EU enlargement agenda, strategies, and reforms. In the analysis, we will try to understand the seriousness and willingness of these countries to fulfill the requirements and make their countries better places to live.

The Western Balkans EU integration process, within *descriptive, interpretive and explicative* contexts, is represented by the political leaders. Therefore, it is significant to explore how they influence our perceptions of *democratic, economic, legal and administrative reforms.* An assessment of the Western Balkans EU integration process should be examined within indecisive and changeable EU strategy towards the Western Balkans countries and the *Open Balkan* platform as emerging alternatives for regional cooperation. The Western Balkans leaders argued that in the circumstances when the European Union does not have a clear strategy, the Open Balkans represents a great opportunity, hope and obligation for the Western Balkans countries to create a better future. They argued that this is the first time that something good for the entire region is launched in the Balkans. For the sake of better analysis of the integration process and our perceptions of *democratic, economic, legal and administrative reforms* we have adopted a joint statement "*Future Enlargement – A View from the Region*." This joint statement was issued by the leaders of Serbia, Albania and North Macedonia within the *Open Balkans Cooperation Initiative*.

The European Union and its member states, together with partners from the region, reaffirmed their unequivocal support for the European perspective of the Western Balkans at the Summit on the Hill on October 6.

The Western Balkans reiterated the region's commitment to European values and democratic principles, the rule of democracy, fundamental rights and the rule of law.

However, the questionable capacity of the European Union to integrate new members, internal debates among EU member states and bilateral relations have hampered the region's real progress towards the EU.

On paper, the enlargement policy remains active. In practice, however, there is growing disillusionment among the region's citizens regarding the EU perspective.

In addition, delays in the EU perspective have cost the region too much in political terms.

Northern Macedonia is a great example of unfulfilled promises of the European Union. Her government has tried to meet Brussels' conditions, only to find itself isolated and left to deal with the consequences of EU decisions. This weakened perspective of European integration threatens to leave us more disintegrated than ever. The feeling is shared across the region.

As the European Union develops new and far-reaching strategies, the region is desperately trying to realize existing ones. And while our path to the European Union has derailed, we remain committed to reaching EU standards.

We cannot allow this negative spiral to jeopardize the very basis of the region's future and prosperity.

The European Union is moving forward, while the region is stuck in the dilemmas of the EU itself. The European Union should and must explore all avenues for faster integration of the Western Balkans in the run-up to accession, together with its phased accession commitments as defined in the new methodology.

Accordingly, it would be useful to involve the region in the development of European Union trade and tax policy, such as a mechanism to adjust the carbon dioxide emission limit and protective temporary measures to restrict steel imports, to name a few.

We could also explore the possibility of exempting the Western Balkans from various *erga omnes* trade policy measures.

Our universities could be involved in the field of higher education and research of the European Union, which would provide an equal chance

to participate in tailored EU programs, research and innovation. At the same time, our agriculture is crying out for additional funds, and it has a huge potential for expanding and delivering high-quality products to the European Union market.

This could prevent a negative impact on the stabilization and economic performance of the region. We believe that it is in the interest of the European Union to help build and promote a secure and prosperous region.

And more than that - we could work together to explore Schengen participation and gradual integration into the European Union's single market.

Today's world is changing rapidly. It is time to act decisively. We cannot afford nor will we be forgiven for missed opportunities, indulgences and lack of determination to realize this strategic vision.

We need to understand each other better if we want to achieve the best results. If anyone thinks we have to act now, it was yesterday.

To that end, today we reaffirmed our determination to deepen our economic cooperation within the Open Balkans initiative, building on the agenda of the Berlin Process and focusing on rapid and tailored implementation.

In this endeavor, we engaged our chambers of commerce and instructed them to prepare detailed guidelines for the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Facilitating Imports and Exports, which was signed in Skopje on July 29.

Today, we approved a detailed plan to implement trade facilitation measures and asked the Western Balkan Regional Chamber of Commerce to further monitor the implementation process. We have also decided to form an Inter-Ministerial Council, which will work closely with the Chambers of Commerce to implement these measures.

The Western Balkans are ready to move at an accelerated pace. We need to move forward. That is how the European Union should move - towards the Western Balkans. Staying idle is not an option.

We invite all other parties in the region to join us and welcome them. The Open Balkans is open ", reads the integral text of the Joint Statement.

Belgrade,
November 4, 2021

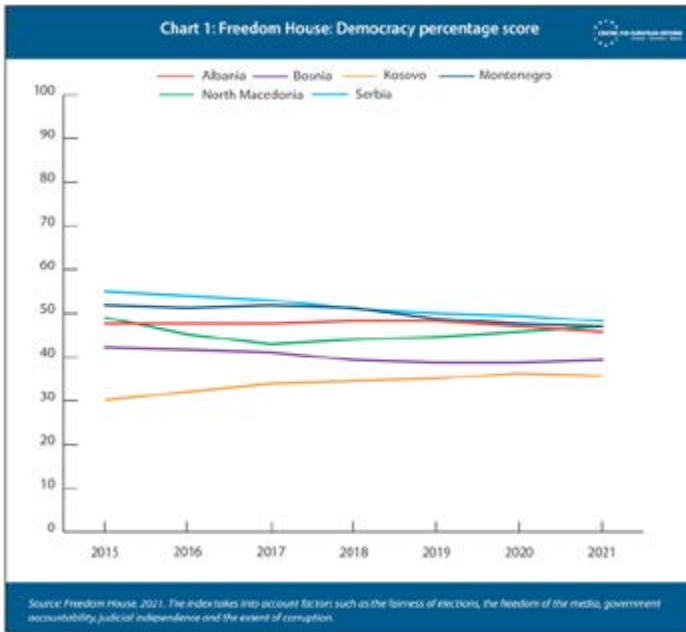The above joint statement of the Western Balkans leaders should be evaluated within the current state of *democratic, economic, legal and administrative reforms.* We are interested to assess the extent to which the region complies with the EU integration process and democratic values. The Western Balkans leaders declared that "*The Western Balkans reiterated the region's commitment to European values and democratic principles, the rule of democracy, fundamental rights and the rule of law.*" This political discourse emphasis in the joint statement aims to create a narrative and the linguistic code of the Europeanization of the Western Balkans, whereby these countries already comply with these values and principles. However, most of the local and international indicators have classified these countries as hybrid democracies and state capture. Thus, the above statement shows the manipulative use of the language by the leaders and policy-makers. For instance, in 2021 ranking the *Freedom House* rated all six Western Balkans countries partially free. The above statement also shows the (mis)use of political rhetoric for framing emotions and patriotic feelings of the citizens towards the leader, political party or country (See charts 1 and 2 below).

Chart 1: Freedom House: Democracy percentage score

Source: Freedom House, 2021. The index takes into account factors such as the fairness of elections, the freedom of the media, government accountability, judicial independence and the extent of corruption.

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Source: Freedom House, 2021. The index takes into account factors such as the fairness of elections, the freedom of the media, government accountability, judicial independence and the extent of corruption.

Then, the statement "*However, the questionable capacity of the European Union to integrate new members, internal debates among EU member states and bilateral relations have hampered the region's real progress towards the EU*" points to the interpretation and the construction of an antagonistic narrative that the EU has to be blamed for the lack of regional progress towards the EU. Some local leaders promote anti-European sentiments among the voters and question the EU sincerity and strategy towards the Western Balkans region. This narrative has been especially used for local purposes, which is an excellent excuse for covering the very questionable pace of the reforms and utilization of IPA funds in the Western Balkans. The basic analysis would show that some Western Balkans countries, like Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina, still struggle to get the candidacy status and other countries have closed but few chapters with the EU. However, the statement that *"there is growing disillusionment among the region's citizens regarding the EU perspective"* is the creation of a narrative that the citizen's support for the EU integration is in decline. On the contrary, most of the recent surveys indicate strong public support for the EU integration process. The above two statements demonstrate the role of the manipulative power of the language and purposeful political degradation of political and diplomatic discourse.

The joint statement continued with the construction of an antagonistic and anti-European narrative by arguing *"Northern Macedonia is a great example of unfulfilled promises of the European Union."* Although there is room for constructive criticism of the EU treatment of North Macedonia and Albania, it is significant to mention

that perhaps this was the first time that the EU has delayed its promises. On the contrary, the Western Balkans countries failed many times to comply with set criteria in the past but they were always given the second chance. Moreover, due to security, peace, negotiations and reconciliation, the EU had to compromise set criteria towards the Western Balkans countries. Therefore, this statement points to the construction of a narrative, whereby the EU is presented as unjustly superior in relation to the Western Balkans countries. In addition, the leaders and policymakers in the Western Balkans try to shape the public opinion with a very simple idea "no matter what we do the EU will not let us in." This complies with the additional statement *"As the European Union develops new and far-reaching strategies, the region is desperately trying to realize existing ones."* This statement, strengthens the idea of conditionality and setting of higher criteria for the Western Balkans countries. However, a new EU strategy and conditions, based on specific *six thematic clusters,* were introduced to make the EU integration process easier for the Western Balkans countries, considering the difficulties of the region to keep up with peace and security. The above statement also indicates purposeful use of over-lexicalization and loaded words, which give indefinite meanings to the sentence. For example, *"the region is desperately trying"* denotes indefinite meaning and message.

Playing on the card of peace and security the statement argues *"We cannot allow this negative spiral to jeopardize the very basis of the region's future and prosperity."* As an alternative, the EU should *"explore all avenues for faster integration of the Western Balkans in the run-up to accession."* These statements and calls for a privileged status and exemptions request the EU to compromise its own agenda and policies. This statement indicates how the Western Balkans leaders (mis)use security, and the EU strategy for the accession to cover their ineffective leadership, which is further (re) affirmed in the statement *"We believe that it is in the interest of the European Union to help build and promote a secure and prosperous region."* This statement points to the specific use of key terms that portray the most important focus within the discursive social context. For instance, the term "security" denotes the key term and its relationship with the discursive social context.

The joint statement pointed to the need for regional cooperation as an alternative to the EU integration process. The statement argued, *"To that end, today we reaffirmed our determination to deepen our economic cooperation within the Open Balkans initiative."* Although there are positive sides to the Open Balkans initiative, many skeptics argue that this initiative is another opportunity for the Western Balkans leaders to retain their authoritarian power and keep of the status quo. The above

statement denotes linguistic presupposition, which implies that an alternative to the EU integration process is the Open Balkans. Such presupposition aims to use problematic presupposition, like the EU integration process, in shaping the public opinion and the acceptance of the alternative solution, like the Open Balkans.

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SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF 2018 ELECTIONS IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

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This chapter explores the political ideologies, narratives and political programs on the political campaign posters during the elections. The political campaign posters often include symbolic meanings, related to nationalism, social democracy and religion as a propaganda method for gaining support from the voters during the elections. Such complex political campaigns match a very complex political system in Bosnia and Herzegovina that has a tripartite presidency, 14 governments and 136 different ministries. For the sake of a concise understanding of the relationship between political ideologies, political campaign posters and elections, this paper examines the 2018 general elections in which the participation 69 parties, 34 independent candidates and 36 coalitions. Through the prism of *semiotic analysis,* it is significant to analyze the ideology, political campaigns and elections. For the sake of a visual and textual presentation selected political posters will be analyzed within the theoretical discussion through semiotic and content analysis. The aim is to analyze what is the relationship between visual graphic elements and the ideological rhetoric of political parties? What political parties on their political campaign posters want to portray or conceal? To what extent the political parties have designed their election campaigns by using the presence of conservative, nationalist and social-democratic elements of visual persuasion?

