

Unravelling border constructions between the EU and the Western Balkans: “Impact of borders on Serbia’s Europeanization”



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Master thesis: Unravelling border constructions between the EU and the Western Balkans:
Impact of borders on Serbia's Europeanization

Cover picture: Belgrade, Kalemegdan citadel wall, 14-6-2011

Author's name: Wout van Lankveld

Student number: 4005953

Master specialization: Europe: Borders, Identities and Governance

Supervisor: Dr. Olivier T. Kramsch

Second reader: Dr. Martin van der Velde

Internship: The Center for EU Enlargement Studies, Budapest (May'11 - July'11)

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Contact: woutvanlankveld@hotmail.com

“Every state needs its own Balkan” (Žižek, 2008)

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While entering the discipline of human geography in the fall of 2009, I consciously began to accelerate the construction of my passion for the world around us. In doing so, my interest especially got focused on the European Union, Europe as a continent and in particular the (South-) Eastern part of Europe. My curiosity on the diversity in people's perceptions concerning their image/perception of borders, identities and numerous other geographical issues within Europe led me to the subject of the borders between the European Union and the Western Balkans. As a result of this, my research topic was a fact and it brought me to the Center for EU Enlargement Studies (CENS) in Budapest.

In between May 2011 and August 2011 I conducted my (field) research at CENS, thanks to the given opportunity by the founder of the Center for EU Enlargement Studies, Professor Peter Balázs. Although it was not certain at all that I would go abroad to conduct my master thesis, I am more than glad that I took the given opportunity. With the variety of people I met during my stay in Budapest and beyond, I reached such an inspiring source which made me even feel more welcome in South-Eastern Europe. Working at CENS was a perfect way for me to improve my academic skills and to increase my professional work experience. In participating in their projects and events I gained a lot of new insights and knowledge. Without the help of my CENS's supervisor, Hana Semanic, my research results would not have been this satisfying. Her assistance in fulfilling my tasks properly is priceless, especially in finding respondents for my interviews which worked out perfectly. Therefore a special words of thanks to her for being both a great supervisor and colleague. Other than that, I would like to thank the rest of the CENS-team for their assistance and engagement prior to my research. Besides, a word of thanks to all the respondents who have been very helpful. Their input has been most crucial in unravelling the border constructions between the European Union and the Western Balkans. Furthermore, I would like to thank my supervisor Olivier Kramsch, who was a great source of inspiration during my research and above all an encouraging factor. Finally I would like to thank my colleague students, family and friends who supported me in this challenging task. With great joy I started and ended this journey, hopefully you will experience the same after reading my thesis!

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Although the European Union (EU) expanded on large-scale over the last twenty years, the Western Balkans are not part the EU (yet). The perception most of the people from Western-Europe have from the Balkans resembles mainly as negative images. On one hand these perceptions are a matter of ignorance, but on the other side these images are based on borders, constructed over the years. Unravelling these particular border constructions between the EU and the Western Balkans is what this thesis is all about. This thesis contains a literature review on the concepts of borders, the process of Europeanization and discourses on the existing borders between the EU and the Western Balkans. An empirical part is included, where the interview results show the importance and impact of the imaginary borders in present day Europe. This imaginary border is connected with culture, values and the position a single person is in. While physical borders within the EU rapidly are being removed, the imaginary border, which is part of the mental map, does not vanish with it. This process may take several generations to overcome. As the process of Europeanization is ongoing in the Western Balkans, each of the Western Balkan countries has its own luggage to carry and therefore their own path towards a possible EU-membership. Today's Western Balkans does not match with present-day Europe (i.e. the EU), but with the past. In the meanwhile the borders (both imaginary and physical) do influence the process of Europeanization. The way towards EU-accession does not remove the borders, but it may reduce the borders. If is to believe that borders are being reduced, this is not done in a single swipe. For the Balkans there is obviously a need for change to cure them by turning into a normalized region and to get rid of the growing nationalism and nationalistic myths. Even though, most of the respondents stressed that even when the Western Balkans become part of the EU, the imaginary borders will remain and the (Western) Balkans will last to be a less favoured, mysterious EU-region.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Over the years, enlargement of the European Union has become a permanent and continuous item on the EU's agenda. Due to this enlargement, the territory of the EU is evolving pretty dynamically and it seems to be a never-ending story so far (Krause, 2008: 223). From 1973 to 2007 the conditions for EU-membership and procedures for accession have developed greatly. This evolution resembles a shift of the changing nature of the prospective members from largely Northern and western, long-established democratic and market-economy states, to recently democratized, economically disadvantaged southern states and further to neutral westerners as well as to post-communist, democratizing and economically transitional Central and Eastern States and small Mediterranean island States (Tatham, 2009: 475).

The European continent is known for its great cultural and ethnic diversity, but as well as a continent with vague borders. Part of the European continent are the Balkans, lying on the Balkan Peninsula. With its geographical boundaries at the Black Sea in the east, the Adriatic Sea in the west and the Aegean Sea in the south, all three are maritime. In the north the rivers Danube and Sava serve as the geographical boundaries. On the Balkan Peninsula, three big mountain ranges are found, namely: the Dinarids, the Rhodope massif and the Pindus system. In between these mountain ranges the main agricultural areas are located. All together these geographical characteristics have had a big influence on the region's history (The Balkan Peninsula, 2012). This particular area in South-Eastern Europe is seen as a somewhat primitive, barbarian and underdeveloped region, not exactly a part of Europe and not being fully oriental either (Koneska, 2008:84-85). While asking an ordinary person from Western Europe about the Balkans, most of them will refer to the war during the 90s and refer to it as a part of Europe which contains a lot of corruption, poverty and its multiethnicity. Therefore the majority of 'West' relies on the image of "*the Balkans is what Europe is not*" (Drakulić, 2009). "*Miller also called the lands of the peninsula "the Near East", while clearly considering them an inextricable part of Europe despite being aware of the Balkan inhabitants habit to refers to their own travel to the West as going to Europe*" (Todorova, 2009: 28). While the European Union majorly expanded over the past decades, the perceptual or imaginary geography of the past seems something that does not vanish (yet). In the minds of most people in the so called Western Europe, 'Europe' and 'the EU' have become synonymous over the past years.

There are about 500 million Europeans being EU-citizens, but still there are many nations that do not belong to the EU (yet) who have a majority of their populations who recognize themselves as Europeans besides their own nationality. The widening of EU brought with it big challenges to the overall integration project between the existing EU and (South) Eastern Europe. (Ingham, H. and Ingham, M., 2002:17).

The EU-enlargements in 2004 occurred in a shift from functional integration to creating a melting pot aimed at 'unity in diversity' (Bufon, M and Gosar, A., 2007). Slovenia was part of the former Yugoslavian Republics, but successfully used the EU escape route, becoming an EU-member in 2004. In 2007, Romania and Bulgaria entered the EU and these enlargements increased the potential accession of (South) Eastern-European countries even more. With a possible expansion of the EU with the Western Balkans, the EU is not only seeking their transformation and membership, but first of all the stabilization of the entire region. The countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia are known as the Western Balkans. Today it is more of a political than a geographical term for the region of South-Eastern Europe, which is not part of the EU (yet). In order to become an EU-member new members have to Europeanize, which means: 'Europeanization extends as a process attempting to tackle and change the 'ways of doing things' in the aspirant countries. The two main mechanisms or tools utilized in the process are the prospect of EU membership and conditionality. In the Europeanization process of these countries, conditionality encompasses political/democratic and economic requirements and the adoption and implementation of the EU's *acquis communautaire* (Demiri, S., Ivanoska, V., Koneska, C., 2008:2). Due to globalization and especially because of the process of European integration, border issues became actual and interesting research topics. Borders are now pre-dominantly critically investigated as differentiators of socially constructed mindscapes and meaning. As seen from the world political map, all boundaries/borders between sovereign states are the same: simple lines that separate one country from another. In fact, borders vary hugely and are complex matters. Identifying where Europe might end on cultural, geographic or ethnic grounds seems a mission impossible. In an ever enlarging EU the demand to increase the insights on borders and the changing view on them has increased, especially on the borders between the EU and the Western Balkans, which have been contested more often over the past years.

In the process of Europeanization of the Western Balkans the borders between the EU and the (Western) Balkans are important key issues, both in their mental and physical presence.

1.1 RESEARCH SCOPE AND QUESTION

Today's Europe is not only drawn in a process of integration and searching for a common European identity, but on the other side a process of separation and more protection intensifies when it comes to external borders (i.e. the borders between the EU and the Western Balkans). As the European Union spreads its wings over the Western Balkans, the existing border constructions between both sides are being contested. The (Western) Balkans seems so far away for (West-) Europeans, so remote, that the last thought it is part of the European continent and knocking on the door of the EU. The fact that many (West-) Europeans experience it in this way is because of the existing borders between the EU and the Western Balkans. A bordered area reflects a certain identity and which makes it different from the 'Other'. In the perception of most Europeans, the Balkan represents 'the Other' and after all, every state needs its own 'Balkan' to divide itself from the others (Žižek, 2008). It seems that borders have not left the scene of human territoriality, they even have become more socially manifest and performatively asserted (van Houtum, Kramsch and Zierhofer, 2005). The borders are so deep entangled within our minds that it is hard to get rid of them. So where are the borders of Europe? Is there still a border between East and West and if there is one, where is it located and because of what? How do inhabitants of the EU and the Western Balkans interpret these borders? To what extent is the past a reminiscent or is it still present? In what way does the 'Other' across the border influence the construction of the own identity and reality? How do people perceive borders, where do they differ and where are commonalities?

In addressing the different concepts of borders and the variety of perceptions and realities, more insights can be given in the nature of the borders and barriers between the EU and the Western Balkans. The imaginary or mental border seems more difficult to erase than the physical border and it is usually transferred from one generation to another. Current borders and boundaries between the EU and the Western Balkans are subject to change within the near future and in my view the 'borders' between these two will not change easily though. While removing the physical border between the EU and the Western Balkans, one does not eradicate the imaginary borders which are linked to it.

Since the Europeanization reflects a process of change, it may have an impact on the existing borders between the Balkans and the EU. Anyhow, borders are social constructs which are hard to overcome. The imaginary and physical borders between the EU and the Western Balkans are being investigated. Besides, the process of Europeanization of the Western Balkans, with a focus on Serbia, is taken into account.

The final goal of this thesis is to unravel the imaginary and physical border constructions between the EU and the Western Balkans and expose the power of these constructions on both sides. Other than that, insight in the impact that the border constructions have on the Europeanization of Serbia and the rest of the Western Balkans is investigated. In this way this research tries to answer the following research question:

“How are the borders between the EU and the Western Balkans being constructed and what impact do they have on the Europeanization process of the Western Balkans”?

1.2 RELEVANCE

While research on the physical features of boundaries separating one entity or political system was popular in the last decades, research on border issues increased rapidly over the years. Obviously, physical borders like territorial lines are more easily addressed than borders that have a socio-culturally grounded perspective, like imaginary borders. Geographers are keen on focusing on the physical territorial lines of separation and investigating the demarcation and delimitation of these borders as part of the physical landscape. Besides, the growing interest on the more abstract, intangible notions of bordering, the imaginary part, needs more attention in order to unravel the border constructions as part of the identity discourses and power of these borders related to EU and Western Balkans. Borders are institutions between states, people, and continents or else, they influence our daily life. As the borders of Europe are not totally fixed and some countries are different to allocate, the impact of borders is still present. In an enlarged EU the physical borders are being removed rapidly, but the presence of the imaginary or psychological borders is something which is not always been taken into account when EU-enlargement is at stake.

These particular borders are constructed in the minds of people and are hard to express in measurable units. The countries belonging to the Western Balkans may enter the EU in the (near) future, therefore the relevance of investigating how the borders (both imaginary and physical) affect the Europeanization of the Western Balkans obviously has an added value. In gaining more insight about the power of b/ordering of space, the perceptive- and sensitiveness for each other longing for the construction of territorial demarcation and difference, may be understood better (van Houtum, 2005:677).

In this way, the aim of this thesis is to contribute to the debate on unravelling the border constructions between the EU and Western Balkans and the impact of imaginary and the physical borders on the Europeanization of the Western Balkans. In giving more insights about the perceptions from both the EU and Western Balkans perspective, it may contribute to the improvement of the process of Europeanization. Together with the reviewed literature, the gathered interview data will help to reach the above mentioned goal. Especially the interview data collection contains a rich and diverse source of information that will be of added value for the existing literature and the academic field.

