



Is the EU losing the Western Balkans and/or vice versa?

14 October, 18:00-19:30h (CET): Public debate in hybrid format with Live Stream

Venue: University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Social Sciences
(Grand Hall: main faculty entrance, 2nd floor)

For a long time, the Central and East European new member states such as Slovenia were a symbol of successful Europeanisation and of the strength of the enlargement policy as the most important foreign policy tool of the European Union. In the last decade, they have taken a central role in the divide over fundamental norms and rules such as independent judiciary, media and civil society, thus ultimately playing in favour of the enlargement fatigue in the Western Europe.

The public debate will among others address the following questions:

- *What did Ursula Von der Leyen's tour in September tell about the reformed enlargement policy being up to the institutional and geopolitical challenges in the region?*
- *How will the German elections impact the rule of law and enlargement policy?*
- *What is the climate in the European Council as seen from the outcome of the informal EU-Western Balkans Summit? How prominently figures here the questions of the rule of law and lack of reforms in this sector?*
- *Are multi-ethnic countries such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and North Macedonia losing their grounds vis-à-vis the strongmen and growing nationalisms in the region? How will this impact the reform impetus?*
- *Are we witnessing a re-emergence of the ethnic conflicts as a result of the weakening of the multilateral-normative framework?*

Discussants:

Peter Grk, Head of the Bled Strategic Forum (BSF) department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia

Marko Makovec, Director/Deputy Managing Director, Western Europe, Western Balkans, Turkey and United Kingdom, European External Action Service (EEAS)

Donika Emini, Executive Director of CiviKos Platform, Kosovo

Dimitar Nikolovski, Director of the Centre for European Strategies (EUROTHINK), North Macedonia

Senada Šelo Šabić, Senior Research Associate, Institute for Development and International Relations (IRMO), Croatia

Moderated by Vedran Džihic, Senior Researcher, Austrian Institute for International Affairs (oiip), WB2EU network

- Live Streaming via YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yuLBLnQPsNU> and Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/events/3076227552645188>
- On-site participants are required to pre-register, wear a mask and display a negative corona certificate (recovered, vaccinated, PCR test). Checks will be made upon the entrance.



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**Tackling Illiberal/Eurosceptic
Narratives from Below**

**Europeanisation meets democracy from
below: The Western Balkans on the
search for new European and
democratic Momentum**



Programme including the closed sessions

Day 1 (14 October)

Venue for all events on both days: University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Social Sciences
(Grand Hall: main faculty entrance, 2nd floor)

10.00-11.30h: *Tackling illiberalism and Euroscepticism from below project meeting (closed session)*

12.00h: Lunch

15.00-16.30h: Workshop - “Eurosceptic and illiberal alliance in the region” (closed session)

Joint meeting within the framework of the EU projects *WB2EU* and *Tackling illiberalism and Euroscepticism from below*

Presentations followed by discussion:

- Tackling illiberalism and Euroscepticism from below: The case of Italy, Manuela Caiani
- Tackling illiberalism and Euroscepticism from below: The case of Poland, Adam Balcer
- WB2EU: Presentation of the Policy Brief by Christina Griessler and Fanni Elek, Andrassy University Budapest, Hungary
- WB2EU: Policy Brief by Djordje Popović, presentation by Marko Savković, Belgrade Fund for Political Excellence (BFPE), Serbia
- WB2EU: Presentation of the Policy Brief by Faris Kočan and Marko Lovec, University of Ljubljana, Centre of International Relations (CIR), Slovenia

17.00-18.00h: Coffee break

18.00-19.30h: Public debate - “Is the EU losing the Western Balkans and/or vice versa?”

20.00h: Dinner

Day 2 (15 October)

9.30-10.30h: *WB2EU network meeting (closed session)*

10.30h: Coffee break

11.00-12.00h: *WB2EU network meeting (closed session)*

12.00h: Lunch



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