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Introduction

Since the emergence of the first cultures, political organization and politics became very important for the progress and the development of humanity. Aristotle in his work *Politics* argued that politics is a noble art of solving collective, common problems and a means to create a just, good and prosperous city (*polis*). The natural city to Aristotle allows human beings to achieve and perfect their purpose (*telos*), whereby we achieve human excellence and well-being only within the city. The Aristotle talks about political affection (*philia*) and civic partnership as means of living together within the political organization that inevitably contributes to human progress and development. This complies with Aristotelian famous dictum "man is by nature a social/political animal." Thus, politics is a skill in managing society, an activity that directs and aligns other activities in the field of public life, especially government affairs politics is the struggle to win and to maintain power (Hague et al. 1998: 3). Furthermore, Feldman and Lowe (2018) elaborated the above ideas by arguing that "policy emerges from complex social and political forces that involve experimenting and searching for meaning and working towards some desired outcome" (p. 335-351). These introductory ideas and thoughts denote that different visions of a good society, achieved through political action, reflect different ideas about how a political community should be regulated. Thus, from the artistic point of view, political ideas are often abstract pictures of how, by using political power, one should manage and regulate life in a political community.

Understood in this way, different political perceptions are widespread in the postmodern world. They have partially evolved due to the lack of their systematic and coherent presentation within a particular political ideology In this regard, political ideologies, therefore, are systematically elaborated political ideas within the public sphere (Šalaj. 2018: 10). Contemporary political scientists define political ideologies as "a more or less coherent set of ideas that provide the basis for organized political action to preserve, modify, or reject existing power relations" (Heywood, 2002: 43). Ideologies differ from each other in terms of a description of the existing state, an idea of what an ideal society should look like, and ideas of ways in which one can get from one's existing situation to one's desired state (Šalaj, 2018: 12). For instance, the pre-election period is often overwhelmed with the spreading of different visual political messages in the public sphere. However, a political campaign poster, as a medium of the visual campaign, is an excellent way of transmitting quick and memorable information to the potential voters. Basic visual analysis of political campaign posters indicate that voters are influenced by visual cues, which is considered as a very effective non-verbal form of communication (Ahler, Citrin, Dougal, & Lenz, 2017; Banducci, Karp,

Thrasher, & Rallings, 2008; Verhulst, Lodge, & Lavine, 2010). Furthermore, visual cues often convey an ideological message through physical attractiveness, usage of a slogan, positioning of image., ect. Therefore, "visual representation has become increasingly important in election campaigns, candidates try to portray themselves positively and use visual frames to mobilize and convince voters to support them" (Grabe & Bucy, 2009; Marland, 2012). In Bosnia and Herzegovina, a majority of voters vote predominantly on the basis of nationality, ethnicity and religion. Thus, it is crucial to employ semiotic analysis of political campaign posters by considering visual rhetoric and ideological messages.

The media, within the context of political discourse and election campaigns, is under the influence of culture, tradition, technological adaptability/modernity, length of the campaign, the congregation of the electorate, etc. However, the political campaign poster has long stood out as one of the most popular persuasive media, that is, genres of political election communication. Any poster, as a communication medium/genre, integrates the image and text. Then, it requires, against two semiotic resources, a correspondent theoretical pattern for study (Stepanov, 2018: 122). A good example of how one image could transcend from a mere poster into a cultural phenomenon is the 2008 political campaign of Barack Obama. The iconic "HOPE" poster designed by Shepard Fairey became a 'literature' for creating successful poster campaigns. Shepard illustrated Barack Obama from the '*three quarters view*' *(a view in which the subject is not turned directly toward the viewer's eyes but instead gazing upward and to the side.* The 'three quarters view' was inspired by the famous John F. Kennedy portrait. According to Scot (2017) "through his graphic skill, visual vocabulary and personal style, Fairey transformed Obama from a presidential hopeful to a visionary icon." The analysis of the visual representation of Obama's campaign showed that the author ultimately aimed to combine the political message from the democrats with his own perception of Obama. Although the poster could be questioned, the results had shown that Obama won the election with a great percentage of voters between the age of eighteen and twenty-nine. An age group was the main target of the iconic "HOPE" poster, which most probably played a decisive role in their voting decision (UK Essays, 2018).

Therefore, it is important to research how semiotic analysis of the visual aids and cues of a political campaign poster could be correlated with the ideological, ethnic and religious affiliation of a political party. Semiotics is a study of signs and behavior and one of the founders of semiotics, Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, defined it as the study of the life of signs within society. Semiotics as an interdisciplinary study

emerged on a crossroads of the 19th and 20th centuries with the independent work of Saussure and Charles Sanders Pierce. In the 20th century numerous authors (Chandler, 2001; Deely, 1990; Eco, 1976; Hodge & Kress, 1988; Nöth, 1995), articulated in their works the importance of semiotics as a science. For them, semiotic analysis is the study and methodology of signs and their meaning within the social world and as a part of social processes (Curtis & Curtis, 2011; Mingers and Willcocks, 2017; Myers, 2013; Mikhaeir & Baskerwille, 2019).

Overall the election campaigns show the presence of various elements of visual persuasion served by political parties. In this way, through religious, national, cultural or urban connotative signs and symbols, political parties attempt to gain the votes. Thus, the researcher purposefully selected six different political parties that actively participate in the system of governance. We examine the visual messages that political parties communicate to potential voters, including typography, slogan, colors, and photos. Besides the visual messages, our analysis takes into consideration the names of political parties, party programs and ideological and religious preferences. Whether political parties have designed their political campaign posters based on their ideological views or based on the populism and attitudes that are closer to the citizens? Given the problem and the purpose of the research, do political parties mostly use nationalism in their propaganda posters? Do political parties mostly use social democracy and liberal values in their propaganda posters? Do political parties mostly use religion in their propaganda posters?

Ethnicity and nationalism are the terms that more closely define Bosnian all aspects of life. Therefore, "the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina are exposed almost daily to ethno nationalist-populist rhetoric, feeding fears of another potential conflict down the road. In practice, this rhetoric served only to paper over the cracks in an increasingly impoverished and overburdened society, with politicians showing little to no interest in developing plans to resolve the country's most pressing issue" (Brezar, 2020). Therefore, this chapter points to political ideologies and religious connotations on political campaign posters. This research employs semiotic analysis, which is a result of the research objectives' requirement for objective data. The research covers the period between September 7 and October 6, 2018, during the official election campaign. The semiotic analysis covers 6 political parties *(SDA - Democratic Action Party, SDP - Social Democratic Party, SNSD - Alliance of Independent Social Democrats, HDZ BiH - Croatian Democratic Union of Bosnia and Herzegovina, DF - Democratic Front, NS - Our Party)* of the different ideological spectrum, parties.

Political Ideologies

The visual appearance of political campaign posters and ideological rhetoric should be viewed within ethno-nationalism, democratic and religious contexts. Therefore, the ideological background of the political parties determines the political program and the political campaign. In this regard, Michael Freeden (1996; 2003; 2006) believes that political ideologies are conceptual maps of the political world that facilitate citizens' political thought. Ideologies, thus, turning the complexity of the political process into images, constitute a bridge between politicians and citizens. Each ideology has a basic structure with several interconnected concepts. According to Freeden (1996), ideologies differ less in terms of the concepts they use and more in how they are interpreted and combined. There are three main types of political meta-ideologies: monism, pluralism, and the category of "weak" meta-ideology (Šalaj, 2018; 12). Louis Althuser has incorporated into ideology our individual perception of the world. Althuser, same as Herbert Marcuse, saw art as a tool to recognize misuse of ideology and as a power holder to escape ideological chains. However, "in today's globalized world with its new face of 'vulture' capitalism even art that escapes ideology has been turned into a commodity " (Monteiro-Ferreira, 2001, 99)

The group of monistic political ideologies includes fascism, communism, and religious fundamentalism. Monism, therefore, as meta-ideology, embraces ideologies that differ from one another, but at the same time share one common characteristic, namely that there is only one, absolute political truth and only one correct way of organizing political life (Šalaj, 2018; 13). Furthermore, monism was seen as a driving force in practice and teaching modernism (Younes, 2004, 540). The second group or group of pluralistic political ideologies includes liberalism, conservatism and democracy. According to Šalaj (2018), pluralism embraces a pluralistic view of politics, the political process and the organization of the political community. Pluralism as meta-ideology and individual pluralistic ideologies take as their starting point heterogeneous and their ethnicity, religion, class, interests, etc. (p. 14). Pluralist political ideologies have marked the world politics of the 20th century and today they exist in almost all liberal-democratic states. A third category is a group of weak meta-ideologies, which include populism, nationalism, and technocracy. A 'weak' ideology consciously rejects or ignores many concepts that one would expect political ideology to include. 'Poor' ideology does not attempt to answer all important questions such as macro-ideologies and is limited in its ambitions and scope (Freeden, 2003: 98). Weak ideologies appear in very diverse manifestations and as such are often used for manipulating the masses.

Political Ideologies in Bosnia and Herzegovina

There are about 148 political parties and movements in Bosnia and Herzegovina with different political ideologies. Parties in B&H are defined as members of the left-wing socio-democratic parties, the centre – liberal parties and the centre-right – conservative parties. There is no party belonging to the extreme left or the extreme right. However, right-wing populist and nationalist parties are easily recognized because they advocate exclusive ethno-nationalism and allegiance to a specific ethnic group of voters.

Political parties avoid connecting and especially declare themselves as extreme, radical and right-wing. The reason for this is, one can assume, is the dominant image that has been created for years about the term "right" as the term extreme, populist, retrograde, and closed. Some political parties cover their ideological inclination by focusing on the slogans of democracy and Europeanization (Grebenar, 2018; 34). Each political party has its statute, which clearly emphasizes the political rhetoric that is being actualized and implemented. For the most part, they are parties that strive towards the centre through their statutes, but through their actions they are closer to the left or right. Some parties sometimes have conflicting definitions in their programs and rarely find ideal-type examples of ideological programs.

Social democracy as a separate ideology was recognized after the First World War (1914-1928). What differentiates social democracy as an ideology is a belief that political reforms could create a democratic state. Thomas Meyer, the German political scientist, states that the three core values of social democracy are freedom, justice and solidarity. Thus, social democracy aims at security, equality of opportunity and the rule of a democratically-elected majority. Then, in the *International Relations Theory* book, by Stephen McGlinchey, liberalism is seen as a defining feature of modern democracy, illustrated by the prevalence of the term 'liberal democracy' as a way to describe countries with free and fair elections, rule of law and protecting civil liberties. Liberals believe that a government is there to protect individuals from the injustices of others, but also that government itself can pose threat to liberty. According to Bert Šalaj, nationalism in terms of content is very simple and "poor", but at the same time, as history and the present suggests politically very powerful ideology with the strongest influence on the feelings of the people. Then, conservatism is contested among the public and politicians, and among the philosophers and political theorists. Popularly, "conservative" is a generic term for "right-wing viewpoint occupying the political spectrum between liberalism and fascism". Philosophical works treat it as a standpoint that is sceptical of abstract reasoning in politics, and that appeals instead

to living tradition, allowing for the possibility of limited political reform (Hamilton, 2020; Grebner, 2016; Goati, 2007; Nešković, 2013).

Political Parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina

SDA – Party of Democratic Action (www.sda.ba) is defined in the first article of the *Statute* as the *"People's Party of the Political Centre"*, open to all citizens. This party was founded by Alija Izetbegović in 1990. The positioning of the SDA as a political centre is debatable, as in the case of national parties affiliating with other ethnic groups. Positioning parties at the centre does not mean a combination of attitudes and policies from ideological areas, but rather a moderation of positions as a consequence of moving away from more extreme policies and choosing a "middle way". However, the SDA is an extremely strong Bosniak party with a program focused on the state of B&H and Bosnian identity.

The Statute defines SDP – Social Democratic Party as "a unified political multi-ethnic, pro-democracy organization of the Social Democratic Left, free, equal and responsible members. The primary objective of the party is to build BiH as a democratic state of equal citizens and peoples, Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs and other citizens; affirmation of BiH's sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence". This party is often linked to the League of Communists from the 1990s and its political orientation is multiethnic and civic (www.sdp.ba).