1.3 METHODOLOGY

In this thesis the imaginary and physical borders between the European Union and the Western Balkans are being investigated. The theoretical framework were this research relies on is grounded on descriptive and explanatory theories, in which the concepts of borders and Europeanization prevail. To unravel the border constructions, the usage of the concepts of borders and boundaries are more or less intermingled, although both of them do have a different meaning in technical terminology.

According to Van Houtum (2005) do “*boundary studies focus on the evolution and changes of the territorial line. Borders are more complexly understood as a site at and through which socio-spatial differences are communicated*” (p. 672).

One could distinguish imaginary borders and physical borders. Imaginary borders are those who are stuck in people’s minds and where people rely on while taking into account the ‘Other’. Physical borders can be explained as all the physical objects that comprise and support the border including the boundary markers and fences, walls, monitoring facilities and transit controls etc. Nevertheless, the boundary line itself remains non-physical.

“More precisely, boundary studies investigate ‘where the border is’ and border studies focus on ‘how the border is socially constructed’ (Van Houtum, 2005:674). Therefore, borders are more imaginary. They are mostly not visible on maps, often they are zones around boundaries. Still there can also be borders, where no boundaries are, like between two different social groups. For example the Kurdish people have no distinct boundaries, but still there is a border between them and the Turkish people. They live together in an area without any institutional restriction. So it is possible that there were borders before there were nations and states (Van Houtum, 2006:4).

In order to understand this discrepancy, this thesis relies on a qualitative research methodology, in which a literature study and semi-structured interviews account for the research data. To unravel the border constructions between the EU and the Western Balkans, the empirical findings from individuals (those who are conscious of their position) are of big importance. In choosing for a semi-structured interview (see appendix 1) the researcher is able to review similar kind of answers, but it leaves as well space for interesting features from the respondents which otherwise may have been left out. Both the EU view and the view from the Western Balkans are included and the amount of interviews is fourteen, a minimum to provide any reliability in this type of research. While there is a particular focus on Serbia within this thesis, the majority of respondents do have a Serbian identity, among others professors, students, workforce, researchers (see appendix 2). With the questionnaire of the interview agenda, the researcher has tried to grasp the essence of the role that both mental and physical borders play for both sides (meaning the EU and the Western Balkans). At the end of the interview agenda a blank map of the European continent is included (Blank map Europe, 2011). The fourteen respondents drew their image of the Balkans on a blank map of the European continent and herewith gave their representation of their cognitive image. The frame of reference is crucial in this drawing, since this may clarify the differences that are shown in the results.

With this form of a mental map, insight in the perception of an individual about its geographical environment (i.e. the Balkans) is gained, more or less, it will be translated in the way an individual structures the space around itself. Mental mapping relies on perception and cognition, and since a mental map is internal in principle, drawings make it possible to express this.

Besides, people's sensory capacities, age, experience, attitudes, perceptions, preferences, values and biases also play an important role in mental mapping (Akcali, 2010, p. 2). A mixture of the nature of the respondents allows for differentiated analysis of the citizens' perceptions in the Balkan region.

The goal of the interviews is to gain in-depth information on the image, perception of the borders and the experience of different persons on both sides of the borders. The respondents are well chosen and they cover a representative group of people. According to Erving Goffman (Todorova, 1997) "*representatives are not representative, representation can hardly come from those who give no attention to their stigma, or who are relatively unlettered*" (p. 38). The experts (the educated elites) who are included are those living both in the Western Balkans and the EU who are at least conscious of their ethnic, national, religious, local and of other multiple identities (The EU and Balkan identity). The knowledge of a couple of experts is an added value, since they offer the insight information about the situation and future prospects. The fourteen interviews held among a group of respondents on different levels and disciplines, therefore a rich source of information on border constructions between the EU and the Western Balkans is being gathered. The majority of the interviews have been held in Belgrade, since over there the biggest share of respondents housed. The overall results were a great eye-opener and gave an in-depth overview on the border perceptions and experiencing on both sides. With the input of people from all kind of levels, the information is really helpful in reveal the essence of the borders between the EU and the Western Balkans. Next to this, the real life experience of the researcher in this Western Balkan country was an added value. The remaining interviews have been held in Budapest. With the empirical data in stock, connections with the theory and reality can be made. The result of this will help to grasp people's perception on the (present) borders between the EU and the Western Balkans (and vice versa) and the impact of these borders on the Europeanization process of the Western Balkans.

A concept-driven research like this research will add to the theoretical and practical understanding of border constructions as it unravels the indicators that create the borders between the EU and the Western Balkans and vice versa. Moreover, as borders are captured by a certain vagueness, this thesis tries to clarify the workings of these social constructs.

1.4 STRUCTURE

With the key concepts of borders and Europeanization among others being addressed in chapter 2, the theoretical framework is the basis to start with. The chapter contains as well discourses on the current borders constructions between the EU and the Western Balkans. Chapter 3 deals with the 'Image of the Balkans', where the history of the Balkans, the invention of the Western Balkans and the geopolitical representations of the Western Balkans are described. The chapter offers insight in the way the images of the Balkans have been constructed and the impact of these images in present day Europe. In Chapter 4 the Europeanization process of the Western Balkans is taken into account. While the Western Balkans have been encouraged with the future possibility of entering the EU, the road towards this accession differs from country to country. The Europeanization process has been described from both the EU and Western Balkan perspective, with a special focus on Serbia. The empirical findings are presented in Chapter 5. By means of the border indicators the goal is to unravel the border constructions between the EU and the Western Balkans. Chapter 6 ends with concluding remarks on the border constructions between the EU and the Western Balkans and the impact of these borders on the Europeanization of the Western Balkans.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The main objective of this thesis is to unravel the border constructions of the (present) borders between the EU and the Western Balkans. In order to understand this objective, there is a need for a well-founded theoretical framework in which essential concepts are being exposed. This includes the concept of borders in all its appearances with a focus, on the impact of these borders on the current process of Europeanization, in special the one in the Western Balkans. Eventually, the goal is to clarify how the borders between the EU and the Western Balkans are being constructed and what influence they have on the Europeanization process of the Western Balkans (and Serbia in particular).

2.1 THE CONCEPT OF BORDERS

Around the world, borders are interpreted in numerous different ways. Drawing neat lines around states and nations is a quite reasonable task, but on the ground it is obvious that the borders between cultures and communities are blurred. Borders can appear in different shapes, they move, shift, get blurred, may disappear and are after all social constructs, created by mankind. In most cases borders do exist on the edge of the territory of a state, but they exist as well in numerous points within and beyond it. There are three major forces that are influencing the borders in Europe: the internal development relating to national borders, a European transnational state system in which an external border has been formed and the wider global context. For border demarcations, both from the past and present, the key notion remains the nature of the power relations. Newman (2006) states that *“the criteria determining where and how the border is to be constructed in society and/or space, are drawn up by the societal managers, usually acting in their own political, economic or institutional interests. The idea that the transition from a bordered to a borderless (sic) world is indicative of a transfer of power from one interest group to another, is mistaken. The removal, or opening, of borders, usually serves the interests of the same power elites who were intent on constructing the closed borders of the past”* (p. 175).

As globalization takes place at this particular moment in time, borders and boundaries seem to vanish. Newman (Delanty, 2006) argues that borders are becoming more and more permeable than in the past, but they remain the hard lines that determine the territorial limits of the state and the citizenship of those included within it (p.189). Physical barriers are being removed and people are able to travel freely (again).

Despite the fact that these borders and boundaries seem to lessen, other borders and boundaries are being created instead. Armstrong (2007) stated on this particular issue:

“Borders not only exist in the era of globalization, they continue to flourish and any report of their imminent demise has been greatly exaggerated. Yet, considerable change has take place in the EU. As with other regions around the world, the phrase ‘a borderless world’, when applied to the EU, refers first and foremost to the steady whittling away of those borders between nation-state members within the Union” (p. 1).

According to Eder (2006:255), the social construction of the borders of Europe is “the combined effect of a historical trajectory in which the construction of its outer and its inner boundaries interact”. Borders can be both hard as soft facts. The hard borders of Europe are written down in legal texts and are institutionalized borders. A pre-institutional social reality is indicated by soft-borders, these borders determine what Europe is, who Europeans are and who are not. Eder (2006:256) argues that soft borders are partly the cause of the hardness of borders, since the symbolic power which belongs to soft borders helps to frame hard borders. Images of the borders have been produced over the years and are being reproduced even more since the institutional borders of Europe are not finalized and open to political struggles. Eder (2006:256) states that *“Europe can be taken as a case of how border discourses on imaginary boundaries (i.e. soft facts) can play a causal role in the making of institutional (hard) Europe which we call the European Union”*. While claiming for a European identity there is a mode of defining a boundary between ‘us’ and ‘them’. Identities are created in dynamics of openness and closure, there origin is found in borders as boundaries as a matter of classification. The European identity is built from the discursive constructions of such boundaries. ‘Objective referents’ are being used in these constructions as signifiers, in creating a leading whole into an identity. In organizing the different elements into a meaningful sequence, *narrative fidelity* and narrative resonance is provided. To define its borders, Europe has collected a huge history of images of it boundaries that are used selectively. The history of such images is based on an internal logic, in which a unity is constructed overtime. The images of the history of drawing boundaries are founded on these moments and are known as collective identities (Eder, 2006:256).

According to Delanty (2006:183) the borders of Europe are *“generally posed in terms of a civilizational notion of the unity of European civilization and concerned the relationship between culture and geography”*.

With its system of classifications, the border does distinguish insiders from outsiders with the system of classifications and because of the changing nature of borders it affects identities as well. In a way borders are like categories, they do not simply represent the world but instead create it and limit it. While establishing an inside and outside, defining of the categories of borders/boundaries is being done. So what is the essence of the borders between the EU and the Western Balkans? The truth is that the borders can be explained in numerous ways. For Neuwahl (2005):

“Borders do not only play a legal or a functional role. Dardenne and Weerts point out that borders also have symbolic importance. They can represent an identity and fulfil a function of ideological orientation, because they can symbolise a relationship of exclusion or proximity for example. For this reason, borders remain as important as ever, regardless whether they are manned, whether or not the right to perform border controls is claimed, and even if there is international and transnational cooperation at various levels” (p. 32).

In marking the boundaries of the ‘we group’, borders have a symbolic role. In creating difference, borders express the identity of a whole rather than being a structure existing in geography. In these issues, the physical presence of the border is relatively unimportant.

According to Delanty (2006), *“borders, in the imaginary sense, should be seen as a reflection role in respect of territorial determined by the physical facts of the historically contingent situation and is an on-going process, as opposed to being fixed or territorially determined by the physical facts of geography” (p.186).* Moreover, he believes that:

“A conceptual framework for theorizing borders in Europe on the basis of (this) two sets of distinctions, both of which refer to different conceptions of the border as a networked process in which dynamics of openness and closure are played out. The first concerns hard vs. soft, the second open vs. closed borders” (p. 186).

The physical border between the EU and the Western Balkans (e.g. between Hungary and Serbia) is an example of a clear demarcation, since one have to stop and show its passport identification to identify themselves. In defining ourselves and others we create ‘soft borders’ between groups of people, which reflect the imaginations that people have of the world around them. In this way the imaginary borders are being constructed. This imagination, according to Appaduri (Blocksome, 2011) is *“an extremely potent force responsible for much of the dynamics of the world today. In contrast to fantasy, imagination is a social force that carries with it an inherent potential for expression, for action.*

Groups, communities, nations, cultures imagine themselves – and inevitably they imagine themselves in opposition to an Other. Thus the forces of identity construction act in direct opposition to the nature of the reality that most, if not all, people presently find themselves in” (p. 181).

