



European Movement in Serbia 5/2018



8th Belgrade Security Forum: EU Needs Strong and Stable Western Balkans, Our Region Needs strong and stable EU

Belgrade Security Forum titled “Finding Answers Together for the New Normal” saw the participation of more than 800 participants and media at around 20 panels and sessions and one special pre-event. Speakers included two presidents of Serbia and Austria, Aleksandar Vučić, Alexander van der Bellen, Prime Minister of Serbia Ana Brnabić, Secretary General of NATO Jens Stoltenberg, Deputy Assistant Secretary, U.S. State Department Matthew Palmer and many others distinguished scholars, analysts and politicians.

“One of the direct recommendations of the BSF is that the approach of EU to the Western Balkans and the engagement of the region with the Union need to change. The main change has to be an open identification of the problems concerning the rule of law and democracy”, said **Sonja Stojanović Gajić** of the Belgrade Centre for

Security Policy.

“European Union needs a strong and stable Western Balkans, but our region also needs a strong and stable EU, and I hope that we are going to work on it together”, concluded **Suzana Grubješić**, Secretary General of EMinS and quoted one of the participants that we still understand that the benefits that could come from being a part of the EU outweigh all possible disadvantages.

Sonja Licht of the Belgrade Fund for Political Excellence was thankful that the BSF once again proved that dialogue is possible: “It is extremely important that we have managed to bring the global debate home. We had different opinions and views and it worked!”.

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Changing the Constitution on the Way to the European Union

EMinS Research Forum's analysis, conducted with a view of covering all the obligations facing Serbia on its path to the EU, goes beyond the current political circumstances of constitutional change. The reason for the analysis stems from the fact that EU Member States have to ensure the full and proper enforcement of the EU *acquis* in their territory from the moment of accession.

This publication lays out EMinS' specific views and suggestions on constitutional reform based on its years-long focus on the issue.

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Ksenija Milenković: Serbia Will Join the EU in 2025 Realistically Speaking

Assistant Minister in the Ministry of European Integration **Ksenija Milenkovic** said on Sept. 25 that it was realistic to expect that Serbia would become a member of the EU in 2025 and that she expected the Union to continue offering support for expansion as one of its most successful policies since its inception. In a debate called Ask Me Anything About the EU, Milenkovic said that she was pleased with the result of a poll in which 55 percent of respondents supported Serbia's European integration, given that this support had been less than 50 percent in previous years.

Remarking that "there is a tendency of rising support for European integration" in Serbia, Milenkovic recalled that for the first time in January this year support exceeded 50 percent, while according to the latest survey conducted by the Ministry of European Integration in August support equaled around 55 percent.

"This result is affected by the dynamics of the negotiating process and the fact that Serbia is continuously opening negotiating chapters," Milenkovic said.

Milenkovic said that the ministry and the government were aware that support for Serbia's membership in the EU was waning among the youth and that "the youth are increasingly skeptical of future membership" in the Union.

Albania in the Serbian Media

(January–September 2017)



Study on Albania and Albanians in Serbian Media

The image of Albania and Albanians in the Serbian media is mostly portrayed negatively but there are positive trends that can increase understanding, said the participants of a conference called In the Media Mirror - Serbian and Albanian Mutual Perceptions, held in Belgrade on Sept. 20th.

Presenting the study EMinS' President Mihailo Crnobrnja said that it was a contribution to "improving relations" between the two countries. "It is clear from the study and reality that Kosovo is the main topic in the media mirror," Crnobrnja said, adding that negative connotations were dominant but that there was positive leverage which could be used to foster cooperation between the two countries, such as the economy, culture and tourism. President of the EMinS Forum for International Relations Jelica Minic said that it was very important to see the situation so that it could be changed and that the aforementioned study was vital to that.

Italian Ambassador Carlo Lo Cascio said that good relations between Belgrade and Tirana could have a positive impact on the entire region. If there is understanding between Serbia and Albania, the Balkan region will be more stable, he said, adding that the situation had improved over the past several years and that Belgrade and Tirana had constructive cooperation. Head of the OSCE Mission in Serbia Andrea Orizio said that cooperation between the youth and journalists from Serbia and Albania is key to better mutual

The debate, which was held at the EU Info Center and was organized by the European Movement in Serbia, was supposed to bring the European integration process closer to the audience. Questions were asked by the participants, as well as by everyone who followed the event on social networks.

The debate was a part of the EU2Me project funded by the European Union.

understanding of the two countries. He said that Serbia and Albania shared the region, strategic goals and many regional concerns and that it was important for "balanced and better perception" to improve familiarity with the other side.

In the January-September 2017 period four newspapers - Blic, Danas, Politika and Informer ran 1,177 articles mentioning Albania.

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WB6 Advocacy Group participated in the panel "Transformative Effects of the EU Accession Process - Challenges and Achievements" in the beginning of October in Sofia. The panel was part of the Interparliamentary Conference "Transforming the Western Balkans region - a parliamentary perspective on the role and the future of EU accession process" organized by the European Parliament and the National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria.

The general message is that the process of enlargement is a joint task, that the Western Balkans' countries have to fulfill tasks that the process implies and that regional cooperation and reconciliation have to be further strengthened.