According to SNSD - Alliance of Independent Social Democrats party program, this party is designated as a political party of "Free People and Spirit, Party of Peace, Change and European Progress, Party of Social Integration, Equality and Justice, Party of European Social Democracy and Humane Democratic Change." Furthermore, the Party will pursue the goals of social democracy - freedom, equality, justice, social justice, solidarity, and mutual responsibility - through the classic instruments of social democracy: a strong welfare state and the development of a market economy. In addition to a clearly defined statute, the people viewed it more as a conservative Serbian party. SNSD is the largest Bosnian Serb political party, under the strong leadership of Milorad Dodik. Since 2010 SNSD changed its political agenda and began focusing on radical nationalism and secessionist topics (www.snsd.org).

HDZ B&H - Croatian Democratic Union of Bosnia and Herzegovina is the first party to have a national designation in its name. The HDZ B&H Statute defines a party, as "a people's party that brings together all sections of the Croatian people and other

B&H citizens, whose program is based on the principles of democracy and Christian civilization, and other values of the Croatian people." HDZ B&H is also a "social party" because it represents the interests of all sections of society, a "libertarian party" because it promotes the idea and system of liberties for everyone and everywhere, a "state-forming party" because it promotes the Croatian national interest, preserves the tradition and identity of the Croatian people and values of the Homeland War and the "European Party" because it accepts standards and sees the future of B&H in Euro-Atlantic integration. It is noticeable that this is practically a national and conservative party that, although open to citizens and national minorities, essentially emphasizes one national group and preserves its tradition and identity (www.hdzbih.org).

According to the Statute, DF – Democratic Front is a political party of social democracy, freely and voluntarily affiliated citizens of B&H. The main goals of the party are the secular republican state system and civil parliamentary democracy, preservation, and affirmation of state identity and sovereignty of B&H, social justice and social solidarity guaranteed by the state, development of market economy, affirmation of anti-fascism and others. **Željko** Komšić formed this party in 2013 and retained the support from the voters, due to his patriotic views, civic orientation and multi-ethnic representation (www.fronta.ba).

By the Statute *NS – Our Party*, is defined as a civic party and political organization of a social-liberal political commitment that works on "the principles of the realization of equal rights and equal opportunities for all citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina (www.nasastranka.ba).

Semiotic Analysis of Political Posters
This chapter employs a semiotic analysis of purposefully selected political campaign posters. Since the communication criterion is decisive for the visual and semiotic analysis, the researcher emphasized typography, slogans, colours and photos. Therefore the following criteria will be used for semiotic analysis:
- Photography - interestingness, composition, and attractiveness.
- Typography - innovation, visibility, readability, and amount of text;
- Slogan - originality, distinctiveness, clarity, and ambiguity;
- Colour - the contrast and colour symbolism;
- Concept – message, ideology and political preference.

All these five criteria must be in perfect visual harmony for the successfulness of the poster in reaching targeted voters. Using the semiotic concepts of Ferdinand de Saussure and Charles Sanders Pierce through the prism of the signifier, signified, denotation and connotation, it is methodologically effective to evaluate whether political parties in B&H are pushing through their posters ideologies contrary to their statutes and how they attract the votes.

Election Poster of SDA - Party of Democratic Action

The SDA party as one of the most influential political party has not been particularly creative. The poster is pretty straight-forward. Šefik Džaferović was a candidate for Bosniak member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Based on the criteria set for the analysis, we can conclude the following:

Photography: The candidate is in the foreground of the poster and is dominant over the rest of the composition. Close-up photography focuses on the politician's face and his expression. In visual communication, close-up represents a personal space that we do not let strangers not let strangers into. In a connotative sense, this would mean that with such a visual representation, the candidate tries to portray himself as a friend of the people and, through the prism of friendship, influence voters in terms of reliability and confidence. Also, the candidate's gaze is directed directly at the observer with a slight smile on his face. A slightly smiling face is characteristic of well-meaning, positive and good-natured people, whose aim is to re-awaken a sense of confidence and confidence. The overall appearance can be associated with a particular lifestyle but also connotatively with a particular political attitude. The photograph is right-oriented, which again has the connotation of an orientation towards traditional, national and religious values.

Typography: as the second element of importance to note the name of the candidate written in white on a green background in the bold version of the selected font. Fine contrast that is quite striking but not overly creative.

Slogan: The Democratic Action Party enters the slogan "Power of the People" into this election race. Everyone is aware that the SDA is a Bosniak party made up of Bosniak majority members. With the slogan "Power of the People", they try to convey that only united people have the strength to overcome all obstacles and difficulties, as it was in the past. "The Power of the People" retains the connotative meanings of conservative ideas, in which Bosniaks who are the majority supporting the SDA party should represent the strength and future of the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Colours: Green is the basic representation of the SDA party. In connotative meaning, it signifies an attachment to the Islamic Community, since it also uses the same color as its trademark. Muslims living in Bosnia and Herzegovina are mostly adherents of the ideology and politics of the SDA party.

Concept: Given the orientation of photography, the connotative meanings of slogans and colors, the ideology and politics of the Party of Democratic Action are closer to conservative politics than to the policies of the centre, which are emphasized in their statute.

Election Poster of SDP – Social Democratic Party

The SDP party is characterized as a party of the mild left. Denis Bećirović was a candidate for Bosniak member of the Presidency B&H. The analysis of their approach to the campaign looks like this:

Photography: Unlike the SDA party, the SDP party opted for a medium close-up photo. The photo is left-oriented, which is essentially the ideological rhetoric of the SDP party. The candidate's photograph is in front of the flag of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which

connotatively means that the candidate will be an ideal representative of the peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina and represent their interests equally. Although presented as the previous candidate with a slight smile on his face, his entire expression looks rather tired and worn out, which in direct communication with the observer sends negative connotations.

Typography: Much of the space on the left is occupied by typographic elements. The combination of red and blue text on a white background is very pleasing to the eye and it can be stated that the candidate's name has been successfully placed in the focus of the composition where the other typographic elements successfully follow the overall composition.

Slogan: The Social Democratic Party entered with two very similar slogans in this election race. The party's slogan was extinguished by "Country for All of Us" while the President's slogan was "One President for All of Us". In a connotative sense, this may mean that even though he is a candidate for Bosniak member of the presidency, if he is elected, he will work for all peoples equally. This slogan fits in very nicely with the concept of the flag and the image of the candidate in front of it

Colours: Red color primary represents the SDP party. In connotative meaning, it symbolizes energy, passion, and life. In the political sense, ever since the French Revolution, red has been a symbol of workers and revolution and thus has become a political symbol of socialism and communism. All this is in support of the conclusion that the SDP Party is completely channeling its campaign towards a left-wing flat filled with the rhetoric of social democracy.

Concept: Considering the orientation of photography, the connotative meanings of slogans and colours, we can conclude that the ideology and politics of the Social Democratic Party are exactly as they are presented, filled with social democratic rhetoric.

Election Poster of SNSD - Alliance of Independent Social Democrats

The Union of Independent Social Democrats (SNSD) is a party that operates both at the state and entity levels. They had a very modern approach to design, where they displayed on the posters their two main representatives, Milorad Dodik as a candidate for the presidency of the Bosnia Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Željka Cvijanović as a candidate for president of entity Republika Srpska. In their Statute, they were characterized as followers of social democratic political program and ideology. The analysis revealed the following:

Photography: Close-up photos of candidates in the close-up suggest closeness to the political right. The photo is made so that the candidates are not direct but in indirect communication with the observer. Modeled on the campaigns of US presidents, their gaze is slightly upward. Many connotative meanings can be drawn from this approach. First of all, candidates with indirect communication offer themselves to the observer as the ideal solution and the only correct choice. Looking up with a slight smile suggests that the SNSD Party candidates have a vision for a beautiful and bright future for Republika Srpska. Close up of their photos is in front of red, blue and white ribbons, which are also the colors of the Republika Srpska flag, and thus inform their constituents that they will primarily work for the people and interests of Republika Srpska (although Milorad Dodik is a candidate for the B&H Presidency and Herzegovina).

Typography: As in the previous case, much of the space on the right is occupied by typographic elements. The letter used was a Cyrillic script in a combination of red and blue text on a white background, which made a nice transition from slogans to candidates' names, following the rules and design basics.

Slogan: The SNSD slogan is very striking and provocative; it fits perfectly with the overall rhetoric of the propaganda poster. "Under the flag of Srpska, for the unity of Srpska," is a slogan that says a lot about the politics and pretensions of this political option. The message is directed solely at the Bosnian Serb citizens in Bosnia and Herzegovina, promising them a safer, more unified and more powerful Republika Srpska, going to the extent that it is offensive to other people in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In this way, they look quite far from the ideology stated in their official documents. Having played on the sentiment of the Bosnian Serb people for many years, they remain the leading Serb party in B&H.

Colors: Red, blue and white are also the official colours of the Republika Srpska flag, which confirms the facts stated above.

Concept: Considering the orientation of photography, the connotative meanings of slogans and colors, we can conclude that the ideology and politics of the SNSD are far from social-democratic. Through its propaganda campaign, which is visually very appealing, it uses nationalist rhetoric quite close to the extreme right.

Election Poster of HDZ B&H - Croatian Democratic Union of Bosnia and Herzegovina

The Croatian Democratic Union of Bosnia and Herzegovina (HDZ B&H), is the most influential political party from the Bosnian Croat people. By its Statute, it was hailed as a conservatively but also a democratic party. Dragan Čović was a candidate for presidency member of the Bosnian Croat citizens. Analyzing the propaganda poster we come to the following conclusions:

Photography: As with previous parties, the HDZ B&H has opted for a close-up option, which is left-leaning, trying to portray its politics as social-democratic. Like the previous candidates, the modest gentle smile of a person dressed in a suit

through direct communication with the observer sends a message of confidence and togetherness. The fact that in the background of the photograph there is a red and white chessboard which at the same time signifies the flag of the Republic of Croatia, which Bosnian Croats are considering to be their second homeland, shows that the HDZ BIH has defined political rhetoric

Typography: As a secondary element in the hierarchy of poster typography come to the fore. Emphasis is placed on the message that they want to communicate with the voters while the candidate's first and last name is tertiary information, which makes sense in the case of HDZ B&H candidates. Dragan Čović is a name that has been the leader of the Bosnian Croat people for years and it is not necessary to put his name and surname in focus, but it is more important to give space to the message they want to communicate.

Slogan: As with the SNSD party, the slogan of the HDZ B&H is rather straight forward, which conflicts with their social-democratic ideology. They entered the campaign with two slogans called "People and Homeland" Dragan Čović as a member of the B&H Presidency and the "Togetherness" as the slogan of the entire HDZ B&H campaign. The program and the campaign are based on the results of research amongst their people and imply how to protect the Bosnian Croat people. The tagline "Togetherness" can be seen as an ambiguous game. If one thinks of the unity of the peoples in Bosnia and Herzegovina then one could say that they are following the route of social democracy. However, based on pre-election statements, it appears that unity means the unity of the Bosnian Croats. And as such, their policies are right-oriented with elements of nationalism.

Colors: Red, white and blue are trademarks of HDZ B&H. With red and white, they have a link with the Republic of Croatia and the same party located in Croatia, which greatly influences the decisions and path of movement of the HDZ B&H.

Concept: Considering the orientation of photography, the connotative meanings of slogans and colors, the ideology and politics of the HDZ B&H are far from social-democratic. Through their propaganda campaign, they emphasize the importance of national awareness and community of the Bosnian Croats and affirm their conservative political rhetoric.