According to Žižek (Daly, 2004) “Lacan identifies the Real in relation, to two other basic dimensions - the symbolic and the imaginary - and together these constitute the triadic (Borromean) structure of all being. For Lacan, what we call 'reality' is articulated through signification (the symbolic) and the characteristic patterning of images (the imaginary). Strictly speaking both the symbolic and the imaginary function within the order of signification. As with Einstein's 'general' and 'special' theory of relativity, the imaginary may be regarded as a special case of Signification. What differentiates them is that while the symbolic is in principle open-ended, the imaginary seeks to domesticate this open-endedness through the imposition of a fantasmatic landscape that is peculiar to each individual. In other words, the imaginary arrests the symbolic around certain fundamental fantasies” (Dimensions of the Real section, ¶2). As an exemplification of this, in claiming for a European identity, there is a mode of defining a boundary between ‘us’ and ‘them’. This form of b/ordering resembles the situation between the EU and the (Western) Balkans. Obviously stereotypes rely on a certain objective ground, but most of them have been exaggerated overtime, like the position of the (Western) Balkans. In the book ‘Imagining the Balkans’ by Maria Todorova (1997), she writes about ‘Balkans’ as Self-designation. It is not meant as a historical survey of the process of creating self-identities and self-designation, but instead it intends to transmit a concept of the present views and emotion that are hidden in the region. Over the past decades the EU’s border regime resembled a Westphalian pattern and the execution of this strategy remains (p. 38). However, after the last big enlargement row in 2004, a neo-medieval pattern of EU’s borders is more likely to be produced. Due to the major enlargements in the past and the impact of globalization, Newman (2003: 287) argues: “[...] boundaries of Europe have become increasingly permeable and are not able to prevent the unrestricted movement of goods, people and ideas from one territory to another. The realisation of the Westphalian state model, in which the complete and absolute territorial integrity and sovereignty of the state was determined by the lines demarcating the territorial extent of political power and control, may come to an end in the near future”.

According to Zielonka (2001), a hard border regime can hardly be sustained on the long run if it is based on largely imaginary threats.

Zielonka (2001) also argues that *“In such a ‘maze Europe’ different legal, economic, security and cultural spaces are likely to be bound separately, cross-border multiple cooperation will flourish, and the inside/outside divide will be blurred. In due time, the EU’s borders will probably be ‘less territorial, less physical and less visible’ (p. 518).*

2.2 THE CONCEPT OF EUROPEANIZATION

In the minds of most EU-citizens, ‘Europe’ as a continent and the ‘EU’ have become synonymous as a result of the successfully EU occupation of the social space of what it means to be European. Although the borders between nation-state members in the EU seem to lessen, obviously the external borders of EU-territory remain unfinished.

The EU-enlargements in 2004 occurred in a shift from functional integration to creating a melting pot aimed at ‘unity in diversity’.

In 2007, Romania and Bulgaria entered the EU and these enlargements increased the potential accession of even more South-Eastern European countries, like the (Western) Balkans (referring to the countries of Albania, The State Union of Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, The Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Kosovo) as most prominent group of countries. Slovenia was part of the former Yugoslavian countries, but successfully used the EU escape route, becoming an EU-member in 2004. In the scope of EU-accession of new states, the concept of Europeanization is something which cannot be missed. Europeanization resembles a number of ways to describe a variety of phenomena and processes of change, for example reforms in the economy, the way of governance etc. According to Radealli Europeanization can be defined as *“processes of (a) construction (b) diffusion and (c) implementation of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, “ways of doing things, “and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the EU policy process and then incorporated in the logic of domestic discourse, identities, political structures and public policies. (Anastasakis, 2005:78).*

Nowadays the term Europeanization is a highly popular, but remains a contested concept. One comprehensive definition of Europeanization is not given, since the term has no single precise or stable meaning. It is questionable whether the term is applicable as an organizing concept. A difficult thing with Europeanization is the fact that it is hard to measure its impact. Therefore it is hard to find out what impact the border constructions between the EU and Western Balkans have on the Europeanization of the Western Balkans.

To create a better understanding of the term Europeanization, Olsen (2002:923) made an attempt to bring more order in this disorderly field of research. In doing that, Olsen (2002:923) describes whether and how 'Europeanization' can be useful for understanding the dynamics of the evolving European polity.

Herewith it may help in giving better accounts of the emergence, developments and impact of a European, institutionally-ordered system of governance. With the concept of Europeanization it is possible to compare European dynamics in addition to the dynamics of other systems of governance. Since Europeanization resembles certain change on various phenomena, a first step to understand this term is to separate the term by what exactly is changing. Olsen (2002:923) distinguishes five different uses of Europeanization:

1. Europeanization as changes in external territorial boundaries;
2. Europeanization as the development of institutions of governance at the European level;
3. Europeanization as central penetration of national and sub-national systems of governance;
4. Europeanization as exporting forms of political organization and governance that are typical and distinct for Europe beyond the European territory;
5. Europeanization as a political project aiming at a unified and politically stronger Europe.

In this research the first use of Europeanization, Europeanization as changes in external territorial boundaries is being contested. For Olsen (2002) "*This involves the territorial reach of a system of governance and the degree to which Europe as a continent becomes a single political space. For example, Europeanization is taking place as the EU expands its boundaries through enlargement*" (p. 924). With a future enlargement of the EU with the Western Balkans, the borders between the EU and the Western Balkans are at stake. As the European space could be politically organized and governed it presupposes that Europe as a geographical concept and external boundary can be delimited and defined. It seems to be that the EU occupied the European continent as being their territory, since Europe is used in a variety of ways. The use of 'Europe' with reference to the EU and its member states has become common in public documents and scholarly literature (Olsen, 2002:928). Without doubt, European transformations are not limited to the EU and its member states or to Western Europe. Cross-border relations have been, and are, managed through a variety of transnational regimes and institutions next to the EU.

There are many examples of institution-building at the European level. Furthermore, there has also been an increase in non-territorial forms of political organization, and the meaning and importance of geographical space has changed with the growth of functional networks without a centre of final authority and power. Therefore, a decent understanding of the ongoing transformations requires attention to other European transnational institutions, regimes and organizations as well as non-member states. Still, the EU has been most successful in terms of institutionalizing a system of governance that includes a large, and increasing, part of the continent. The EU is currently the core political project in Europe and the example most often analyzed in the literature on Europeanization (Olsen, 2002).

The concept of Europeanization is both an EU-inspired project as it is a national experiment, demanding the interaction of both internal and external aspects. Whether it will be successful depends on the matter of commitment, will and unity from two sides. *“Europeanization, South East European style” is an even more demanding and challenging process, which requires additional effort and commitment for an uncertain outcome. In the short- and medium-term, Europeanization may be linked with scarifies and difficult socioeconomic and political choices for the countries involved. But in the long run, it is identified with modernization, development, stability and a sense of security based on soft power and the benefits of cooperation and co-existence”* (Anastasakis, 2005:86-87). There is a call for security in the Balkan region, where national uncertainties and borders are still open cases. In developing the Europeanization according to the Balkan experience, the regional past which is included is a great test for the power of the EU itself (Anastasakis, 2005:87).

2.3 DISCOURSES ON BORDER CONSTRUCTIONS BETWEEN EU AND (WESTERN) BALKANS

The borders between the EU and the Western Balkans are contested for the past centuries and will be a topic of discussion in the future too. In thinking of a Europe without borders or boundaries, the difference between the physical and imaginary presence of borders is crucial. The physical border is more difficult to remove and is usually transmitted from one generation to another in the process known as mental mapping. In the European imaginary perception, ‘Balkan’ presents the ‘Other’. Nevertheless, ‘Balkan’ apparently is nowhere, assuming that no one wants to belong to it. Still, *every state needs its own ‘Balkan’ for dividing itself from the others’* (Žižek, 2008).

“The Balkans stand as Europe's resident alien, an internal other that is an affront and challenge by virtue of its claim to be part of the West, as well as by its apparent ability to dramatically affect Western history. So it is, for instance, that commentators have long been flummoxed by the fact that such a seemingly "wretched" and irrelevant part of the world can have been the cause of a major global conflict: "It is an unhappy affront to human and political nature that these wretched and unhappy little countries in the Balkan peninsula can, and do, have quarrels that cause world wars” (Fleming, 2000:1229).

In the Western world, instability and irrationality are linked to the Balkans while recognizing to themselves in terms of stability and rationality. This difference between the Western world and the Balkans relies more or less on the existing mental map, the reasoning and interpretations frame of the West-(European) view. For example, the conflicts and instabilities that occurred in the Balkans are not just happening over there, since similar events took also place in the history of Western-Europe. In Western Europe this negative events are described and being judged. For a country like Serbia, the situation in Kosovo¹ keeps it in a difficult position, since this is not bringing them closer to the EU. The Balkans is the paradox of Europe with two borders. Balibar (Bjelic, 2003) explains that Europe pretends a universalism and inclusiveness in relation to the entire continent. Due to this inclusive external border, Europe allows itself the right to interfere in the Balkans as a part of the European continent. On the other side, Europe relies on internal exclusionary border which are meant to exclude strangers for the reason of being a Balkan danger, to protect its unifying criterion against the criterion of fragmentation, namely Balkanization (p. 9). Even a modest Eastern enlargement would make it difficult for the EU to provide an overlap between various types of borders, frontiers, fringes and triads as required by a Westphalian state-building process (Zielonka, 2001:512). *“Borders, understood as confines of state administrative and legal structures, will exist as long as there is no uniformity among states. These differences may relate to varying conceptions of public policy, internal security and social priorities.*

¹ *“Kosovo lies in southern Serbia and has a mixed population of which the majority are ethnic Albanians. Until 1989, the region enjoyed a high degree of autonomy within the former Yugoslavia, when Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic altered the status of the region, removing its autonomy and bringing it under the direct control of Belgrade, the Serbian capital. The Kosovar Albanians strenuously opposed the move” (NATO's role, 2012). Until today, Serbia has not formally recognized Kosovo.*

Since such distinctions between countries are no longer necessary enforced at physical frontiers, one may well ask whether EU enlargement will actually bring a change in the nature of any new internal or external frontiers” (Neuwahl, 2005. p 14).

Together with several of the contemporary scholars like Todorova, Wolff and Bakic-Hayden, Slavoj Žižek did spread his word and comments on the constructions of the Balkans in the West. Žižek explains that since the mid-1990's the Western media have displayed the Balkans as a place of destructive ethnic passions, turning the tolerant coexistence of mixed communities into a nightmare (Karkov, 2011:292). In replacing the real geography of the Balkans with an imaginary cartography, the West 'Balkanized' the Balkans. The effect of the power of the West resulted in internal and mobile orientalisms (*“the Balkans always begin “somewhere else, a little bit more toward the southeast”*, Karkov, 2011:292) among the local populations and even capsized racism arose. Due to this, the Balkans turned into the unconsciousness of Europe, East and West.

3. IMAGE OF THE BALKANS

The Balkans truly are a complex part of the European continent. Lying on the Balkan peninsula, the Balkans are seen as the major crossroad between Western Europe and the Middle East and over many centuries the Balkans have been a battle region between major empires. In both geographical and geopolitical sense the Balkans do have their significance.

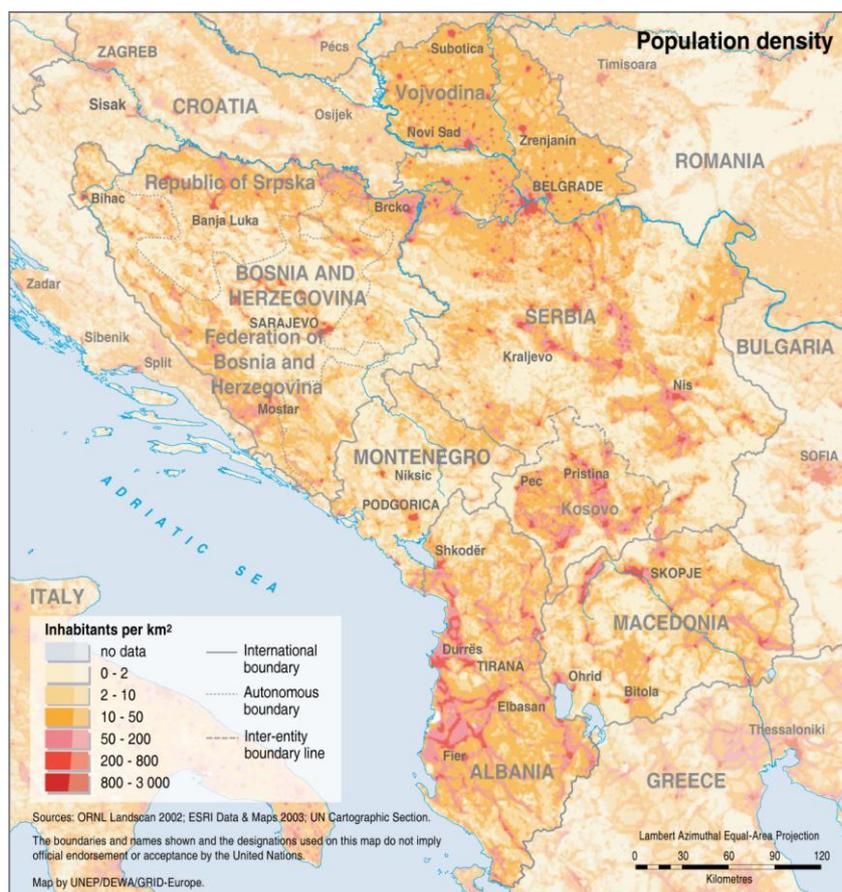


FIGURE 1: MAP OF THE BALKANS (UNEP/DEWA/GRID-EUROPE , 2011A)

As seen from a geographical perspective, the given region refers more or less to the region bounded by the rivers Danube and Sava, the Black Sea in the East and the Mediterranean Sea to the West (see *figure 1*). From the geopolitical and -historical point of view, the Balkans inhabit the border between the Orient and Occident, Christianity and Islam. Nevertheless, they rest a blank spot on the (European) map, partly because of their turbulent history filled with the rise and collapse of empires, democracies and communist (social) systems (Wachtel, 2008:2). Although the Balkans clearly belong to European continent because of their geographical proximity, they have never been treated in a way like other European nations were. According to the Slovenian philosopher Slavoj Žižek the relationship between Europe and its 'South-eastern limbs' is as follows: "*the Balkans are Europe's myth. They have been the screen onto which Europeans projected their dreams – and this has been their doom*" (Canka, 2010). The Balkans are seen as the cultural Other compared to the Europe which present itself as a cultural civilizational unity.

