

Closing Event of the Erasmus+ Jean Monnet Network Project

**"Europeanisation meets democracy from below:
The Western Balkans on the search for new European and democratic Momentum - WB2EU"**

Is EU enlargement back on track? Moving towards a democratic and united Europe

With Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, EU enlargement policy has taken on a completely new dynamic. Ukraine, Moldova, and Bosnia and Herzegovina have been granted candidate status; Kosovo has applied for membership; and accession negotiations have started with Northern Macedonia and Albania. In addition, EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen gave the debate further momentum in her State of the Union address with the prospect of an "EU30+". However, it is not only the candidate countries that must meet the accession criteria; the Union itself must also implement important reforms in order to be fit for enlargement. While EU members are still weighing geopolitical, national, and institutional interests against each other, the Western Balkan countries are in a protracted process of negotiation and reform.

At the conclusion of our three-year Erasmus+ Jean Monnet Network project on Europeanisation, democratisation and strengthening of civil society in the Western Balkans [WB2EU](#), coordinated with the oiip and in cooperation with 15 partners from all over Europe, we want to discuss current developments, obstacles, and perspectives of the EU enlargement and reform process. The project was co-funded by the European Commission under its Erasmus+ Jean Monnet programme.

Monday, 9 October, 17.00–19.00: Public debate

Venue: [House of the European Union](#) (Wipplingerstr. 35, 1010 Vienna)

Introduction

Paul Schmidt, Secretary General, Austrian Society for European Politics (ÖGfE), Project Leader and Academic Coordinator of the WB2EU project

Key note speech

Alma Zadić, Minister of Justice, Austria

Panel

Martin Selmayr, Head of Representation of the European Commission in Austria

Jovana Marović, Former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of European Affairs, Montenegro, member of the Balkans in Europe Policy Advisory Group (BiEPAG)

Sofija Todorović, Programme Director, Youth Initiative for Human Rights (YIHR), Balkan Investigative Reporting Network, Serbia

Anna Krasteva, Professor of Political Sciences, Centre for European Refugees, Migration and Ethnic Studies (CERMES), New Bulgarian University, Representative of the WB2EU Network

Moderated by Vedran Džihic, Senior Researcher, Austrian Institute for International Affairs (oiip), Academic Coordinator of the WB2EU project

At the end of the public debate, refreshments will be offered.

19.30: Joint dinner of the WB2EU Network ([STUWER am Schottentor](#), Rockhgasse 1, 1010 Vienna)

Tuesday, 10 October, Programme for the WB2EU Network

10.00–11.15: Guided tour at the newly renovated Austrian Parliament (Parliament Austria, Dr. Karl Renner-Ring 3, 1017 Vienna, visitors entrance behind the Pallas Athene fountain, <https://www.parlament.gv.at/en/experience/guided-tours/>)

Please bring your valid identification card or passport!

11.45–12.45: WB2EU Network meeting ([oiip – Austrian Institute for International Affairs](#), Währinger Straße 3/12, 1090 Vienna)

13.00: Joint lunch of the WB2EU Network