Election Poster of DF – Democratic Front

The Democratic Front is a relatively young political party formed after its president, Željko Komšić, has opted out of the Social Democratic Party. The DF is a political party of social democracy, a free and voluntary association of B&H citizens. By analysing their propaganda poster, we come to the following conclusions:

Photography: Unlike all the other posters analysed, DF opted for a slightly different approach to the campaign. It was as if they wanted to portray their candidate Željko Komšić as one of "us", a common man of the people who would work for the people. On the poster, we can see the candidate's photo as a central part of the composition where it is in the company of others. The connotative meaning of this approach is that the candidate is someone who is available to the public and it's there to do service for the people. Photography is centrally oriented, which can again suggest the idea of secularism and the ideology of the center. As in the case of SNSD candidates, DF displays his candidate through a blissful smile with an upward glance, displaying a determined vision and determination.

Typography: Like the other parties, the typography is sidelined and subordinate to the candidate's photo. The emphasis is placed on the candidate's first and last name, while a slogan appears as tertiary information.

Slogan: The Democratic Front is by many the slogan the most positive slogan in the 2018 election race. "BiH is winning" is a very good idea and vision. The slogan here is the framework concept of a country that should win after the war and everything that has passed since the war. Such a well-intentioned slogan was a real refresh in a sea of clichés.

Colors: The primary colors of the Democratic Front are orange and blue. In the psychology of color, orange is the bearer of joy, patience, and positivity, just as the slogan is, and so is the entire campaign of the Democratic Front. Blue, on the other hand, symbolizes wisdom, strength, competence, and quality. Colors as such are working very well with the overall composition of the poster.

Concept: Considering the orientation of photography, the connotative meanings of slogans and colors, we can conclude that the ideology and politics of the democratic front are in the true spirit of social democracy with a positive spirit and approach, some would say too idealistic but again in line with their ideological rhetoric.

Election Poster of NS – Our Party

Our Party presents itself as the multiethnic, secular and civic party in which man emphasizes its fundamental value. Our Party's campaign is very carefully conceived and quite bounces off from the rest of the political entities.

Photography: The most dominant element on the poster is the candidate's photo. The candidate is left-facing and with a slight smile is in direct communication with the observer. With no other characteristics, NS puts the focus on the candidate and the slogan "Together and Point".

Typography: Perhaps the most modern approach when it comes to using typography is Our Party. They communicated the text with the rest of the composition in a very striking, readable and innovative way.

Slogan: Our party entered into this election race with great ambition, placing high hopes on its slogan "Together and Point". The background story of this slogan is that ever since the war, the people of Bosnia are divided by name, first and last name and Our Party wants to end it, they want togetherness and equality of all people. Something similar to the case of the Democratic Front, the slogan is in a positive and cheerful mood and at the same time very difficult to achieve. However, this is a very nice execution of the slogan, with a red dot and san-serif typography.

Colors: The basic color of Our party is red. In the psychology of color, red is, in addition to the connotations already mentioned; red also means enthusiasm, strength, provocation, and courage. Courage is exactly the feeling that they tried to portray

with the overall composition. Implications that they have necessary courage to be the change,

Concept: Considering the orientation of photography, the connotative meanings of slogans and colors, we can conclude that the ideology and politics of our Party are entirely focused on the citizenship and ideology of liberalism.

In the 2018 election, the majority victories went to right-wing ideological parties and the political poster as indirect communication is still a secondary means of promoting political ideas and campaigns and that direct communication of political entities with its voters still prevails.

Table 1. Election results for the member of the Presidency of BiH 2018

BH PRESIDENCY								
Federation od BiH						Republic of Srpska		
Bosniak Member of the Presidency			Croatian Member of the Presidency			Serbian Member of the Presidency		
Name	Votes	Party	Name	Votes	Party	Name	Votes	Party
Džaferović Šefik	212.581	SDA	Komšić Željko	225.500	DF	Dodik Milorad	368.210	SNSD
Bećirović Denis	194.688	SDP	Čović Dragan	154.819	HDZBIH	Ivanić Mladen	292.065	SDS
Radončić Fahrudin	75.210	SBB	Zelenika Diana	25.445	HDZ1990	Popović Mirjana	12.731	SNS
Hadžikadić Mirsad	58.555	Platform for progress	Falatar Boriša	16.036	NS	Kličković Gojko	10.355	Prva SDS
Šepić Mirsad	29.922	NB	Ivanković-Lijanović Jerko	6.099	Stranka za boljitak			
Jerlagić Amer	9.655	SBiH						

Source: CIK Bosnia and Herzegovina

By semiotic and content analysis, we conclude *that political parties use the connotations of nationalism in their propaganda posters.* 3 out of 6 analyzed posters showed the presence of nationalist rhetoric in their propaganda campaigns. This is above all evident in the SNSD - *Alliance of Independent Social Democrats*, where the ideas of nationalism are conveyed in a very explicit way through the photographs and use of the slogan. Although to a lesser extent conservative ideological rhetoric can also be found with the HDZ B&H - *Croatian Democratic Union of Bosnia*

and *Herzegovina* and the SDA - *Party of Democratic Action*. Although right-wing democratic ideologies are portrayed through their statutes, conservative ideological rhetoric is very present and overrides democratic one. Since these three parties are the most successful in Bosnia and Herzegovina, it can be concluded that conservatively nationalist rhetoric has been the right formula for success for years.

Political parties use the connotations of social democracy in their propaganda posters. 3 out of 6 posters analyzed clearly show the presence of social democracy in election campaigns, which to some extent agrees with the party statutes (DF, SDP, NS). *The political parties do not use connotations of religion in their propaganda posters.* While it is true that certain political parties, above all the SDA, are close to religious structures, yet they do not use significant connotative religious elements in their propaganda campaigns.

This work demonstrated that some political parties have designed their election campaigns by using the presence of conservative, nationalist and social-democratic elements of visual persuasion even though some of those parties have opposite ideologies named in their official statutes. Election results (Table 1) have proved the fact that ethno-nationalist parties still enjoy big support among voters and that their policy still has strong roots in Bosnian society.

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THE PERCEPTION OF BOSNIA IN CLASSICAL TURKISH LITERATURE

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Classical Turkish literature has been effective in the preservation of culture and arts in the sphere of Ottoman geography. Both, cultural and artistic spheres of influence provide dynamism in socio-political and cultural life. They also play an important role in the development of the literary and artistic tradition, during which monumental works of literature, art and aesthetics had originated. Bosnia, as one of the important cultural and artistic centers of the empire, has brought vitality and color to the Ottoman cultural, artistic and literary aspects of life. Consequently, Bosnia, which was ruled by the Ottomans for centuries, has made significant contributions to Turkish culture, arts, literature and architecture. The works of the classical authors have survived to the present day. This chapter explores Bosnian classical Turkish literature poets, as well as those who mention Bosnia in their works. In this chapter, the linguistic and literary patterns about Bosnia and their expressive characteristics were determined in the tradition of classical Turkish poetry. Their perceptions about Bosnia are examined within a presentday discursive context.

Introduction

Bosnia, located northwest of the Balkan Peninsula and southwest of Europe, entered the Ottoman lands in 1463 and remained a *sanjak* of the Rumeli state until the end of the 16th century. In terms of administration, it was split from the Rumeli province during the reign of Sultan Murad III in 1580 and renamed the province of Bosnia. It was transformed into the Bosnia province in 1864 (Oruç 2005). Bosnia, which has hosted many civilizations throughout history, fell under the control of the Austro-

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Hungarian Empire following the Ottoman-Russian War (1877-1878). In 1992, Bosnia and Herzegovina proclaimed its independence and soon after the country was pushed into conflict, turmoil and chaos.

During the Ottoman domination of the Balkan geography, cities such as Sarajevo, Serres, Skopje, Bitola, Sofia, Thessaloniki, and Vardar stood out as significant cultural and artistic centers. Many intellectuals, public officials, artists, poets, and authors were educated in these cities of culture and arts and went on to make important contributions to the Turkish intellectual life. A thorough assessment of the Ottoman culture and art indicate that a large number of poets who contributed to classical Turkish poetry emerged from the Balkans (İsen 1997:515).

Bosnia, as one of these centers, made major contributions to the development of classical Turkish literature and retained its cultural vitality due to the Ottoman legacy. Bosnia, which has produced poets from various professions such as teachers, governors, district governors, judges, clerks, preachers, archivists, and religious scholars has made significant contributions to the history of Turkish literature. According to the *Sicili Osmani* there are nineteen Bosnian divan poets such as Abdullâh Efendi, Derviş Paşa, Fâzıl, Ferîdûn, Gedâyî, Habîbî, Kâ'imî, Ledünnî, Meylî, Mîrî, Rüşdî Efendi, Sâbit, Sâmi'î, Semâ'î, Siyâhî, Sûzî, Sükkerî, Tâlib ve Ziyâ'i (Yörür 2017:98). Since non-Bosnian poets treated Bosnia in their works Bosnia's presence has been felt more strongly in the classical Turkish poetry tradition.

The word patterns and styles in the texts of classical literature on Bosnia indicate a unique poetic genre. During the climax of classical Turkish poetry, divan poets treated Bosnia in their monumental works (Çeltik 2008). More than fifteen poets have expressions directly linked to Bosnia as a geographical region and Bosnia as a cultural term in their divan poetry. According to the divans and in this chapter, the study of Bosnia in the texts, as well as determinations and evaluations on this subject, have been made in relation to the viewpoint of divan poets and their interpretation of Bosnia. The divans were interpreted in light of the textual meaning, the quoted texts were transcribed, and the name of the related poet, as well as additional information about the text, was included at the end of the text, along with translations of the original texts. The divan texts regarding the classical poet's perception of Bosnia treated the following: life in Bosnia, social life, working life, religious education, architecture, the Bosnia tin-making profession, Bosnia wine, riots in Bosnia, the Bosnian bureaucracy, government officials such as governors, soldiers, commanders, and officers in Bosnia,

and their services. The following sections discuss the descriptions and evaluations of the collected results as they appear in the texts.

Bosnian Enigma

Abdî, a nineteenth-century poet, served in Bosnia at one point in his life and wrote about it in his poetry. Tired of unfair and baseless rumors about him during his time in Bosnia, the poet clearly expressed his desire and longing for Istanbul in his poems:

> *Usandım Bosna'nın nâ-hak yere güft ü şinîdinden*
> *Sitanbulu göñül özler gibi tab'a hevâ geldi* (Sağlam 2011:444)
> *[I'm tired of the unfair rumors of Bosnia (its people), my heart longs for Istanbul]*

In his history poem about the death of Azmi Efendi, who was appointed as the financial officer of Bosnia in 1849, Abdî tells that Azmi Efendi could not escape from the grip of death and died while on duty:

> *Bosna defterdârı iken hâke kardı 'âkıbet*
> *Âh-ı ecel 'Azmi Efendi'ye ne hâlet eyledi* (Sağlam 2011:233).
> *[The angel of death caught Azmi Efendi while he was a financial officer in Bosnia. Woe, what did death do to him, what a pity?]*

Abdî mentioned in his *Divan* the condition of the army, under the command of Ömer Pasha in the Balkans. He has stated in his eulogy that the army maintains order in and around Bosnia, protects lives and property and that the Bosnian people are pleased with the situation:

> *Bu dîvânı görüp dîvâne oldu Bosna erkânı*
> *Rüsûm-ı inkiyâdı eylediler sûretâ îfâ* (Sağlam 2011:112)
> *[The people of Bosnia were satisfied and happy after seeing the services, paid their taxes and continued to live in peace.]*

Bosnia's Revolts

A revolt that broke out for no reason in Herzegovina is also mentioned in Abdî's poems. According to Abdi's poems in the divan, the rebels set fire to everything during the revolt, plundered everything that came their way, attacked the Muslim

community, plundered the property of people living in peace and protection, and the fire of rebellion quickly spread all over Bosnia. In the rapidly spreading rebellion, the places in Bosnia were damaged, looted and pillaged. According to the expressions in Abdi's poems, the uprising started with the violence of Montenegrins, Dalmatians and Serbs against Muslims, but it was suppressed in a short time by the intervention of the army. It is described in detail from the point of view of the poet that peace was ensured after the rebellion, the soldiers provided security by patrolling and the rebels were killed.