Being treated as a kind of internal Other leads to the imagination of West Europeans in which the Balkans traditionally are represented as the European periphery and as European non Europe. The prevailing Western discourses in which the Balkans are represented as the internal Other created the European imagination over the years.

3.1 HISTORY OF THE BALKANS

The Balkans cover a large, but still rather ill-define space. One attempt to classify the Balkans is concerning its geography (the Balkan Mountains give the area its conventional name). From the mid-nineteenth century the term 'Balkans' has been used more often by locals and outside observers (Wachtel, 2008:2). In the borderland of the Balkans, four of the world's great civilizations created a kind of multilayered local civilization. The cultures of early Greece and Rome, Byzantium, Ottoman Turkey and Roman Catholic Europe met, clashed and sometimes merged. In her book 'Imagining the Balkans', Maria Todorova (1997) describes the Balkans in itself as *"a distinct geographic, social, and cultural entity, "discovered" by European travellers only from the late eighteenth century on, with the beginning of the awareness that the European possessions of the Ottoman Empire had a distinct physiognomy of their own that merited separate attention apart from their treatment as mere provinces of the Ottomans or simply as archaeological sites. Until then, the Ottoman Empire was treated as a unity in Europe and Asia. The change that set in "shattered the unitary character of the oriental world" (p. 62).*

Determining this particular region in a positive way by historians is less taken into account since the cultural, historical and social threads make it a coherent, complex whole. With numerous Western European travellers' accounts on the Balkans in the past three centuries, the perception of the Balkans as a distinct geography and cultural entity was gradually formatted, instead of just the site of classical history or the regions to be bridged on the way to the Ottoman capital. The travellers functioned as journalists back then and their travel logs were broadly read (including their prejudices) partly formed the public opinion. On the basis of the introduced perceptions and earlier prejudices, a comprehensive, stereotypical image of the Balkans was being created. (Todorova, 1997:64). The Balkans are a region that no single culture was ever able to dominate completely. One could say that the history of the Balkans is found in the succession of civilizations that have conquered the region. Though, the layering of civilizations is not the only way in which the Balkan displays a mixed character.

Compared to their Western European neighbours, the Balkans have been characterized by exceptional variety. Western European states are more homogeneous states formed by the early modern period. The Balkans, known because of its heterogeneity, were created, sustained and amplified because of another crucial factor; it has been a land in between the West and East part of Europe and therefore being loaded with a special luggage. The Eastern and Western halves of the Roman Empire are separated by the Balkan Peninsula. Since the rather fixed border state during the past, the Balkans were influenced, but never fully controlled nor inhabited by the larger civilizations that lay outside it. These civilizations tended to control the region at any external borders they were able to construct, leaving the local inhabitants more or less to themselves. Due to this, the populations frequently intermingled and because of what outsiders brought, the local life changed. These influences resulted in creative modifications by local people which led to the development of mixtures that reshaped the culture of their conquerors to adapt local conditions. Most of the re-workings left everlasting consequences on almost each level of life: *“day-to-day customs, language, literary and artistic traditions, patterns of trade and economy, and politics and religion”* (Wachtel, 2008:3).

Between the eighth and fourth centuries BCE, the Greek colonized the coasts along the Southern Adriatic and Black Seas. During that time they made little effort to access the borderland, but due to their trading networks they ensured that the barbarian tribes (according to the Greeks) who lived there would be exposed to Hellenic civilization (area of modern Greece). Later on, Romans created a certain infrastructure and built cities in the Balkan area. Nevertheless, they were never sufficiently numerous to repulse the natives who lived in the suburban areas and in the inaccessible mountain ranges, characteristic of the regions geography. With the arrival of Turkic Bulgars and the migration of Slavic tribes somewhere between the sixth to eighth centuries CE, a change in the ethnic and linguistic mosaic of the region occurred again. In the more fertile areas the newcomers settled down and in time they became the biggest population of the region. Their irreligious traditions were merged first with the Roman Catholic culture and Byzantine, at that time with a major influence by Ottoman Turkish civilization. The mixture of imported civilizations produced different results throughout various locations in the Balkans, more or less depending on the length of the time natives were exposed to outside influences.

In general the Balkan region can be divided into a core, in which various influences seriously interacted and the periphery, an area covered by a single, relatively dominant influence.

“The core Balkan regions are today’s Albania, Northern Greece, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, southern Romania, and parts of Croatia. The periphery includes southern Greece, Turkey, much of the Adriatic coastline (Dalmatia, Montenegro, and Albania), Northern Romania, and southern Hungary (Wachtel, 2008:4). The given Balkan regions belong to the Balkan Peninsula, which extends from central Europe to the south into the Mediterranean Sea (World atlas, 2012). The Balkan Peninsula presents a contradiction, being accessible and inaccessible at the same time. On a topographic map the most obvious features are mountains, however they do not rise as high as the Alps to the North and West. Nonetheless, they cover about 70% of the region and as a natural barriers of movements (caused by the difficult terrain), encouraging the formation of micro cultures. These circumstances made it difficult for outside intruders to control the entire area. Still the Balkan Mountains have not excluded invasion completely, since the Balkan Peninsula can be entered through several mountain passes, besides its eastern flank which is open to Romanian and Ukrainian lowlands. Both the character of the Ottoman Empire and the Balkan geography encouraged a mixture of peoples in the region, as is the case with the Roman and Byzantine empires before, which was definitely multiethnic and multicultural.

In addition to the Balkan region, the West European states underwent a rather slow but steady process of homogenization. Since the fifteenth century the citizens got exposed to a single linguistic, political, social, legal and cultural system, often expelling unwilling citizens to obey it. The Ottomans on their side offered the citizens a high degree of autonomy in their daily life activities. They did not force a conversion to Islam or imposed the Turkish language (Wachtel, 2008:5). During the Ottoman control, mobility of various groups within the borders of the empire was allowed and from time to time even encouraged. So did the Habsburgs in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in the Northern parts of the peninsula from the Ottoman Empire. Both Habsburg and Ottoman did not create conditions for homogenization of the region which was happening in the rest of Western Europe back then. Besides, they built on the continuation and intensification of a state of affairs to remain the mixing of peoples and traditions into the modern age. Among the Balkan inhabitants, various groups did recognize the differences between each other.

Obviously they could hardly have denied noticing the differences in linguistic, religious and cultural practices and their physical closeness. Since the Middle Ages, Balkan inhabitants were creating unique civilizations and competed for influence and territory.

Nevertheless, medieval Balkan states have been developed on the principle of loyalty to a monarch and his family compared to a culturally determined national group. Foreigners on their territory were never demanded to follow a certain way of life. The citizens under Ottoman rule were divided by religion instead of nationality, this principle slowed the national awareness of local populations. Although local populations did not like each other or their Ottoman overlords in some cases, a relative peace was ensured among the various peoples of the Balkans. Due to the longstanding, thorough interactions, traces of this are still been seen in for example the Balkan languages, which share many words as well as grammatical features, besides the traditions they have in common (Wachtel, 2008:6).

Due to the geographical factors together with the fact that no civilization was able to realize complete control over the local populations, the Balkan Peninsula developed its diverse civilization over many centuries, where variety was encouraged (see *figure 2*, next page). Around 1700 the Balkans were, so to say, in place as a region and a culture, though the region was not yet named as the Balkans. This stereotype was created about 150 years ago. The Balkans were represented as follows: “*a warren of small and spiteful peoples, states, and would-be states racked by racial and ethnic hatred always ready to burst into violent conflict, a region whose spirit, in the words of the German Count Hermann Keyserling, is that of eternal strife*” (Wachtel, 2008:7). While locally born, but European educated elites strived to cover Western European ideas of nation and nation-state (sort of invented in Western Europe) onto the diverse groups in the region, the Balkan Peninsula became the Balkans. It all happened when the Ottoman control over the peninsula decreased, which resulted into a power vacuum. Local Muslim warlords took over the authority in first instance, but later on local (Western-European-educated) Christian men supported by great powers from West Europe i.e. France, England, Austria, Prussia, Russia) ruled over the region. According to these men, the nation symbolized the natural cultural and political instead of the multilingual and heterogeneous Balkan mosaic. This image of a nation embodies a historically uninterrupted, ethnically fixed group defined by a common language, culture and religion. Such units did not exist in the Balkans as a result of history and geography, therefore the European-educated elites came up with a cultural process of national “awakening”.

However, Balkan heterogeneity had shown that it was inconsistent with the development of the modern nations and states that Europeans and European minded Balkan elites experienced as normal and natural. Hence, “the Balkans became the Balkans when the diversity that had traditionally characterized the region went from being a fact of life to a problem that could only be solved through violent separation” (Wachtel, 2008:8).



FIGURE 2: POLITICAL HISTORY OF THE BALKANS FROM 1878 – 2006 (UNEP/DEWA/GRID-EUROPE, 2011B)

The conflicts during the modern period that represented relations between states in the Balkans were more or less attacks to adjust the borders of the state and nation, while getting rid of heterogeneity because of national consolidation. To achieve this goal, each national group tended to ask for help from outside powers, since none of them were able to do it on their own. These outside powers obviously had their own reasons for keeping the rumour on the Balkan ongoing and did not try to decline the tensions. The results for large numbers of people (Jews, Roma etc.) were catastrophic (p. 8).

Throughout the twentieth century, the Balkans states started to lose their common characteristics. Many reasons underlying to gradually transformation were: population exchanges, massacres, border changes and due to the national educational systems who gained more power which began to dissolve the cultural diversity in the region. Moreover, the collapse of cultural monuments (most of them from Muslim culture), removal of “foreign” vocabulary from national languages and the takeover of Western European lifestyles and habits, caused a decrease in the visibility of the region’s heritage and history. After World War II, a major change in the world’s geopolitical boundaries occurred and together with the fall of communism, the Balkan region lost its true essence as borderland (as shown in *figure 2*). While the population of Greece became more mono-ethnic around the 1920s, they were being considered as a part of the West. By the 1950s, Albania, Bulgaria and Romania started to lose the typical Balkan characterises. Ever since, the only typically ‘Balkan’ part of the region was Yugoslavia, which contained a multiethnic population that tried to create harmony between Soviet communism and Western capitalism. As a result of the collapse of Yugoslavia and the raise of more or less mono-ethnic states, the history of the characteristic Balkans came to an end. The denomination ‘the Balkans’ remains to describe a stereotypical vision of the Balkans, but the truth of the Balkan Peninsula and this denomination do not fully match anymore. Later on the word ‘Balkanization’ arose to refer to antagonistic break-ups in other parts of the world, whether that is appropriate or not. Nowadays the Balkan region is rapidly being integrated into Western Europe, creating new borderlands to its east with Moldova, Ukraine and Russia and Turkey to its south, despite the few places left with the traditional Balkan diversity. Overtime the Balkans as a region seems to be transformed into a geographical unit called South-Eastern Europe (Wachtel, 2008:9), but this loaded term can hardly be used in a neutral way.

