

## INTEGRATION OF WESTERN BALKANS, LIKE A BENEFIT FOR THE REGION AND EU

**Prof. Assoc. Dr. Eva Teqja**  
“Aleksander Moisiu”, University, Durrës  
ALBANIA

### ABSTRACT

The stability of the Western Balkans is still weak; it still depends on the support of the European Union. The prospect of EU membership has so far been the only driver and the most important for the implementation of many difficult reforms, necessary towards reconciliation and prosperity in the region. Studies have argued that the EU countries through adapting the enlargement strategy, guarantee a strong Europe from geopolitical and economical view too. Enlargement of the EU referring to the Western Balkan states, brings to the European institutional the possibility to strengthen the future basement of the European project. The paper will present the case that integration process that aims absorption for the Western Balkan in the Union, so that not only the Balkan states, but also the EU itself may benefit from stability in this region. The question is how to deepen integration and not to stop it because of illegal immigrants from the Western Balkans, or incomplete reforms. Are political steps like return visas, the right thing to do, or there is need for more effective European policies by increasing equality of opportunity for the Balkan countries, in the fight against poverty and high unemployment. EU investment for the European perspective of the Western Balkans in respect of Copenhagen criteria should be considered the only way to stability.

**Keywords:** Enlargement; European Union; Western Balkans, stability.