> *Hersek'de zuhûr etdi sebeb yog iken 'isyân*
> *Etrâfa edip nesr-i şerer âteş-i tugyân*
> *İslâma hücûm etmege başladı ri'âyâ*
> *Selb oldu o yerlerde bütün râhat-ı insân*
> *Bu fitne o dem Bosna'ya da 'akis ile der-hâl*
> *Yek-hamlede her cânibe oldu zarar-efşân*
> *Bu bâd-ı mühâlif ki zuhûr eyledi birden*
> *Devlet nereden esdigini eyledi iz'ân*
> *Sevk etdi hemen ehl-i fesâd üstüne 'asker*
> *Gavgayı karışdırdı ra'iyyetle Müselmân*
> *Bir nice Karadaglı vü Dalmaçyalı Sırplı*
> *Görüldü 'asân içre merâm oldu nümâyân*
> *Ta'kîb-i 'asân etmek için ehl-i hükûmet*
> *Pe-der-pey edip her tarafa 'askeri pûyân*
> *Oldukca 'alev-pây-ı hurûş âteş-i fitne*
> *Teskîne devâm eyler idi harble şüce'ân*
> *Ol deñli olur idi vegâ hûn-ı 'adûdan*
> *Gûyâ cereyân eyler idi seyl-i firâvân (Sağlam 2011:210-211)*

> *[For no apparent cause, an uprising erupted in Herzegovina, engulfing the surrounding like flames. Some of the people started attacking Muslims, pillaging and robbery occurred in the regions where the rebellion took place. Security forces detected the rebels that appeared suddenly. The revolt of Montenegrin, Dalmatians and Serbs united against Muslims was suppressed before it expanded. Many security points have been established to ensure the safety of life and property. Those who burned the fire of sedition drowned in their own blood.]*

There is some information about the riots that took place in Bosnia in the chronicles section of the poet's Divan. Due to the demographic structure of Bosnia, it is emphasized that there are some difficulties in maintaining peace and tranquility; there are rebels among the Bosnian people and they are inclined to revolt because they cannot distinguish between good and bad, right and wrong.

> *Bosna halkı bagy u 'isyân eyleyip*
> *Çünkü bilmezler idi nîk ü bedi* (Sağlam 2011:232)
> *[Since some people of Bosnia did not know the good and the bad, they got angry and started to rebel.]*

Abdi is a good observer who can use what he experienced and witnessed during his stay in Bosnia. Based on what he saw in Bosnia, the poet stated that the stubbornness of the bandit is a brother to the Pharaoh's curse. He symbolically stated that the end of the bandits who opposed the state drowned in the Bosna river and the sea. He also points out that if the bandits in Bosnia and Herzegovina achieve their goals freedom will only be made up of words; therefore it is important to protect their independence.

> *'İnâdı eşkıyânın küfr-i Fir'avn'a birâderdir*
> *Ki bunlar gark oldu Bosna nehrine o da bahre* (Sağlam 2011:482)
> *[Since the stubbornness of the bandits was equivalent to the curse of the Pharaoh, all of them poured into the Bosnian river and mixed into the sea.]*
> *Eşkıyâ-yı Bosna vü Hersek olursa ber-murâd*
> *Lâf-ı istiklâli artık her taraf muhkem urur* (Sağlam 2011:484)
> *[If the bandits in Bosnia and Herzegovina achieve their goals, only the name of freedom will remain in these regions.]*

Hâmi Ahmet, one of the divan poets from Diyarbakır, also used the Bosnia example in his poems, in which he described the successes of the army while expressing that the soldier cut off the foes' feet from the Islamic lands. Bosnia got rid off from the long-lasting Nemçe sovereignty by the sword, and it is proud of its becoming an Islamic urban.

> *Tîg ile kesdi ayagın meclis-i İslâmdan*
> *Bosna'ya pây-ı gurûrı Nemçe itmişken dırâz* (Yılmaz 2017:219)
> *[The Austrians trampled Bosnia's honor for a long time but the Ottoman army destroyed them with their swords from this Islamic land.]*

One of the divan poets who grew up in Bosnia, Şehdî, reflected the traces of the geography he grew up in his poetry. Drawing attention to the intrigues in Bosnia, the poet states that Bosnia has been devastated by various tricks of the enemy and emphasizes the importance of being alert to the enemy's trickery:

> *Olup Bosna Sarây'ın hâli gülgûn fitne-i a'dâdan*
> *Ki itmişdi çerâgân lâle-zârın bâg-ı Nu'mânı*   (Bayındır 2008:277)
> *[While Bosnia was overflowing with enemy strife and deceit, the Ottoman navy eliminated this strife.]*

Kâimî, one of the divan poets who lived in the 17th century, pointed out the importance of the people of Bosnia to act in unity and solidarity to ensure peace and tranquility and to protect the life and property of the people. It is explained in an aesthetic style that the inhabitants of Bosnia should turn their back on evil, and if there is unity, harmony and order will be achieved.

> *Bosna'da birlik cân kıla dirlik*
> *Redd ola körlik sırlar evinde* (Aydın 2007:85)
> *[Let there be unity in Bosnia, let life go on, let the evil disappear in the house of mystery.]*

Bureaucracy and Bureaucrats

Hurşid Pasha (d.1822): In his poem written for Hurşid Pasha, Abdî describes how Pasha served as the governor of Bosnia, was known for his compassionate and just nature, and what he did during his duty to rebuild Bosnia. The poem about the opening of the police station constructed by Hurşid Pasha to meet Bosnia's military needs during his governorship aims to explain the Pasha's activities.

> *Bosna vâlîsi iken yapdı bu vâlâ tâkı*
> *Nâm-ı nâmî-i şehin-şâh-ı 'azîmü'ş-şâna* (Sağlam 2011:233)
> *[When he was the governor of Bosnia, he designed this magnificent structure worthy of the Sultan's glory]*

Ibrahim Pasha (d. 1896) is listed in historical poems in Ahmed Bâdî's Divan. Things were delayed because a vizier had not been appointed to the province of Bosnia for a long time, and the people began to pray in the morning and evening for the appointment of a vizier to their province. In the end, it was stated that Ibrahim Pasha was appointed as

vizier to the province of Bosnia, duly fulfilled the affairs of the province, observed rights and justice, was a professional administrator in state affairs, and bestowed good wishes:

> *Bosna şehrine vezâretle vilâyet mansıbın*
> *Hep duʿâ eyler idük şubh u mesâ bula vezîr* (Okmak 2008:106)
> *[We used to pray every morning and evening for the appointment of a governor for the city of Bosnia.]*
> *Vâlî-i Bosna kıldı İbrâhim Pâşâyı hemân*
> *Şaʿb-ı umûr-ı ʿâlemi teshîle bâ-sıdk u sedâd* (Okmak 2008:108)
> *[In order to correct the affairs of the people and to treat them with justice, Ibrahim Pasha was appointed as the governor]*

Sheikh Mehmed Emin Zâik Efendi, a divan poet of the nineteenth century, mentions Bosnia in his poems as a result of Halil Kamili Pasha's (d. 1866) duty. The appointment of Halil Kamili Pasha as Bosnia's top military commander was welcomed along the borders, and it is stressed that with Pasha's arrival, the area would achieve peace, and Bosnian children would live in peace without fighting with others:

> *Akîbinde şerefyâb itdi me'mûriyyet-i Bosnâ*
> *Semâhatle sügûr-ı pür sürûrı eyledi ihyâ*
> *Batursun şulha ol serhadd-i maʿmûr-ı Ferahrâyı*
> *Ki Boşnâk beççeler de yek digerle itmesün gavgâ*
> *Bu târîh ile Zâ'ik itdi farz-ı demmeti tekmîl*
> *Müşîr-i câh-ı Bosnâ bu sen'oldı Kâmilî Pâşâ* (Karakoyun 2007:81)
> *[Finally, with the appointment of Kamil Pasha as a military commander in Bosnia, peace, security, the safety of life and property will be ensured, and Bosnian children will be able to play without fighting with others.]*

Âsım, one of the 17th-century poets, shares the joy of the Bosnian people while expressing the appointment of Halil Pasha, who ruled with justice to ensure Bosnia's stability. He emphasizes that Halil Pasha's activities made Bosnia a center of attraction and that Bosnia is regarded with envy from Baghdad:

> *Müşîr-i maʿdelet-âyîn Halîl Pâşâ kim*
> *Keremle Bosna ahâlîsin eyledi dil-şâd*
> *O Bermekî-şiyemüñ fart-ı lutfı itse n'ola*
> *Diyâr-ı Bosna'yı magbût-ı hıtta-i Bagdâd* (Tozlu 2013:191)
> *[When Commander Halil Pasha ruled Bosnia fairly and generously, the*

> *people were also satisfied with this situation. With the beneficial actions of fair administrators, the land of Bosnia has become a coveted place like Baghdad.]*

In his praised poem written for the Bosnian Governor Mehmed Pasha (d. 1704), the poet Asım points out that Pasha's generosity, fairness and benevolence will always be remembered for his kindness. He emphasizes that every poet would write the good stories of Mehmed Pasha, who was appointed to Bosnia and was famous for his castle conquest.

> *Virdiler Bosna'yı bir zât-ı kerîmü'ş-şâna*
> *Ki yazar menkabetin böylece her nevk-i kalem* (Tozlu 2013:200)
> *[Such a helpful and hard-working manager has been appointed to Bosnia that every penholder writes his story.]*
> *Server-i kalʿa-küşâ yaʿni Mehemmed Pâşâ*
> *Eyledi devlet ile Bosna'ya tahrik-i ʿalem* (Tozlu 2013:201)
> *[Mehmed Pasha, the conqueror of castles, was sent to Bosnia by the state as governor.]*

Asm, who wrote a poem about the opening date of the palace built by Bosnian Governor Cafer Pasha (d. 1697) in Bosnia, reported that the palace was opened in 1691, and Vizier Cafer Pasha attended the opening alongside state officials and describes the Pasha's contributions to Bosnia.

> *Bi-hamdillâh serâya eyledi teşrîf-i devletle*
> *Vezîr-i Caʿfer-ism ü Bosna'nuñ devletlü pâşâsı* (Tozlu 2013:276)
> *[Thanks God, Vizier Cafer Pasha, along with the state officials, entered the palace as the new governor of Bosnia.]*

Ali Haydar Efendi (d. 1903) was sent to Bosnia as an inspector. The 19th-century divan poet Abdünnâfi İffet, who was also the governor of Bosnia, wrote a *tahmis* (a particular type of poem) by Haydar Efendi, who served as an inspector in Bosnia. It has been stated that, with Haydar Efendi acting justly, rich and poor people are happy and smiling. His effects are seen everywhere in the province, that Haydar Efendi is a blessing for Bosnia and that he should be helped in his services:

> *Olarak bây u gedâ sâye-i adlinde besîm*
> *Eyleyip re'y-i Felâtunu mehâmmı tanzim*

> *Şimdi seyr itti vilâyet ne imiş feyz-i ʻamîm*
> *Bosnaya mevhibe-i Hakdır o destur-ı Kerîm*
> *Yapışıp dâmenine celb-i inâyet idelim* (Gündüz 2018:565)
> *[Thanks to your justice, the faces of the rich and the poor are smiling, all*
> *things will be settled with your actions, let's protect the governor as the*
> *people of Bosnia and help them in their work.]*

Meşhûrî, another of Thessaloniki's divan poets, also expressed his feelings following the death of Seyyid Abdurrahman Efendi (d. 1844), the Bosnian Mullah who appeared in his divan. Mullah Abdurrahman Efendi, who worked in Bosnia, has left the previous scholars knowledge and is one of the great scholars of his period. However, this world is not left to anyone, nor to the great scholar Molla, who, like every mortal, has left this world.