3.2 INVENTION AND GEOPOLITICAL REPRESENTATIONS OF THE WESTERN BALKANS

Today's EU consists of 27 member states, of which Romania and Bulgaria are EU member states with a Balkan connection. The naming of the Western Balkans has been widely addressed in scholarly literature, having a general denominator in their description of a region as a territory or an area that is delimited or defined in some way (Petrovic, 2009:30). In recognizing the 'Western Balkans' as a neutral, geographical name, others parts of the Balkan Peninsula like the Central or Eastern Balkans should be used next to it. Beyond the Western Balkans there is no real Eastern, Southern or Northern Balkans addressed, just the Western Balkans and Europe. The remaining countries on the Balkans, who are not (yet) part of the EU are nowadays known as the Western Balkans (see §1.1).

Today the political usage of the term Western Balkans prevails over the neutral, geographical use. Petrovic (2009:33) stated on this: "*The political term Western Balkans, which bears a conspicuous ideological burden, is today much more present in public discourse, and its use has important dimensions that already extend beyond exclusively political or administrative communication purposes*". The concept of the Western Balkans as a political invention basically came due to fact that most of the countries in South-Eastern European by the end of the wars in Bosnia-Herzegovina in the 1990s, did not qualify for the closure of the Europe Agreements². The EU already signed with Romania and Bulgaria and at that time a Europe Agreement with Slovenia was underway being negotiated.

The only country outside the borders of the former Yugoslavia was Albania. This country could be integrated into a regional approach, with the goal to realise administrative, economic and legal reforms and the development of good neighbourly alliances. The mutual relations between the current Western Balkans and the EU would rely on a different kind of association: the Stabilisation and Association Agreement³ (Blockmans, 2007:13).

² The Europe agreements constituted the legal framework of relations between the European Union and the Central and Eastern European countries. These agreements were adapted to the specific situation of each partner state while setting common political, economic and commercial objectives. In the context of accession to the European Union, they formed the framework for implementation of the accession process. At present, only Bulgaria and Romania still have Europe agreements (European Commission, 2012a).

³ The stabilisation and association process is the framework for EU negotiations with the Western Balkan countries, all the way to their eventual accession (European Commission, 2012b).

At itself, the Western Balkans is not a fixed region in the traditional sense of the word. In EU's policy documents the terms 'Western Balkans' and 'South-Eastern Europe' are used interchangeably, like in numerous 'occasional papers' from the European Commission. The including countries do have certain commonalities, but it is hard to define the Western Balkans as a unit as seen from historical legacy, which is an important factor to define a region culturally, historically and politically. What they have in common is that they are not part of the EU. The countries of the Western Balkans share a common historical legacy like the legacy of the Habsburg Empire, the Ottoman Empire or the Yugoslav legacy and communist legacy. Anyhow, it is questionable whether the Western Balkans as a political term will disappear when a geographical region exists, in case all countries that belong to the Western Balkans (see definition) will enter the EU. As the Western Balkans are part of the Balkan region, the image outsiders have is not too different from the image they have of the Western Balkans. Some European countries see themselves more European than other countries and this view does not change when a country like Romania entered the EU. The image of a backward, corruption linked country is not fading away while entering the EU sphere.

According to Petrovic (2009) all kinds of discourses on the Western Balkans create the following "time map" of Europe: *"the EU's present is the Western Balkans future, with the latter now living not in the present but in a past governed by nationalistic myths. The image in which the reality of the Western Balkans is not the reality of the present but of the past makes the transformation of these countries indispensable and the difference between Europe (the EU) and the Western Balkans explicit, thus preventing us from perceiving the similarities between the two parts of the continent"* (p. 51). The above given political discourse embodies the widespread representation of the Balkans in general as a special part of Europe with *"inherent traits, characterized by and explicit tendency towards myths and an obsession with the past"* (Petrovic, 2009:52). The Western Balkans remains the Other that is different (at least on paper) from the new EU member states like Romania and Bulgaria.

In discourses from right-wing politicians on the accession of new countries to the EU, the Western Balkans has been rather relocated into the south of the continent, aiming at the third world. Although the Western Balkans is geographically seen situated in the South-East of Europe, the shapers of 'European' discourses increasingly pushed them towards the south, outside the symbolic borders of Europe, for ideological reasons.

The common notions that are linked to the EU are *future, progress, stability, and health*. On the other hand, non-inclusion in the EU is referring to the *past, instability, chaos, nationalism and disease*, more or less the characteristics that in discourses of Balkanism usually are associated with the Balkan countries (Petrovic, 2009:50). Nowadays the term Balkans is often used to denote the Western Balkan countries, but the word Balkans has as well other usages, for example, to touch on the war in former Yugoslavia, and when transferring this strange negative image to the political class and the society as being Balkan. What remains for the Balkans is that they can cure themselves, become normalized and beat the growing nationalism, only by becoming an EU-member and become part of Europe. Today's Europe is the Western Balkans in the future, since the Western Balkans are still living in the reminiscent which is loaded with nationalistic myths. The reality from the Western Balkans does not match with present-day Europe (i.e. the EU), but with the past. This shows differences between the EU and the Western Balkans and the need for change, since the links that are made with the Western Balkans viewed from the Western perspective confirm that "*the non-westerner is always living in another perspective, even when he is our contemporary*" (Petrovic, 2009:52). This reproduction of the image of the Balkans in the given political discourse relies on the perception of the Balkans as a different region, referring to myths and the legacy of the past. While most of the representations of the Western Balkans over time are created with knowledge from the reactionary past, the future orientation is towards EU-accession. This prospect is presented as the only way for the Western Balkans to get rid of the burden of the past and destructive nationalism, and point their angle towards the future.

4. EUROPEANIZATION OF THE WESTERN BALKANS

The European map of convergence and divergence is very complex one. Still, the overall conclusion is that even a smooth Eastern enlargement would not make it easy for the EU to create a bridge between various types of borders, frontiers, fringes and triads that belong to a Westphalian state-building process (Zielonka, 2001:512). The European Union is in principle open to enlargement without defined limits, but some territories which historically are considered as 'European' are still left outside or excluded (Balibar, 2009:193).

After the big enlargement row in 2004, including the access of ten new member states, becoming an EU-member only seems to become a tougher job for the Western Balkan countries. With the previous big enlargement row in 2004, the EU had to compromise on the detailed accession requirements to accomplish its extensive political mission of merging West and Eastern Europe. Busek (2009) argues that *"in a world preoccupied by economic recession and the global banking crisis, EU leaders will tend to forget about their troublesome neighbours, but the Balkans nevertheless remains part of Europe, and will loom ever larger on its list of unfinished business"*. With the Western Balkans on the threshold of EU-accession, this does not mean that the Western Balkans as a whole can enter in a single shift (Zielonka, 2001: 512). The process of Europeanization is ongoing in the Western Balkans, but this obviously goes smoother in some countries while it stalls in others, like in Bosnia-Herzegovina. According to Anastasakis (2005) *"Europeanization is internalized differently by the various states of national actors in the Western Balkans, and its degree of success relies on their ability and willingness to change"* (p. 77). Each of the Western Balkan countries has its own luggage to carry and therefore their own path towards a possible EU-membership. For the next years it will be important for the Balkan leaders to consolidate on what the countries of the Western Balkans have in common. Judah (2009) argues that the whole Western Balkan region would benefit when the politics and business will be more closely aligned with each other and ideally with the EU too.

The first Western Balkan country to become an EU-member is Croatia, on the first of July 2013. Another Western Balkan country, Serbia, received the official candidate status for membership in the European Union on the first of March 2012.

Before the lack of cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) from Serbia's side had cost the country important time on their path toward the EU, which caused a brake in the accession negotiations in 2006 (Subotic, 2011:600).

4.1 EUROPEANIZATION FROM THE WESTERN BALKANS PERSPECTIVE

In the below given paragraphs the process of Europeanization in Western Balkans (with a focus on Serbia) is being discussed as well as Europeanization of the Western Balkans as seen from the EU-perspective.

4.1.1 SERBIA'S EUROPEANIZATION FROM THE WESTERN BALKANS PERSPECTIVE

While the borders of the European Union are moving eastwards, most of the Western Balkan countries still have a long way to go to become an EU-member. As one of the Western Balkan countries, Serbia is on its way to become an EU-member. With its turbulent past, Serbia started to take some concrete steps in 2009 which brought the whole Western Balkans closer to an EU-accession. One of these steps, as Jano (2008) presented, is that *"Today, most of the problems and factors underpinning the Balkan wars seem to be over. The Western Balkans have achieved positive reform developments in the last couple of years"* (p. 65). One measure to stimulate the Europeanization was the lifting of the visa requirements for three Western Balkan states (Montenegro, Macedonia and Serbia). Despite these positive steps towards the EU do the findings of the Gallup Balkan Monitor from 2010 show that EU-accession is still supported, but clearly not as fervent as before. During the elections in 2008, 53% of the people were in favour of the European Union and 47% against. After the capture of the war-criminal (Ratko Mladic, June 2011), the situation became more bright, but the situation for the common people on the ground did not change at all. With the current candidate status, Serbia is on the right track towards EU-accession. What matters is how Western Balkan countries like Serbia deal with and perceive the whole process of Europeanization. Due to political changes in Croatia and later in Serbia, the regional risks changed and turned the region towards EU integration. For Serbia counts that they have to choose between their nationalist past or a future within the European Union, obviously the most promising direction they are heading for.

Regardless of the big load of news on today's global (economical) crisis, the Western Balkans remain in the spotlights.

For example on their future prospects within the EU, the independence of Kosovo and the struggles with Serbia, and minority troubles etc. In order to continue making progress in the road of the Western Balkans towards the EU, sound policies are vital. To realize these solid policies, there is a need for extended, reliable knowledge on the perceptions and mindset of the people living in the Balkans. The Gallup Balkan Monitor tries to fathom the Western Balkans with their surveys and herewith provide a huge source of information on socio-economic, socio-political and ethnic dimensions of the Balkan area (Balkan Monitor, 2012). In the 2010 results from the Balkan Monitor the attitude in Serbia towards the EU is as follows: *“EU support in Serbia has been steadily decreasing since the beginning of Balkan Monitor measurements in 2006. For the first time in this period, less than half of respondents (44%) thought of EU accession as a ‘good thing’. It seems, however, that in the case of a referendum (on the Sunday after the survey interview) a majority would still support Serbia’s EU membership plans with 63% stating that they would vote ‘Yes’. Serbia’s difficult path to EU integration seems to have reflected on how people perceived the EU citizens’ stance on the matter of Serbia’s accession: the share of people thinking that ‘people in the EU want Serbia to join the EU’ has dropped from 53% to 41% between 2009 and 2010”* (Gallup Balkan Monitor, 2011).

In spite of the turbulence of the past decade and the unique transition tests the Western Balkans are confronting, their positive strides should not be ignored. As sad before, the Western Balkans nations have accomplished positive reforms in the past years. Besides, the greater part of the legacy underpinning the Balkans war appears to be over. The recent political changes in Croatia and later on in Serbia turned the direction more towards EU-integration. Other than that, the economical development in the Western Balkans encouraged the positive direction. While the transition is going on in, the age of ‘Balkanization’ might be abandoned sooner or later. To reach this transformation, it is important to democratize and work towards a market economy to keep on track with the perspective of EU-integration. The mentality of the people living in the Western Balkans differs from the other parts of Europe, since the countries were long under the communist rule. To increase the speed of their accession, the aspiring countries rigidly have to apply with the EU-requirements on politics, economics as well as legal requirements (i.e. the Copenhagen criteria). With this relation of EU conditionality and Western Balkan compliance, the EU intends to have an impact on the Western Balkans, known as ‘Eastern style’ Europeanization.

For the Western Balkans it might be the right occasion to get rid of the 'Balkanization' and enter the era of transition. In the vision of the Western Balkans, the orientation towards the advanced western models, security and future prospects matches with Europeanization.

