

ALBANIA AND THE CANDIDATE STATUS TO EUROPEAN UNION

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Abstract

After one century of delay in the European reformation of the Balkans: 1914-2011; and a decade of status quo of enlargement: 2000-2010; Western Balkans is facing a new historic challenge: will the next decade: 2010-2020 be the decade of realistic expectations to be part of the EU? The key dilemma in the relation between EU and Western Balkans remains the same: will the EU Europeanize the Balkans? In this paper I will analyze the crucial factors of the existing situation between EU and Western Balkans. I will try to give a detailed view of the relations between two parties (EU and Albania). The Union enriched the policy of Stabilization and Association including the SAA for the WB Countries all the way to their future accession. How long will the EU implement the SAA in the WB? Will the EU approves opening of the Accession negotiations, after the approval of the candidate status? In the first part of the article I will analyze the possible scenarios for Albania's candidate status. In this respect, I will give some examples of the countries of region (Croatia, Montenegro, and Serbia), for whom the European Commission unable to open the Accession Negotiations, decided to launch the High Level Dialogue of Accession Process. The analyses of WB's negotiation framework and High Level Dialogue will be taken in consideration and will be implemented by Albania during its membership process. At the end of the article I will give my opinion on the continuity of the integration process of Albania towards EU and on the need of fulfillment of reforms by Albanian party in order to implement all the obligations established in the Stabilization and Association Agreement.

Keywords: *Western Balkan, European Integration Process, European Union, Stabilization and Association Process, countries of region.*