> *Ser-fırâzân-ı mevâlî-i izâmdan sâbık*
> *Bosna mollâsı o allâme-i dehr ü devrân* (Aydemir ve Çeltik 2017:83)
> *[Bosnian mullah, who is superior to the scholars of the past, is the greatest*
> *scholar of our age and the world]*

Ahmed Bâdî, one of the 19th-century divan poets, mentions the death of a Bosnian young man named Mehmed Efendi (d. 1877) pseudonym Fuâd. He describes the sadness of the Bosnian young man, who does the accounting work of the foundation, over the death of the valiant young man at a very young age. In his poem "History of Death", Badi tells about the death of this brave young man who died in the prime of his life. The poet says that those who receive the news of the death had to be patient after expressing their sorrow and pain, and he consoled by stating that Fuad went from this temporary palace of the world to a permanent paradise.

> *Muhâsebeci-i evkâf Bosna zâdesi hayf*
> *Bu nev-civân ana mahsûl-i ʻömr idi rûşen*   (Okmak 2008:111)
> *[It was a pity that a Bosnian young man, who is the accountant of the*
> *foundation, died young in the prime of his life.]*

The Religious Education in Bosnia

Akif, one of the 18th-century divan poets, refers to the religious education in Bosnia based on a child's memorization of the Quran. In Bosnia, it is stated that a child's Quran memorization is incomplete, and it is emphasized that Hafız Mustafa Mazhar

Bey came to the child's aid and completed the child's memorization with his effort and help:

> *Hatm-i Kur'ân etmemişdi bir tıfıl Bosna'da kim*
> *İşte Hak bagışlasun ol mîr-i zî-şân eyledi* (Admış 2007:274)
> *[A child could not memorize the Quran in Bosnia, God forgive Hafız Mustafa made that child complete his memorization.]*

Tinism in Bosnia

Ibrahim Tirsi, a poet and calligrapher from the eighteenth century, states that Bosnia is a city famous for its tinning. In one of his poems, he refers to Bosnia's renown for tin-making as "Bosnia tinned plate." Tinning is the method of plating these items with tin to protect against poisoning caused by the oxidation of copper kitchenware over time. The sampling of Tirsi reaffirms Bosnia's reputation for the tinning profession, which spread around Ottoman geography.

> *İbrîk-i lutf ile bir içüm suyı virmedün*
> *Bosna işi kalaylı leğen söylerüm sana*   (Yılmaz 2017:39)
> *[If you do not give me a sip of water from the bowl of water in your hand, I will purchase a Bosnian tinned bowl for you.]*

Bosnian Wine

Seyrî, one of the nineteenth-century divan poets, associates in one of his poems eating, drinking, and entertainment with spring. In his poem, the poet expresses a longing for the famous Bosnia wines to be enjoyed in entertainment before the time comes.

> *Bu humârın zamânı yetmezden*
> *Eyle bu Bosna'da sûr gûn-a-gûn* (Hatipoğlu 2010:58)
> *[It is nice to organize various entertainments in Bosnia before the time for these wines.]*

Life in Bosnia

One of the fifteenth-century poets, Mesihi of Piriştine is one of the poets who reflect the beauties of the land and the city where he was born and raised. Stating that those born in Bosnia are brave and manly, the poet calls out to the beloved. While there is time and opportunity among the beauties of Sarajevo, it is necessary to have fun, eat

and drink, and spend time. Although the future is uncertain, it is important to savor the present:

> *Gel bugün şehr-i Sarây içinde beglik sürelüm*
> *Kim bilür yarın felek kimlerle ᶜişret-bâz olur*
> *Cân u dil niçün mürġin eyledüñ didüm didi*
> *Bosnadur bunda kim anadan ṭoġan şehbâz olur* (Mengi 2020:162)
> *[Let's have fun in Bosnia today, who knows who will be lucky tomorrow. Life and heart become a bird and fly, but Bosnia is famous for its valiant children.]*

One of the seventeenth-century poets, Mehmed Nazif Efendi of Tirhala, also mentioned Bosnia in his divan for its beauties. Nazif Efendi, who does not include metaphorical love in his poems, questions a Bosnian beauty to be a friend to him in his poem and mentions that if his hair gets around his neck, he will tell him not to choke it. The presence of Bosnian beauties in classical poetry texts indicates the richness of connotation about Bosnia:

> *O Bosnevi güzel âyâ olup bana hem-dem*
> *Taka mı boynuma zülfün ki bende bogma diyem* (Darıcık 2006:383)
> *[If a Bosnian lover befriends me and leaves her hair around my neck, I tell her not to drown me.]*

One of the poets of the eighteenth century, Gurbi from Bosna Yenipazar expresses his being Bosnian from time to time in his poems. Describing Yenipazar in detail in an ode, the poet talked about the natural beauties of the places where he was born and raised, the architectural structures, and the spiritual life that dominates the city. Although Gurbi, who is very dependent on his homeland, tells about his city at every opportunity, he praises his hometown by proudly expressing that "if the mountains were ink and trees were pens" this city would not be able to tell even one-thousandth. With emphasis such as "my homeland is Bosnia, my land is Bosnia, my city is Yenipazar", Gurbi has always been proud of being a Bosnian:

> *Gel diyârum Bosnadur bil sen benüm*
> *Hem Yeñibâzâr olupdur meskenüm* (Akbulut 2007:76)
> *[My hometown is Bosnia, let you know that, my home is in the town of Yenipazar.]*
> *Diyârumdur benum Bosna bilâdı*

> *Kamu halk-ı cihân bilur bu adı* (Akbulut 2007:143)
> *[Bosnia is my hometown, the whole world knows and understands this name.]*
> *Benüm sehrüm Yeñibâzâr içinde*
> *Çü bülbül oturup gülzâr içinde* (Akbulut 2007:143)
> *[My city is Yenipazar, the nightingale is sitting in the rose garden in it.]*
> *Anatolda Rûm ilinde Bosnada*
> *Dahı Bender cânibinde iy dede* (Akbulut 2007:218)
> *[I live near Bender, in Bosnia, in Rumelia of Anatolia]*

Bosnia and Sarajevo are mentioned in the divan of Bosnian Kâimî, a seventeenth-century Sufi poet. Kâimi, who also resides in the cities of Sofia, Istanbul, and Konya, as well as in Bosnia and Herzegovina, became the *sheikh* of the Silahdar Pasha lodge in Sofia and reflected his Sufi personality in his poetry. He emphasized the significance of the *dhikr* made by dervishes in the *tekke*, particularly in the Islamic town of Bosnia, and he implied that the Sufi movement and spiritual life in Bosnia protected Bosnasaray:

> *Subh u akşam cem' oluban dervîşân*
> *Bosna şehrinde ola turfe nişân*
> *Bu nişânile biline bî-nişân*
> *Hak velîler himmetinde hû dirüz* (Aydın 2007:269)
> *[Dervishes gather in the morning and evening, we chant in the city of Bosnia, we join this remembrance, we say Allah under the auspices of the dervishes.]*
> *Bosnasarây'a himmeti*
> *Yitişdi seyr it hikmeti*
> *Gel Kâ'imî kıl hidmeti*
> *Şevkile tevhîd idelüm* (Aydın 2007:513)
> *[The help of the dervishes has reached Bosnia, so let us join them wholeheartedly.]*

Asim, a seventeenth-century poet, makes observations about his time in his divan, stating that Bosnia is a prosperous city that continues to grow in terms of zoning, construction, and natural beauty. He emphasizes that the people who live in Bosnia and Herzegovina are prosperous, that nobody is in need, and that they are grateful for this:

> *Serhad-i Bosna olmada ma'mûr*
> *Bûmlar itmişiken anda karâr* (Tozlu 2013:239)
> *[Bosnia has attained both safety and peace and prosperity.]*

> *Ba'de-zîn her taraf olup gülşen*
> *Bosna olsa 'aceb mi bülbülzâr*
> *[Now everywhere in Bosnia is a rose garden, Bosnia is the nightingale of these gardens.]*
> *Hakk'a minnet diyâr-ı Bosna'da hîç*
> *Kalmadı şimdi kimse zâr ü nizâr* (Tozlu 2013:240)
> *[Thanks to God, there is nobody in Bosnia anymore who is in distress, hungry and exposed]*

Discussion and Conclusion

Bosnia, which was one of the important centers under Ottoman domination between the 15th and 19th centuries, is one of the cities that brought vitality to Turkish cultural life. Bosnia has inspired literary works in a variety of ways, including the daily flow of life, bureaucratic life, religious rituals, natural beauty, and folkloric elements, and has been successful in attracting the attention of Classical Turkish poets. While literary texts praise the activities and accomplishments of public officials working in the Bosnian bureaucracy, the emphasis on the importance of stability, peace, and tranquillity attracts attention. The attempts to eliminate the security of life and property with the revolts originating from Bosnia also attracted the attention of the classical poet and they called for support to the security forces by taking part in the face of these riots with their writings. Classical divan poets, who express the fame of Bosnia and the importance of its colorful wines in tinning, reported the values of Bosnia in their poems. Poets who follow the tradition of classical Turkish poetry have not shied away from incorporating the regions in which they grew up, lived, traveled, and witnessed, as well as their characteristics, into their poems from a variety of perspectives and artistic approaches. Thus, he not only preserved a window onto the era in which they lived but also fulfilled his obligation to ensure the transmission of cultural heritage to future generations.

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MODERNIZATION OF EDUCATION SYSTEM IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA (1486-1914)

Prof. Dr. Emel Topcu* and Mr. Yunus Dilber**

This chapter aims to assess the Bosnian educational system comparatively in the Ottoman Empire and in the Austro-Hungarian Empire in the light of concrete data such as education laws, investment budgets, student numbers and newly built schools. Since Bosnia and Herzegovina remained under the Ottomans for 415 years (1463-1878) and afterward under the Austro-Hungarian Empire or 40 years (1878-1914), it was affected by these two states in many areas. This interaction provided the development of a *sui generis* culture in B&H. After the *Tanzimat Fermanı* (Imperial Edict of Reorganization) proclamation in 1839 reforms were also made in educational institutions according to the European model. B&H, as the frontier land of the two Empires from the Treaty of Passarowitz (1718) to the Treaty of Berlin (1878), and became closer to European culture. This rapprochement was accelerated under the Austro-Hungarian Empire. This convergence played an important role, especially in the reorganization of educational and cultural institutions. The Austro-Hungarian Empire brought innovations to the schooling process. Administrators implemented their own school systems to achieve education integration with the Empire. This tendency created a new social class called *Bečka škola* by facilitating the education of Bosnian leaders in Vienna with its college policy. These developments were the starting point for Bosnian society, which had been in interaction and intertwined with Eastern culture for many years. The process, which was the legacy of the two empires, played a significant role in the realization of this transformation.

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Introduction

The European-style education and school system in Ottoman Empire began after the proclamation of Tanzimat Edict in 1839, which was regarded as the pioneer of the Europeanisation of the institutions in the Empire. After its implementation in Istanbul, this process gradually expanded from centers to the periphery, throughout the territory of the Empire. Regarding the number of schools and pupils in the Ottoman Empire, the data provided by Turkish and Austrian sources differ significantly. One of the reasons for the misinformation is to show that Austro-Hungarian Empire introduced the modern educational system in B&H.

Most sources from that period are respectively German, Turkish, Bosnian and English. The Turkish sources mostly rely on articles and books by Turkish historians and linguistics, which were appointed mostly after the year 2000, when Turkish studies were established at the universities in B&H. The researchers, who cannot read Ottoman Turkish, generally cannot reach the major sources, since the alphabet reform of the new Republic of Turkey in 1928. However, the alphabet drawback doesn't exist in the German language. Because of that, Turkish researchers focus only on topics related to the Turkish language, while German and Austrian researchers can focus almost on all fields of the Austro-Hungarian period in B&H.