The Western Balkans are in the pre-Europeanization process, preparing for accession while implementing transformations. *Europeanization in this context is first a member-state building process where Western Balkans states have to review much of their legislation, adapt existing institutions or build new ones conforming to the EU's legislation, policies, and standards* (Jano, 2008:66). In doing so, major transitions in structuring the public administration, the social and economic convergence to EU requirements and democratic governance in the Western Balkan states is aimed for. The readiness of the Western Balkans to join the EU has been a big issue, even the question whether these countries would ever suit to enter the EU. According to the uppermost sceptical viewers, the Western Balkan region's Europeanization capacity is doubtful. While taking for granted that the Western Balkans are not entirely part of Europe in terms periphery or second-class (future) members or not even as third-class if the Central and Eastern European countries (CEECs) were second class members of the EU.

With a growing conditionality this particular case gets even more complex. Even with all obstacles towards the Europeanization process of the Western Balkans, the key point is that these developments are beyond recall. For a country like Serbia the most of the political changes only will have an impact the progress but not the general direction. The norm and values connected to Europe resemble the common representation where the new collective image of the Balkans is being created from. For the Western Balkans joining the EU is the only long-term prospect. At this moment in time, the Europeanization process cannot be turned back, which means that the accession of the Western Balkans is predestined by now. Where the experts and public bodies in the region commonly share a bright picture because of their European orientation, the need for well-grounded actions should be taken by the political elites. This is because the admittance with the EU standards and the continuation of the Europeanization process primarily rests on their shoulders. Jano (2008) argues that *"ultimately, the political will and commitment of the regional leaders determines the success or failure of the European package "consisting of a bilateral (pre) association process, regional co-operation and proactive crisis management"* (p. 67).

The above given sentence denotes that it is possible to Europeanize the Western Balkans, still this does not go without difficulties.

Such difficulties are not only seen in meeting with the EU requirements, but reject the legacy of the past is probably the biggest challenge to overcome. In that way the Western Balkans may become Europeanized, not only on formal grounds but as well in terms of behaviour and act as EU members. The approach of the EU towards the Western Balkans in terms of Europeanization asks for a more positive way of conditionality. In doing so, this positive conditionality should not contain the offer of a general accession prospect for the whole Western Balkan region, but perhaps even more important, a clear road map for each of the countries to elaborate on. With the SAA spreading the EU approach, the maintenance of the progress is aimed for. The correctional features of conditionality return in each of the SAA's and remain of big importance. It seems that the characteristic “*carrot-and-stick*” approach, while both rewarding and correcting, lasts to be the fundamental approach to smoothen the road for the Western Balkans towards the EU and perhaps becoming a member themselves in the (near) future. What matters is which types of incentives are needed to Europeanize the Western Balkans and how to implement them in an effective way, not just the conditionality by itself. The EU brings hard conditions to the Western Balkans, but at the same time it is having a hard time in dealing with the stabilisation of the whole EU-territory. Scholars clearly emphasize that the EU conditionality only works when the prospect of EU membership truly exists. There is no better incentive for the Western Balkans.

The EU, attracting and inspiring in building present-day states and societies is the guide who should bring the Western Balkans closer to the EU, and the membership “*carrot*” is necessary to make progress with the required transitions. “*Reinforcement by reward*” (Jano, 2008:68) is the way to Europeanize the Western Balkans. The importance of the continuation of the Europeanization process is vital, since any delay of EU enlargement will work as a discourage factor in times where the Western Balkans are scaring to cope with the sensitive transitions (p. 68).

4.1.2 SERBIA'S EUROPEANIZATION FROM THE EU-PERSPECTIVE

Although the countries part of the Western Balkans lay on the European continent, EU-candidacy is not given to these countries yet. In order to qualify for EU-membership, the EU expects the Western Balkans to prove their maturity. As sad more often by EU-politicians, the Balkan countries do belong to Europe, politically and geographically.

In becoming EU-members the Western Balkans should be transformed from 'non-European' to 'European' countries. The view of the European enlargement unit (Brussels) on the Western Balkans in relation to the EU is as follows:

“The Western Balkans have been given the perspective of EU membership once they fulfil the established conditions. The EU's approach to enlargement is based on this conditionality against which each country concerned is assessed on its own merits and achievements.

Consequently, the speed at which countries make progress towards accession depends first and foremost on the pace of domestic reforms. The capacity of the EU to integrate new members is also taken into account. Therefore the EU is not in a position to forecast by what future date countries will be ready to join” (Walldén, A., 2011).

After Croatia, Serbia most likely is the next country to enter the EU. Serbia is the biggest country within the Western Balkans and could make good steps to stimulate its neighbouring countries as well to become closer to the EU. Although the capturing of Mladić in Serbia gave a positive global reaction, it is questionable whether this was the last barrier left on Serbia's path towards the EU. Since EU members are divided over the recognition and independence of Kosovo, Serbia is facing another obstacle in joining the EU. Regardless of the less favourable position of Serbia, news from current Kosovo-Serbian diplomacy announced an improvement in administrative issues, which might give some air around the Kosovo affair (Mladić trail, 2012). Despite the given improvements, the finalizing of the EU-integration of Serbia must be accelerated. The EU favours to integrate countries which meet the full *acquis* and requirements, and herewith convince the EU population of the value and the work with regards to the EU-enlargement (Perio, 2011).

The Western Balkans should not be left out, since this will not bring the EU any further in terms of stability in the region, economical welfare and meeting its EU-goals (e.g. EU's energy supply). An ongoing flow of incentives should keep the EU-integration in the Western Balkans on track, eventually bringing the Western Balkans closer to the EU. Nevertheless, the Western Balkans leaders on their side must not expect that the EU will help them over the walls at all costs. The responsibility for the success of their integration is primarily on their own shoulders. In order to become an EU-member, the Western Balkan leaders have *“to fight against a certain type of regional fatalism or ‘Bice bolje malo sutra’ (maybe things will get better one day)”* (Perio, 2011:6).

Considering the scarifying of the Balkan population for more than one generation, the Western Balkan politicians have a major task to achieve. It is time to shift from the political disputes and short-term individual standards to politicians with a vision, because there is a lack of these personalities. With the EU's desire to realize a common foreign and security policy to integrate in their own policy, the Balkans need to have a better understanding of this in order to succeed. This chance should not be missed, so therefore the Balkans must combine forces and advertise with a transparent, future minded focus (Perio, 2011:7).

With the EU as the example neighbour, Perio (2011) stresses that the integration of the Western Balkans is an opportunity to grasp on the condition that the Europeanization process moves forward and intensifies for all the Western Balkan countries. Once a country lags behind, it goes at the expense of the regional stability, which is crucial to reach the right steps towards EU-accession. The EU approach allows a transparent track in terms of its prerequisites and it may succeed as long as the timeframe is reasonable enough to count on the population's confidence. Other than that, a strict compliance from the Balkan leaders with the Copenhagen criteria is desirable. To leave the past behind, one must insist that the Western Balkan leaders improve the regional cooperation, to show their credibility towards their own population and the EU population. This means that their policy must be future oriented which should result in a shared path to prosperity (Perio, 2011:8).

4.3 BORDERS AND EUROPEANIZATION OF THE WESTERN BALKANS

In today's EU-27, there is still a gap with the Western Balkans as far as their presence on the European continent. It is in the name of European security that boundaries are drawn to discipline the behaviour of those within and to distinguish 'Europe' from the Other. The EU accession of the Western Balkans would enable the EU borders being less strict/physical, less visible and less territorial. In this way the Western Balkans and the Balkans as a whole will no longer be a blank spot on the map, but another region belonging to the European Union and the European mindset. The impact of the Europeanization process on the border is measured to a certain extent by the Gallup Balkan Monitor. In doing so, the Gallup Balkan Monitor asked people (1000 individuals from each of the Western Balkan countries) about their opinion on the consequences of EU-accession on numerous fields. An example of this is the following question being asked on the consequence of EU-accession: "*What do you think the EU accession would bring to [COUNTRY] - Freer travel*" (Survey data, 2012).

When, in which year do you think [COUNTRY] will be a part of the European Union?

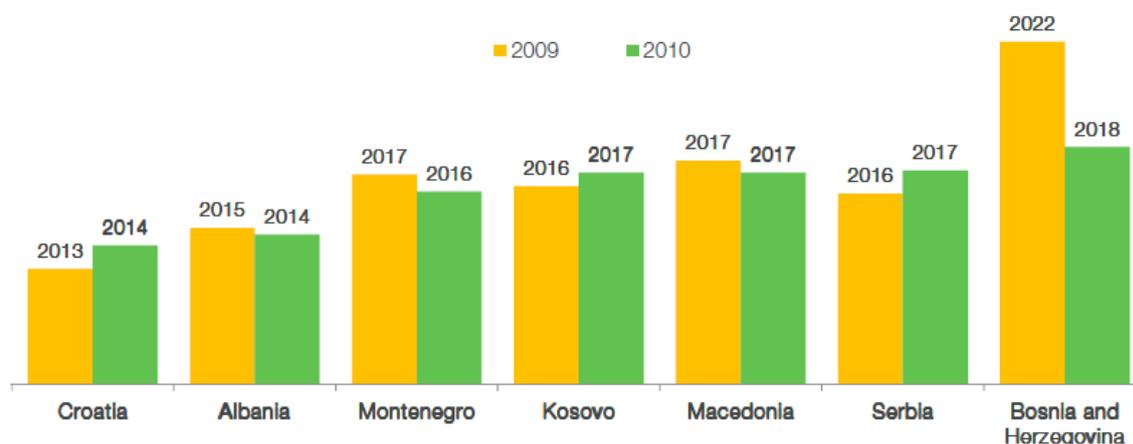


FIGURE 3: VIEW ON EU-ACCESSION PERSPECTIVE INDIVIDUAL WESTERN BALKANS COUNTRIES (GALLUP BALKAN MONITOR, 2010)

From all the Western Balkan countries the vast majority thinks that EU accession certainly entails freer travel. Another question focuses on which country may enter the EU after Croatia, a more complex issue. From the Serbian population 26,7% expects Serbia to enter first after Croatia. Overall the Western Balkans countries expect Serbia to enter first, where Bosnia-Herzegovina is expecting this most with 55,7%. In comparison, from the Bosnia-Herzegovina population just 10% expect their country to enter after Croatia. In *figure 3* the view on the EU-accession perspective of the individual Western Balkan countries is shown.

Altogether there are some serious issues faced by the Western Balkans, generally with the illegal trade of people and the issue of drugs and organized crime, mainly in Kosovo. The entire Western Balkans are suffering as a result, because borders are porous. Eventually this is impacting the relation with the EU. According to Serbian respondent Vuskavin Pavlovic (Professor at the University of Belgrade), the position of Serbia is not favourable, although the country recently received the EU-candidacy status. Pavlovic (2011) describes that the problem with Serbia is that the country has a pretty high responsibility of what happened during the 90's. The country is now in the position of paying a high price for the delay of the Europeanization process, regardless of Serbia's actions to fulfil EU requirements, like for those who were send to the Hague tribunal. Apparently this is not enough to speed up the EU-integration and get rid of the bad image. When you compare democratic and authoritarian political regimes, it is always relatively easy to change a democratic into authoritarian regime.

The other way around, towards a society/country which is democratically oriented and with ditto attitudes, values and behaviour, is a more time consuming operation (Pavlovic, 2011). Besides, there are problems with nationalists in Serbia and therefore the EU asks for more requirements to become an EU-member compared to other countries. Even now the Hague tribunal problem is solved, there are (still) some negative attitudes towards Serbia and the problem is maybe because of the fact that it is a wrong moment of enlargement in general, not only for Serbia. In July 2013 Croatia will enter the EU, but the rest of the Western Balkans will have to wait at least until 1 or 2 years before the start of 2020.

The Bosnian case is a special story. Even in the second Yugoslavia they always were some kind of consociation, because of three parts/nations which are constitutional for Bosnia. It was forbidden according to the old Bosnian constitution, before the war, that two sides will stand against the other. The consensus was the clue for all major decisions, but the war started because two sides were against one. Even with Dayton Agreement, invented to stop the war, the same mistake was made, because Republica Srpska was one side and Bosniaks and Bosnian Croats on the other side (Bosnian Federation). At the end it was also two against one. Even within the Federation the relations were not that good. Bosnia as a state has no capacities, it is not easy in this situation to reach consensus. The other Balkan countries become more or less homogeneous in ethnical sense, Serbia is still quite multicultural: 82% of Serbs, 18% of national minorities. Macedonia is ethnically a heterogeneous country, with about 25% > of Albanians living there. The Albanian community is traditionally a country with an old majority of people compared to other countries in the Europe. Now the rate of new born babies is very high, nowadays the most biological active and social productive group in Europe. In the future the percentage of Albanians in other Western Balkans will increase. Therefore it is good for this region to become member of the EU, since the sharp border will be reduced and the strong meaning will lessen. Even the problem of Kosovo cannot be solved in this region, there is a need for interference of the EU (Pavlovic, 2011).

