

Society

WB2EU Network published final publication on EU integration of the Western Balkans

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EU flag; Photo: Pixabay

VIENNA – „WB2EU“ Network has published the final publication titled *“Vision Western Balkans 2023 – Europeanisation meets democracy”*, which contains selected op-eds and policy briefs published within WB2EU Network and the Network’s *Next Generation Summer School* participants. The articles in the publication focus on all challenges of the WB related to the EU integration process, such as the rule of law, social questions, and democratic developments in the Western Balkans.

„The following publication gives the interested reader a very good insights into our journey towards a new European and democratic momentum for the Western Balkans”, stated from the WB2EU Network.

Coordinators of the WB2EU project, Paul Schmidt and Vedran Džihčić, stated in the introduction of the final publication that enlargement is not only driven by foreign and security policy concerns but also entails a strong economic, financial, and social dimension.

„Thus the EU needs to undertake far-fetched reforms. That is why the European Commission rightly initiated a review of all policy areas to already discuss how to make them ready for a bigger and better Union. This is why it is paramount to include the EU candidate countries in the yearly Rule of Law Monitoring of the EU, which is already at an early stage”, stated Schmidt and Džihčić.

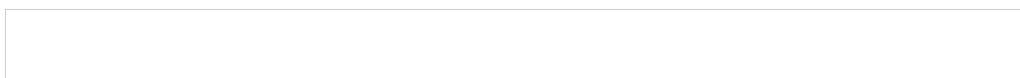
They assessed that besides internal EU dilemmas and necessary reforms, one important tasks for the EU is to intensify and widen its networks and partnerships in the candidate countries.

„Closer cooperation with civil society, pro-European and emancipatory institutions, and grassroots movements would indeed be a welcome and much-needed help to boost democratisation from below. Frontloading some of the tangible economic and social benefits and an early, gradual integration into the single market could give new hope and perspective to the people”, they underlined.

EWB articles on policy briefs published within the network you [can find on this link](#).

This article is published in the framework of the WB2EU project. The project aims at the establishment of a network of renowned think-tanks, do-tanks, universities, higher education institutes and policy centres from the Western Balkans, neighbouring countries and EU member states that will be most decisive for the enlargement process and Europeanisation of the region in the upcoming years. The WB2EU project is co-funded by the European Commission under its Erasmus+ Jean Monnet programme.

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