The major Turkish sources in the old Ottoman Empire are *Salname* (yearbooks), *Kanunnâme* (Code of Law) and *Vakıfname* (Endowment Charter), *Ferman* (Edict of Sultans). In modern Turkish, the data concerning the number of schools and pupils in the period of Ottoman Empire are available in the books such as '*BiH in the Tanzimat Period'* of Gölen (2010), '*Implementation of Tanzimat in BiH and Its Outcomes'* (1839-1875) of Ak (2010), 'Education *in Bosnia (1751-1905)* of Karagülle (2019). Then, the main sources in Bosnian are the books '*Education in BiH during the Austro-Hungarian Occupation 1878-1918'* of Papić (1972)*, 'Education in the Bosnien Eyalet during the OE Administration'* of Kasumović (1999).

Austria offers richer research opportunities in terms of books, reports and yearbooks. The book '*BiH under the Administration of Austria-Hungary'* of Schmid from 1914, '*The primary school hunters in the different countries II. Primary school hunters in Austria-Hungary, BiH*' from 1901 of Hinträger, 'Report *on the administration of BiH for 1906* 'published from the State archive of Austro-Hungarian Empire are the main German sources. The book *'Taming Balkan Nationalism, The Austro-Hungarian Empire 'Civilisation Mission'* in Bosnia, 1878-1914' of Okey is one of the considerable works concerning the mission of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in Bosnia (2007).

Each empire aimed to establish its education system and teaching of its language. The Austro-Hungarian Empire used the Ottoman school system until the enactment of its School Reform in 1894. This chapter, therefore, compares schooling policies in regard to the number of pupils, schools and its administration, curricula, foreign language teaching, types of schools such as military schools, teachers schools, reading schools, commercial schools, trade schools and religious schools, their financing and laws enforced in the scope of school policy. The high education policy at the university level is an important part of this policy, but it is not included in our research.

Historical Background

The Bosnians are a Slavic nation that lived within the borders of the Roman Empire until the Bosnian Kingdom was established in the late 12th century. After the Ottoman conquest of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1463, they brought its education system, which was initially regulated by the laws of the Empire. Libraries were established near mosques, *madrasa-*[1]and *tekke*[2], which would later become the milestone of science in Bosnia. The first school, mosque and teachers*'* housing that were opened in Foča in 1566 in eastern Bosnia is an example of the first educational institution in the country. As the famous Turkish travel writer *Evliya Çelebi* mentioned in his '*Seyahatname*' (Travelogue), there were approximately 180 schools in Sarajevo in 1660 (Furat, 2013, p. 40).

As all great empires did, the Ottoman Empire introduced some reforms to keep up with the process of modernization in the political and military field. In that respect, we can consider the *Tanzimât Fermânı* of 1839 the starting point of modernization of schooling in the Ottoman Empire. In the *Tanzimat Fermânı, there* are no provisions regarding reforms in the field of education, which was its weak point. Six years after the proclamation of the *Tanzimat*, *Muvakkat Meclis-i Maârif'* (Temporary Council of Education) was established in 1845 to be responsible for education, which was organized in three stages. Primary schools were determined as *Sıbyan Mektebi*, secondary schools as *Rüşdiye Mektebi* and higher education as *Dârü'l-fünûn*. In 1857, the " *Mekâtib-i Umûmiye Nezareti* (Ministry of General Education) was established and the schools put in charge of this ministry.

The *Islahat Fermanı* (the Imperial Reform Edict) in 1856 allowed non-Muslims communities to open their schools. The *Rüşdiye* schools, allowed non-Muslims and Muslims to be educated at the same school in Turkish. In 1869 the *Maârif-I Umûmiye*

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[1] The Arabic word for any type of educational institution in the level of secondary school
[2] The monastery of dervishes, especially in Ottoman Turkey

Nizâmnâmesi was published and the education system in Ottoman Empire was organized in compliance with the French model, dividing schools in two types: general schools (administered by the state) and private schools (Gölen, 2010, p.181-182). The governor *Ahmet Cevdet Paşa* was an operating officer whose task was to observe the implementation of the *Tanzimat* and who was in charge of solving problems in the field of education between July 1863- November 1864 (Karagülle, 2019, p.17 and p.52).

After the establishment of education directorates, one of the major items on the agenda of the Bosnian parliament was to open new schools. The state provided substantial financial support such as the reconstruction and renovation of Muslim schools, as well as non-Muslim schools (Gölen, 2010, p.185). Then, the important milestone in the emergence of education in a modern sense during the Austro-Hungarian Empire was the period of the Austrian Queen Maria Theresa who ruled the Empire between 1740-1780 (Klaus, 2006, p. 115). Josef II (1765-1790) and his policies contributed to restructuring the schools as primary, secondary and high school systems (Kusber, 2004, p. 183).

The revolutions that took place in 1848 all over Europe affected Austria, too, causing the emergence of some new education institutions. The first ministry of education was established after the revolution in 1848. In 1869, the *Reichsvolksschulgesetz* (Royal Public Schools Act) was enacted and implemented in all countries of the Kingdom. According to this law, compulsory schooling was extended from 6 to 8 years, while the influence of the church was excluded from education, which was now placed under the control of the state. The school subjects such as religious and language classes, mathematics, writing, geometry, nature and history were stated in the law. The first secondary school for girls was established in 1868 and the first *Girls' High School* in 1892 (Reichschulgesetz, 1869)

The Ottoman Education System and Europeanization

One of the most important reforms of the *Tanzimat* in the field of education was the *Maarif-i Umumiye Nizamnamesi* in 1869, during the time of Mahmut II. However, many western writers state lower numbers of schools in the Ottoman Empire. The reforms in education started with a delay due to the riots that started in B&H in 1858. Rights to Orthodox and Catholic Christians, such as opening schools, building churches, were only granted in 1862. In 1875, the schooling rate of children in BiH was around 10% (Yılmazata, 2012, p. 42-44). Haselsteiner stated that the number of schoolchildren stood at around 30,000 in the last period of the Ottoman Empire and this percent makes the overall number of children is 20% (Haselsteiner, 1996, p. 82-83).

Primary schools *(Sıbyan Mektebi)* also known as the *Mekteb*s are schools built near mosques and have existed since the foundation of the Ottoman Empire. Reading, writing and basic religious lessons were taught in these schools. Children aged 4 years, 4 months and 4 days began to attend *mektebs* with the ceremony called '*Amin Alayı'*, which demonstrated the value of schooling (Öcal, 1988, p. 63). Primary schools became compulsory with the decree issued by II Mahmut in 1846. After this, the number of schools increased. In 1873, the number of primary schools in Bosnia was around 1350, 897 of which were Muslim schools and 453 were non-Muslim schools (Gölen, 2010, p. 187). Although there was no regulation on the language of education in primary schools, Bosnian Muslims used their mother tongue and Arabic alphabet, Orthodox Christians used Cyrillic alphabet, Catholic Christians used the Latin alphabet and Jews used the Hebrew alphabet.

Secondary schools (*Rüşdiye Mektebi*) were secondary schools that began to spread after 1850 and could be attended by children from non-Muslim families, too. The *Tanzimat Fermanı* made it obligatory to open a *Rüşdiye* in every province in 1851 *(Kaymakamlık).* After the first *Rüşdiye* in Istanbul, the second one was opened in Travnik in 1852, which was an indicator of the importance given to education in Bosnia. In the first years of *Tanzimat* the issues such as the teaching staff engagement and building of new schools started to emerge. In 1863, only seven *Rüşdiye*s were opened in B&H and the *Vilayet Bosnia,* in which French was an elective foreign language (Gölen, 2010, p. 187). In 1873, there were 863 school children and 22 teachers in 22 cities (Ak, 2010, p. 69-75). Furat gives a total number of 17 *Rüşdiye*s, 96 Christian and 15 Jewish schools according to the 1877 *Salname* (Yearbook) (Furat, p.43, 2013). The establishment of *Rüşdiyes* only in cities, the geographical conditions, village affairs and livelihoods in Bosnia can be listed among the reasons for the low number of pupils in *Rüşdiye*s. At the same time, there were also 12 *Art School*s (Kaya, 2008. p. 138).

Military high schools *(Askeri İdadi)* began to open after 1845 in the Empire and in Sarajevo in 1873. Subjects such as Ottoman Empire Laws, Grammar, Persian, Arabic and French were included in the curriculum. The number of pupils was 55 in 1878 (Gölen, 2010, p. 199-201).

Male teacher schools *(Dârü'l Muallimin)* were established to educate school teachers. The first such school was opened in Istanbul in 1848. As most of the primary school teachers did not speak Turkish, it was decided to open such a school within the *Madrasah of Gazi Hüsrev Beg* in Sarajevo (Gölen, 2010, p. 201-203).

Religious schools *(Madrasah)* are educational institutions at the highest level of the classical Ottoman Empire education system. The first *Madrasah* was opened by the founder of the Ottoman Empire Osman Gazi in Bursa in 1331. According to the degree of the graduated *Madrasah*, the graduates were assigned duties as teachers or judges *(Kadı)* (Tekeli, 1999, p. 18). In contrast to a common custom, classes were not determined in accordance to the age of pupils but in accordance with their past achievements and potential. Classes were not determined in accordance with the age of the pupils, contrary due to their success and passing exams. By this means, successful kids could graduate earlier from *Madrasah* (Kasumović, p. 153-54, 1999).

The Ottoman Empire established 665 *Madrasah*s in the Balkans, 98 of which were in Bosnia. In the *Madrasah*s, there were classes of Arabic linguistics, Islamic sciences such as exegesis and *Hadith* (Tradition and Speeches of Prophet Muhammed), as well as logic, philosophy and law. Like *Mektebs*, *Madrasah*s and its students' expenses were covered by the established foundations (Gölen, 2010, p. 203-204). The first known *Madrasah* in Bosnia was built in Sarajevo by Firuz Bey, who ruled in *Sancak of Bosnia* between 1502-1512. After the raid on Sarajevo in 1697, this madrasah was destroyed by soldiers of the Austrian general and statesman Prince Eugene of Savoy (Kasumović, p. 158, 1999). After the period of Tanzimat, the demand for *Madrasah*s decreased and people generally preferred to send their children to modern schools. Between 1873 and 1878, there were 10 *Madrasahs* in Sarajevo, 6 in Zvornik and Banjaluka, 5 in Bihać, 4 in Travnik and 10 in Herzegovina, with a total of 41 *Madrasahs* (Bećirbegović, 1974, p. 284). Another source wrote that there were 34 *Madrasahs* according to the *Salnama of 1877* (Furat, p.43, 2013). Today, 7 *Madrasahs* remained in BiH, which have the status of private schools under the institution of 'Riyaset' as the highest Muslim authority in BiH.

Orphanage schools *(Darüşşafaka)* were boarding schools that provides scholarships education to orphans, in which vocational courses such as shoemaking, weaving, tailoring, printing and leather processing were given, in order to enable them to find a job after graduation. It was first established in the region of Ilidža/Sarajevo in 1870. Until the last period of the Ottoman Empire, approximately 50-70 children were educated in these schools, in which non-Muslims were also educated. There were 4 Serbian girls among the graduates in 1876 (Gölen, 2010, p.205-209).

Morgen schools *(Sabah Mektebi)* were meant for civil servants who worked in the province in 1866. They aimed to acquaint them with the rules of etiquette in Bosnian society. The 2-year training included courses such as history, geography, Persian, French and Bosnian language (Gölen, 2010, p. 209-209).