The image above illustrates that Serbia is still struggling with its negative past. Nevertheless, Serbia is the biggest county in the Western Balkans and the role of Serbia can be important, both in a good and a bad way. To be a stabilizing factor for the whole Western Balkan region, the legacy of war among other things should be abandoned.

As Europeanization stands for accepting a set of values and standards, Serbia must harmonize their identity and values with those of the EU. Besides, with the Europeanization of the Western Balkans, changing the borders is the end result. Several institutions in the Western Balkans are part of European processes. Those companies are already functioning as if they are in one common economic space. The imaginary borders between the EU and Western Balkans are still strong, even though they physically do not exist. In today's EU the ten countries that entered in 2004 are still seen as the new members. When people stop talking about new members things may change for the Western Balkans as well, since it is relative and does not just count for this part of Europe.

5. EMPIRICAL FINDINGS AND REFLECTION

In order to grasp the essence on how the borders between the EU and the Western Balkans are being constructed over the past years, the results from the held interviews provide a rich source of information. The insights about how borders are constructed and the image people have on both sides, clarify how border constructions are still present, even in contemporary Europe.

5.1 INTERVIEW RESULTS

Out of the interviews and filled out questionnaires more insights have been gathered on the perceptions of the (current) borders between the EU and the Western Balkans. Measuring these border issues has proven to be a difficult task, since mental issues in particular are hard to map. Therefore the included maps do provide even more insight on the different border perceptions. With the information about the existing borders, a link is being made with the ongoing process of Europeanization in the Western Balkans. As shown in the results below, borders do have a significant impact on the Europeanization process between the EU and Western Balkans.

While presenting the interview results and reflecting on it, special attention is paid to the perception of the borders between the EU and the Western Balkans. The perception on the borders from each individual provides useful insights on how the borders between the EU and Western Balkans are being constructed over the years. The why and how of such perceptions clarifies the underlying meaning of the existing border constructions. In the paragraph (5.2), a summary of the comments out of the interviews is given. The complexity inherent to the concept of Europe and the EU is shown in the results. This is why it is so important to expand the sources of information and multiply the data, in order to better understand why and how such perceptions arise. Since the Balkans have been represented as somewhat frightening and ill-defined space overtime, the respondents were asked to draw on a blank map of what they considered as being the Balkans. Together with the perceptions of each individual on the borders between the EU and the Balkans, the maps are great source to investigate.

5.2 UNRAVELLING EU-WESTERN BALKANS BORDER CONSTRUCTIONS

With the goal to unravel the border constructions between the EU and the Western Balkans, the researcher used specified indicators as the personal border perceptions, Balkan experience and degree of Balkan belonging etc.). By means of the interviews, a huge load of data has been gathered. The chosen indicators to unravel the border constructions, the most important issues that unmask the key features underlying the borders constructions between the EU and the Western Balkans are: the geopolitical representations of the Western Balkans in the EU, the imaginary and physical border experiences, the feeling of Us and Them, impact of borders on Europeanization and legacy of the past etc. With these themes in mind, the researcher has tried to describe the essence and impact of borders between the European Union and the Western Balkans. For a better understanding of the gathered data, a summary of the answers from the respondents is listed in the separate paragraphs, followed by a short reflection.

5.2.1 BALKAN IMAGINATION

With the purpose of grasping the image of the Balkans, a number of comments from what the respondents consider as being the Balkans are shown below.

According to Croatian respondent, *M. Zorko* (Teaching Assistant at the Faculty of Political Science), the Balkans incorporates the follow image:

“I believe that “Balkan” is a negative imaginary geopolitical phrase and in that sense it could exist anywhere. Miroslav Krleža (Croatian novelist 1893 – 1981) was writing about “North Balkan” in his works, and by that he meant place of fighting and interest between Russia and Scandinavian countries. That means that Balkan as a state of mind can be anywhere. So, my perception of Balkan is strongly geographical – I agree with Magocsi (Historical Atlas of Central Europe) that the line that divides Central Europe from Balkan are rivers – Kupa, Sava and Danube with straight line to Black and Aegean Sea. That matches definition of Balkan Peninsula in geographical sense of way, as well. My personal definition includes part of Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Macedonia, Albania, Greece, part of Turkey, Bulgaria and Romania”.

The perception of the Balkans from Serbian respondent *A. Trbovich* is as follows:

“The Balkans include Turkey and Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia, Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro, Bosnia. The traditional map of the Balkans (from Croatia to Turkey).

Hungary and Slovenia geographically do not belong to the Balkan, although Slovenia has a link with former Yugoslavia, but that's the only thing. There is as well some overlap with Austria and Hungary in the region, they are somehow attached because of history. Nevertheless, Balkans is Balkans and I do not consider them being part of the Balkans. The question is whether Greece and Turkey are in. South-East Europe is an overlap” (Trbovich, 2011).

While asking the 27 year old student V. Durić (student political science) from Belgrade (Serbia) about what she considered as being the Balkans, a totally different map was drawn. In her view the Balkans contains Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia. Her image of the Balkans resembles more or less former Yugoslavia. The fact that she did not travel outside Serbia yet may clarify that her map shows a more simplified version of the Balkans in addition to the others maps.

A view from EU-respondent J. Shattuck (President and rector Central European University) on the Balkans as a whole and the Western Balkans is as follows:

“The Balkans extends out to the Greek peninsula. So Croatia, Bosnia, Serbia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania and Greece are in. The map would not contain Romania, Bulgaria (certainly not the Western Balkans, Carpathian basin/Eastern Balkans and politically different), Slovenia either too (EU member, orientation differs), Turkey either. It's both a geographical and a political map. My map consists of countries that are not yet in the EU and that are part of the Western Balkans” (Shattuck, 2011).

With fourteen respondents who drew on the blank map of Europe, the researcher did not expect that much variety between them. Especially these differentiations are important and interesting to grasp the essence of what the Balkans represents. Certainly does the mixture of the nature of the respondents allow for the differentiated analysis of the perceptions in the Balkan region. The different interpretations of the Balkans obviously clarify the complexity of the region as well as the fact whether one relies on his or her geographical or political interpretation of the Balkan region.

5.2.2 IMAGE OF BALKAN BELONGING

The comments from the respondents below are based on the present image of the borders, the individual experience of being part of the Western Balkans and degree of belonging to it.

Serbian respondent *M. Popovic* (PhD-student at the Central European University) stresses that *“the physical borders become visible when you want to cross the border, until then it is very blurry (Schengen). Still there is a strong separation between the EU and Western Balkans. At the border people ask you about the purpose of your visit and for how long you are going to stay. Though the imaginary border is more present than the physical”* (Popovic, 2011).

Serbian respondent *I. Bandovic* (Programme manager at the European Fund for the Balkans) talks about a ghetto-feeling, a matter of internal despair.

“They created the feeling of someone who would like to travel but could not, now it is not really important anymore. This is also a source of conservatism, traditions, and different negative feelings, but it has also to do with the economic crisis. The freedom of mobility of people is important when it comes to the EU, it is not easy for a Bulgarian to go to the UK to apply for a job for example. There are still a lot of problems with the flow of people. This freedom of mobility of people is not fully reality”. “The cultural border represents the imaginary border. Urban people (West-oriented), listen to Turbo folk, instant music phenomenon, nationalistic cultural influence and the post-war is stuck in their mind. The cultural patterns are the borders” (Bandovic, 2011).

Bosnian respondent *H. Semanic* (research assistant at CENS) describes her feelings on the present image of being part of the Western Balkans as follows:

“I believe the Western Balkans in general do not enjoy a good image with other European citizens, since they tend to hold many preconceived ideas about the region (too complicated, too violent, etc.) On the one hand, many European capitals know very little about the Western Balkans, about their past/present situation, their intentions for the future, etc. It seems to me that the Western Balkans is usually associated with the existence of war criminals, mass graves, ethnic turmoil, internal disagreements, etc. On the other hand, there are some member states which either border the Western Balkans or in which there is an important diaspora (Sweden, Denmark, Italy, Austria). They usually take greater interest in the region with whom they have a shared history in some cases or in which they have a vested interest” (Semanic, 2011).

Croatian respondent *M. Zorko* disapproves the term Western Balkans:

“It is administrative invention to put somewhere countries of ex Yugoslavia (and Albania), and not to call it the Balkan because those countries disapproved it.

This kind of artificial melting pot of cultures, religions and identities took us in the 1990 in the first place. If we want to divide Balkan region on east, west, north and south – you can see that there are some parts missing. In administrative sense of way, if we talk about region that is on waiting list and will enter EU one day I could accept to be part of Western Balkans. On the other hand, I do not feel any similarity to, for instance, someone from Albania or Macedonia in sense of identity, only the fact that we are Europeans and will enter EU one day. Croatia is geopolitically on the crossroad of three great influences; all three of them shaped my identity. I can proudly say that I am one third Balkan, one third Mediterranean, and one third Central European. Still, I do not feel Western Balkans as part of my identity at all” (Zorko, 2011).

From the comments above there is obviously a common ground to be found in. The imaginary borders are experienced more strongly than the physical borders are. Due to lifted VISA-regime, people from the Western Balkans are able to travel now. Nevertheless, for the older part of the populations the Still, the mental borders keep the majority of the people stuck in the legacy of the past.

5.2.3 IMAGE OF THE BORDERS BETWEEN EU AND WESTERN BALKANS

The following theme focuses on the present image of the borders between the EU and the Western Balkans:

Serbian respondent J. Teokarević (Assistant professor at the University of Belgrade) states: *“The EU imposes the borders between the EU and Western Balkans when it invented the ‘Western Balkans’ as a political term. Neither the Balkans or the Western Balkans really existed as being ‘one’ homogeneous region (post second WW)” (Teokarević, 2011).*

Serbian respondent A. Trbovich described the situation as follows:

“There are different mental maps for many people, general public and business people. The mental map of former Yugoslavia is still present, so a lot of people in the Western Balkans see Austria and Hungary, Italy and Greece as EU-neighbours, while Romania and Bulgaria may not be seen as EU-neighbours, this will take some time. At the same time people have stopped travelling in former Yugoslavia to some extent. Some still go, but there is an increase of tourism from Serbia to Croatia and Slovenia. Generally go more to the West rather than staying in the former Yugoslavia.

Business wise there is still a lot of activity in the former Yugoslavia and in the region because of the common language, knowledge of partners and most of our trade is still within the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA) and within the former Yugoslavia. Besides, Trbovich stresses that the EU is seen as a fortress where borders become tougher rather than more open. This is because the Western Balkans needed a VISA for a long time. There are the images of long lines and humiliation, definitely the image of second class citizens. People in the Western Balkans have a lot of information about the imposed restrictions for the new members in 2004. The Western Balkan people do not just see the EU as the place where there is freedom of movement. There will be similar restrictions for Serbian citizens when they will enter the EU. Entering the EU for Serbia is (objectively) more difficult than the accession of previous 2004 and 2007 countries. It is more difficult, because EU even openly says that they made a mistake by accepting Bulgaria and Romania, who not ready at that time (2007). Besides, a mistake was with the White Schengen, providing it too early to some countries. The investment in White Schengen was more costly and it took a lot more time to enter the White Schengenlist. Of course the Western Balkans are under very serious scrutiny and there is a threat that they can get off the list. So it is objective to say that it is tougher the EU. The EU is also less attractive now that Romania and Bulgaria are there, because the EU used to have an imagine of a prosperous place and Bulgaria and Romania is not what we try to become. After all there is no mixed message of what the exactly European Union is”

According to EU-respondent (living in Hungary) J. Shattuck (President and rector Central European University), the borders between EU and Western Balkans are obvious. Shattuck emphasises that the Western Balkans should become EU-members in order to improve security and economic welfare for example. A different timetable is needed for each of the Western Balkan countries, but they should not be excluded of becoming part of the EU.

Serbian respondent I. Bandovic (Programme manager at the European Fund for the Balkans) points out:

“Before 2009 it was obvious where the border was, everyone needed a VISA. Lifting the VISA-regime was important for the people living in the Western Balkans, especially for the countries who then needed a VISA. Croatia was not a VISA country, they are free to travel. For Bosnians and Serbs it felt like a burden. Physiologically the borders were there.

