



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

14 October, 18.00–19.30: Public debate in hybrid format with livestream

Venue: University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Social Sciences

(Grand Hall: main faculty entrance, 2nd floor), Kardeljeva ploščad 5, 1000 Ljubljana

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 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 figure here the questions of the rule of law and the lack of reforms in this sector?*
- *Are multi-ethnic countries such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, and North Macedonia losing their ground 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 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 Emiri, Executive Director of CiviKos Platform, Kosovo

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

Christina Griessler, Research Fellow for netPOL-Network for Political Communication, Andrassy University Budapest

Moderated by Vedran Džihic, Senior Researcher, Austrian Institute for International Affairs (oiiip), WB2EU Network

- Livestreaming via YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yuLBLnQPpNU> 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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