The Austro-Hungarian School Policies in B&H

As the Empire brought innovations in many fields after the occupation in 1878, it aimed to implement its own education system in B&H by the enactment of laws and regulations. The Empire continued with the OE education model until the 1894 school reform. After a 16-year observation, there were two possible options regarding the school policy: to modernize already existing denominational schools or to create an interdenominational public school system (Nuhanovic, 2009, p. 70). During the time of the Common Finance Minister Benjamin Kallaj (1882-1903), efforts were made to formulate a single nation *'Bošnjaštvo'* which proposed a supra-religious and modern education system regardless of religious affiliations and national differences. The main pillar of this policy was to create a common language and school policy (Babuna, 2000, p. 140-143).

Although the Latin alphabet was accepted as the official alphabet of the language of instruction by the decree of 1879, the usage of the Cyrillic alphabet was also allowed in schools. Because of the assassination of Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand by a Serb, the Cyrillic alphabet was abolished in 1915 in school classes, especially at the state level (Juzbašić, 2002, p. 261-273). Bosnian Muslims' request to make Arabic the official alphabet for Bosnian languages at the state level was not accepted for various reasons. The Muslims protested the abolishment of Turkish in the school curriculum. Thereupon they conveyed these demands to the relevant institutions by sending a delegation to Vienna in 1896 (Yılmazata, 2012, p. 88).

In 1880, Latin and Cyrillic Alphabet had the same status. During the Kallaj's period, the usage of Serbian increased and schoolbooks began to be printed in two alphabets. The education policy of the Empire can be explained as follows:

- Conducting necessary reforms to bring the educational institutions from the Ottoman Empire period and keep up with Austro-Hungarian Empire standards
- Implementation of the school system that existed within the Empire in this region

They also made efforts to bring civilization and culture to schools as a mission. According to Hasensteiner, modernization would not be possible if education was given in schools, which were divided due to confessions. The issues that needed to be solved were building new schools, educating teachers who spoke the local language, preparing new textbooks and determining their language, teaching Latin

alphabet, particularly to Serbs and Muslims, determining further education options after primary school according to needs (Haselsteiner, 1996, p. 70-75)**.**

As it was not financially feasible to make all these changes at first, education in schools continued as it was in the Ottoman Empire period. In order to prepare for the new education program and system, literacy courses were opened and the employees of military units were engaged as teachers. Another important strategy was to open schools at many different levels in the cities close to Montenegro and Serbia and thus prevent parents from sending their children to these countries. The city of Bijeljina ranked first with 14 primary schools (Babuna, 2000, p. 144).

Noel Malcom claims that Yugoslavian writers criticized the Austro-Hungarian Empire school policy because of the small number of pupils in school. However, he also states that the government's school policy that established 200 primary and three high schools, a technical and a teachers' vocational high school, was not at all bad (Noel, 1999, p. 225). For instance, writing and reading courses started to open a year after the occupation. It was opened especially for Bosnian Muslims who did not know the Latin alphabet and Serbs who used the Cyrillic alphabet. These courses lasted for 1 year and were held 5 days a week and 2 hours per day (Verleihung, 1879, p.314).

Primary schools *(Narodna osnovna škola)* were opened in 1869 in all countries of the Empire (Reichsvolksschulgesetz, 1869, p. 277-288). After the school reform in 1894, some changes were made in the primary school education system. Consequently, 3 different types of primary schools emerged:

- *General Elementary Schools*, with inter-conventional structure;
- *Confessional Schools*, which were attended by pupils from religious communities and were financially supported by those communities;
- *Private Schools*, which were founded by individuals or certain groups and were attended which were founded by individuals and were mostly attended by children of government officers and other citizens of AHE in BiH (Schmid, 1914, p. 700).

After regional churches were established, the government opened schools for priests all over BiH. Women's organization opened schools such as Catholic church *Sister Order,* which opened *General Urban Girls School* and *Muslim Girl School*, *Advanced Primary School in* Bosnia (Sammlung, p.318-321). Due to Report 1906, until 1904 raised the number of school kids around 14 times more (Heuberger, 2009, p. 2).

Secondary school *(Srednja škola)* in B&H was organized according to the imperial system, which categorized schools as *Gymnasia*, *Realschule* and *Girls' Higher Schools* (Više Dijevojačka Škole). Education in these schools lasted for 8 years, divided in two periods (4 + 4) (Engelbert, 1988, p. 147-192).

1. The State Real Gymnasium was opened in 1879 in Sarajevo, as the first high school in B&H (known as First Gymnasia of Sarajevo). After passing *matura* (the exit exam for the German language), graduates received diplomas that were deemed valid throughout the Empire. Although the number of hours of Latin was the highest among other foreign languages in these schools, there were also 23 hours of German and 28 hours of Arabic, as an elective foreign language (Verodnung, 1889).

2. Die Realschule was another type of school at the Gymnasium level. The first such school was opened in Banjaluka in 1895. Natural sciences were predominant subjects in these schools, German was the first foreign language, while French was elective foreign language (Bericht 1906, p. 208)

3. The Girls' Higher Schools included *Liberal Education* and *Household Customer* lessons and were opened for female students who were lagging behind to continue their education. The foreign languages were German or Hungarian and were taught for 4 hours per week. *Tailoring* and *Model Cutting* were the most classes with 81 hours in the course of 8 school years (Landesregierung, 1908, p. 461).

4. Vocational schools include military, trade, agricultural, technical, religious and teachers' schools. Military schools were founded in 1879 in order to train local soldiers. People of all nationalities that lived in the Empire were allowed to apply for the training. Compulsory military service was introduced in 1182 (Bericht 1906, p. 180). Then, in the commercial high school graduates of 4-year public schools could apply. They were opened in the important commercial cities such as Tuzla (1884), Brčko, Banjaluka, Mostar (1885) and then in Sarajevo, Bihać, Livno (1886), Travnik (1891 and Trebinje (1893) (Bericht 1906,p. 174). These schools also offered evening school opportunities for commercial workers. Due to the high demand for vocational training, the *Trade Academy* was opened in Sarajevo in 1912. The education program included chemistry, natural sciences, accounting, commercial goods and law (Schmid, 1914, p. 734-37). Trade schools were 3-year schools were opened to educate craftsmen who would be experts in some professions. The Specialization School, which was opened in 1887 in Sarajevo, was transformed into the Industrial School in 1893 (Bericht 1906, p. 356-359). Then, the teacher school *(Učiteljske Škole)* as the former Teachers'

Training Courses that opened after the occupation, were later transformed into these schools. The first Teachers' School was established in Sarajevo in 1891, in order to educate teachers for *Madrasah*. It was founded by the Catholic Church in Sarajevo in 1884 by *St. Josip Teacher School* and *Mis Irbin Teacher School* were opened in 1866 (Verodnung, 1900, p. 21-39 and Schmid, 1914, p. 737-740). Finally, Religious staff schools with this new period, the Catholic Church grew and the Franciscans began to lose their influence in the field of education. The Jesuits took over the task of educational institutions and established 3 higher religious schools (Malcolm, 1999, p. 238). As a result of the treaty signed with Vatican in 1881, opened the *Isusovačko Rimo-katoličko Svečeničko Sjemenište u Sarajevu* (Sarajevo Roma-Catholic School) (Schmid, p. 247-474, 1914). *Srpska Pravoslavna Bogoslavje u Reljevu* (Reljevo the Orthodox priestly Seminar) school was opened to educate Orthodox clergy in 1882 (Papić, 1972, p. 150-153). At the same time, *Šerijatska Sudačka Škola* (Scheriat School of Judges) was opened for Muslims in 1887. In addition to Islamic law courses, there were lessons such as European law, mathematics, geography and history (Organizations-status für die Scheriatsrichter, 1887).

Discussion

For over four centuries the Ottoman Empire implemented its classical education model in B&H. After the *Tanzimat*, Ottoman Empire partially reconfigured the education institutions under the European model. After the Treaty of Berlin was signed in 1878, Austro-Hungarian Empire maintained the heritage of the Ottoman Empire more or less, until the *School Reform of 1894*. The separatist tendency of Bosnian Serbs, the straddle of Muslims and the desire for dominance were just some of the issues that led to a stalemate and made the policy of balance difficult.

Table 1: Comparison of the numbers of schools in the period of Ottoman Empire and Austro-Hungarian Empire in BiH

Ottoman Period (1463-1878)							
Autor and Source	**Period**	**Muslim Schools**			**Orthodox School**	**Catholic Schools**	**Jewish Schools**
		Madrasas	**Muslim Schools**	**Rüşdiyes**			
Furat (Salname)	1867		842		96 Christian		15
Gölen (Salnama)	1873		897	24	453 (Non-Muslim)		
	1875			24			
Furat (Salname)	1877	34	805	17			
Gölen (Salnama)	1877			21			
Haselsteiner (1880, Report)	1878		535		100 (Christian Schools)		
Bećirbegović (Vakıfname)	1873-1877	41					
	1463-1878	100					
Džaja	Last period of Ottomans	40	1000 Mektebs	30	56	6	
Austro-Hungarian Empire (1878-1914)							
Author and Source	**Period**	**Muslim Schools**			Orthodox Schools	Catholic Schools	Jewish Schools
Bericht (1906)	**1879**		500		56	54	
	1904	41	352				
Džaja	**1878-1914**	330 Elementary Schools			123	48 (New buildings)	
Law of October 30, 1913	**1897-1913**	Total of 640 primary schools					

Source: Author's Compilation

While doing the research we found out that the statistics related to the number of schools and pupils were contradictory. The statistical data in the articles and researches, which did not use the main sources from that period such as Ottoman Empire *Salname* from that period, were gathered from western researches. Therefore the numbers presented in these studies significantly differ, which will be the subject of another research.

The fact is that the contradictory number of schools coincides with the contradictory number of pupils. It is very difficult to make a single categorization because each researcher gives numbers from his own point of view or his own needs. The main cause of these contradictions is the change of status of schools and attendees in different periods.

Table 2: The number of pupils

	Date or Period	Total	Muslims	Christian s	Jews
Furat	1867 (salname)		39644	3119	499
Gölen	1867 (Salname)	43262	39644	3119	
	1877 (Salname)	38930	35009	3921	
Haselsteiner	1878 (According to the 1880 Joint Ministry of Finance Report)	30000		686 teacher totally, just 131 of them can teach European Model	
Bericht (1906)	1906		23603 (mektep kids)		

Source: Author's Compilation

The Austro-Hungarian Empire established numerous vocational schools and brought innovation from Europe. Their education policy revived cultural life by establishing museums and publishing new journals and newspapers in different languages. Thanks to the law that was enacted in 1884, diplomas obtained in B&H were valid within the border of the Empire (Verordnung, 1884). The recognition of high school diplomas of B&H in the entire Empire paved the way for university education in Vienna, which would later be known as *Bečka škola* (Vienna Schooling) (Memić, 2016). Bosnian Muslims who graduated in Vienna were prisoners of the establishment and the institutionalization of Islamic beliefs such as the Islamic Law that was enacted in 1912 and later the Islamic Religious Community in Austria (İGGiÖ) in 1979.

While the Ottoman Empire was laying the milestone to educational institutions in Bosnia, Austro-Hungarian Empire contributed by means of integration of Bosnia to contemporary educational institutions of Europe. The most important difference between the two empires was that the Ottoman Empire could not follow the developments that were taking place in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, despite its efforts to include modern technique and science in the educational system through various reforms. The Austro-

Hungarian Empire successfully integrated Bosnian Croats and Muslims to the Empire, but the efforts to integrate Bosnian Serbs failed due to the influence of the Kingdom of Serbia and its rivalry with the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

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Verordnung der Landesregierung für Bosnien und der Hercegovina vom 30. April 1884, Zahl 8593/I., womit die Staatgiltigkeit den vom Obergymnasium in Sarajevo ausgestellten Semestral- und Maturitäts-Zeugnissen in Kroatien und Slavonien ertheilt wird.

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