For example when one is flying to Brussels and he or she has a connecting flight to Frankfurt, the police will ask for how long are that person is staying, what is the purpose of the visit is etc. This is clearly a border. One does not get this question when he or she is travelling in the region (for example to Croatia), they do not care. Now the VISA-regimes are lifted one cannot really see this, but there are still two lines, EU and NON-EU. There is still a feeling of Otherness. The second important issue are the economic borders. These borders are at this point the most important ones. The perception of EU from the perspective of the Western Balkans is that the EU means a full pocket of money, certain standards, although they do not know how people live in Poland or Bulgaria for example. There are two reasons for this. First of all there are the relatives who tell them about it, but these stories are not coming out of Bulgaria, but for example out of Germany, Netherlands, Belgium or France. In these countries the standard of living is high, compared to the standard of living in Bulgaria. In Bulgaria the average salary is less than the average salary in Serbia. So what is the meaning of being a member of the EU. On the other side, there is an EU-bubble, created by politicians. The politicians promise change, buying the political votes while selling the EU-story as an ultimate success story. After the joining the EU there will be no more problems, not only in our country, but all over the world. This is basically propaganda, since the politicians avoid the serious discussions on the EU” (Bandovic, 2011).

While taking into account the comments from above, one can say that the imaginary borders between the EU and the Western Balkans are filled with cultural patterns, created over the past years. The physical (hard) borders are strict and locatable, while soft (imaginary/mental) borders rely on the perceptions of each individual. As for the soft (imaginary) borders, these borders are stuck in people’s mind and this shows itself off in their perception of the world around them. The EU-view on the Western Balkans is (in general) a negative loaded imagination. This image is being constructed due to movements in history, but as well because of the characteristic representations of the Balkans in the West, often linked to the stereotyped image of the Balkans as another, special region of Europe. Although the Balkans are part of the European continent, they have not been recognized as equals. The impact of the hard borders between the EU and the Western Balkans in daily life is experienced while travelling to the EU, although not all respondents felt the presence of it in the same way.

5.2.4 SERBIA'S (FUTURE) EU ACCESSION

The accession of the Western Balkan countries on short term is unthinkable, but on the long run the Western Balkans may join the EU. The respondents were asked to give their opinion about why the Western Balkans, with Serbia and Croatia as examples, should enter the EU.

According to Serbian respondent A. Trbovich, EU accession would be a good thing. *“It is a success story, economies and skills, integrated market, predictable climate, makes investors more teased, more likely to invest their capital. There is a safety net! For all the reasons anyone else is part of the EU, I do not think our (Serbia’s) reasons to become a member are any different. Other than Central and Eastern Europe we need the Western Europe support to push to reforms through, both technical and financial”* (Trbovich, 2011).

Serbian respondent M. Popovic, (PhD-student at the Central European University) motivates: *“EU is not heaven on earth, but entering the EU would give economical benefits, access to bigger funds as being a member, local projects. Second benefits: provide input with neighbouring countries on political games”* (Popovic, 2011).

Croatian respondent H. Butković (research assistant at the Institute for International Relations) states that: *“The EU membership will improve credit ranking of Croatia which should increase Foreign Direct Investments. Such investments are needed for stimulation of economic growth which has sharply fallen in 2009 and is currently stagnating or showing minimal improvements. The EU membership will enable Croatia to finance part of its growth through the EU funds. As a member state Croatia will financially benefit from the EU funds. It was estimated that for every euro paid in the EU’s budget, Croatia will be able to receive three Euros from the various EU funds. As European citizens Croatian citizens will be able to study at universities of other member states under same conditions as nationals of that country and they will be able to work in the EU member states without work permits”* (Butković, 2011).

Serbian respondent V. Pavlovic clarifies that the accession of Serbia would be good for both Serbia and the EU. *We could not belong to Asia or Africa. If you take a look at former Yugoslavia, Serbia is not only the largest country in terms of population and territory. People who came to Belgrade of the isolation, they were surprised with the level of human and social capital (capacities).*

They came with prejudgetments and thought of Serbia as a lost country. I think that, especially because, pretty large Serbian community abroad (Germany for example), young educated people. For the moment they are the best export products of Serbia, because they send money to their families back home, about 4 billion Euros (high). And their presence and influence there is important” (Pavlovic, 2011).

As the results show, do the respondents favour the EU-accession of Serbia (and Croatia). Serbia and the rest of the Western Balkan countries will benefit from the advantages of the EU concerning economical and political issues among other things. For all the Western Balkan countries becoming an EU-member is the only option towards a better future.

5.2.5 IDENTITY CHANGE WESTERN BALKANS DUE TO EU-ACCESSION

One of the major goals of this thesis is to find out whether the existing borders between Europe and the Western Balkans will change due to the process of Europeanization. A couple of comments are listed below.

Serbian respondent *M. Popovic* describes that *“the physical border will change, but the imaginary border will not (even when the whole region is accepted to the EU. The flow of people will be limited (more strict), but Western Balkans may be the trouble spot of the EU” (Popovic, 2011).*

According to Croatian *M. Zorko* the negative representations and imaginary borders will continue to exist. *“There is Europe of several circles now as well as there will be in years ahead. Negative perception of Balkan region was build trough many years it cannot disappear in two or three years. Also, provisionally speaking, rest of the Balkan – already in the EU (Greece, Romania and Bulgaria) did not show that “Europeanization” have had any effects at all. Or, maybe I am being prejudicial right now. Europeanization is two way process - you should learn how to act as you belong somewhere, but to belong truly you have to be accepted from the other side” (Zorko, 2011).*

Bosnian respondent *H. Semanic* believes that the physical borders between the EU and WB will change in one way or another thanks to the process of Europeanization.

“If you take economic borders as an example, it will be easier to do business with the EU, import products to the EU market, there will be a free movement of work force, etc.

However, when it comes to the mental borders, the situation could be slightly different. For instance, people in the Western Balkans tend to think that Romania and Bulgaria are not “real” EU members due to their low standard of living, low average salaries, some political factors that contributed to their EU accession, etc. I am afraid that somewhat similar image could be associated with the Western Balkans by other EU member states, and potentially by Romania and Bulgaria themselves” (Semanic, 2011).

EU-respondent *P. van der Bloemen* (Former Second Secretary at Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Political department) stresses that *“due to the impact of Europeanization borders will change. With Croatia knocking on the EU-door, a step in the right direction is made to clean up the negative imago which surrounds the whole (Western) Balkans. Nevertheless it will be difficult to change the collective mind of the EU-population, this may take a couple of generations. Opening up the borders with the Western Balkans benefit the situation, although this is something for the long-term” (van der Bloemen, 2011).*

Serbian respondent *M. Crnobrnja*, Professor and dean at the Faculty of economics finance and administration) points at that *“Borders are being reduced, but still not as easy. The way towards EU accession does not remove the borders, but reduces the borders. When Serbia will enter, the borders will remove” (Crnobrnja, 2011).*

Out of the results can be concluded that most of the respondents think that the border will change, but at the end borders will remain to exist. The matter of border change in the future depends on the degree of EU’s capacity to accept the Western Balkans as equals.

5.2.6 BORDERS AFTER EU ACCESSION WESTERN BALKANS

In case the Western Balkans will enter the EU, to what extent do you think new (imaginary) borders will occur when Serbia (and other Western Balkan countries) enter(-s) the EU? This question is highly important, since the prospect of a better living in the Western Balkans is related to the existence of borders.

According to Serbian respondent *A. Trbovich*, it is going to continue to be West and East. *“I do not think it is going to be Central Europe and/or Balkans, we are all on the same boat.*

Everyone who entered before 2004 and everyone who entered after 2004 will continue for some time, with the exception of Iceland, which most people did not even know that it was not a member of the EU” (Trbovich, 2011).

Serbian respondent M. Popovic points out that *“the imaginary borders between old and new members will remain. When Serbia and/or other members will enter the EU they will become part of the 2004-members” (Popovic, 2011).*

Croatian respondent M. Zorko stresses that:

“Of course there will be new imaginary borders on both levels. Towards others there will be Schengen wall; these neighbouring countries will be treated as threats not as partners and they cannot expect membership or equal treatment. In mindsets they will be constructed as Others, different and far in values and identity, no matter whether we speak about east neighbours from former SSSR, or south neighbours in Mediterranean – all of these countries are still in transition of some kind, perceived as threats of some sort, and above all of that we are not talking about rich countries). This process has already started with some ideas for changing Schengen regime because of migrations from North Africa. This indicates that diamond wall, as Schengen is used to be called, is getting even stronger. This process is to be fully recognized when Western Balkans enters EU and EU gains its wholeness in territorial sense. On the other hand, new imaginary borders will be seen inside the EU as well. We already have divisions like old and new Europe, Europe of few speeds, circles, etc. We have strong successful countries, and those not so well being. We have parts of Europe that depends on Russian gas and pipelines, and parts that depend on gas from North Africa. Among all of these interests it is hard to have unified politics. As Europe is getting bigger, divisions among Europeans will also be seen” (Zorko, 2011).

Serbian respondent M. Mihaljevic (hostel owner Belgrade) believes that *“it will still not be as if we were an equal EU member, the same happened with Bulgaria or Romania for example” (Mihaljevic, 2011).*

EU respondent J. Shattuck says that *“Serbia will become part of Europe. Nowadays Serbia is de facto part of Europe, it will be formally integrated into Europe. Serbs, like newly integrated countries in the EU will consider whether the EU-identity is equally important to the Serbian identity.*

My feeling of all of this that it is a question of generations. The young generations in all these countries are more likely to think on a European-wide basis, older generations are far likely to do. Within time it may change. On the other hand, if Serbia is for some reason rejected from Europe, this will have a negative impact on the younger generation in Serbia” (Shattuck, 2011).

Overall the results show that most respondents do think that the EU-accession of Serbia will create new borders, since EU-enlargements in past have shown that new divisions were constructed. Nevertheless, it would be promising in case the EU-accession of Serbia could eliminate the present imaginary (mostly negative) borders and that this would result in building a new, positive and future-oriented image around the Western Balkans.

6. CONCLUSIONS

In the beginning of this thesis the following research question has been noted:

“How are the borders between the Western Balkans and the EU being constructed and what impact do they have on their process of Europeanization”?

In the following words the conclusions of this thesis will be set out. The researcher comes back to the research question by answering questions as: what are the borders between the EU and the Western Balkans, where are they located, what impact do they have, how do the borders intermingle, which border prevails above the other, to what extent do borders have an impact on the process of Europeanization of Serbia, how to speed up the process of Europeanization and in general give insight in the situation of the Balkans being put away as Europe’s myth and unconsciousness etc.

In combining the literature and interview results, the border constructions have been addressed and mapped. So what exactly are the key indicators that unravel the border constructions between the EU and the Western Balkans (Serbia). The words that come to my mind while thinking of a hard border between the EU and the Western Balkans are: strict, border control, purpose of visit, border crossing and boundary etc. The words that come to my mind while thinking of the soft borders between the EU and the Western Balkans are: imaginary, negative image, backward, less developed compared to EU etc.

The images of the Balkans reflect a certain cultural representation, but the cultural identity provides insight in the objective reality on this. There are multiple interpretations on the US/Them issue concerning the Balkans, making it not a clear cut story and therefore not a single answer can be given. The conclusions are not based on individuals, but on the sum of the individuals together. Each individual has its own frame of reference by which he or she creates an image from its surroundings. Since each individual relies on its own frame of reference, a great variety in perceptions and images of the border constructions between the EU and the Western Balkans was found, as shown in the empirical part of this thesis. During my research I became aware of the fact that the norms and values in the Western Balkans (i.e. Serbia) are rather similar to those in the EU, but the political systems are not just that mature to carry away with this.

It has been shown that both the imaginary and physical borders have their impact on how people perceive and experience the world around them. Since imaginary borders are mental issues, getting rid of them is something which is not possible within a short amount of time and especially not in areas as the Western Balkans, where the situation to live in is not preferable at all. In the last two decades the map of the Balkans changed, while new states were created with new borders as a result. The people living in the Western Balkans have to deal with the war legacy and face the problems which are not preventing them to shift easily concerning the mental issues. Despite the fact that people living in Serbia feel a certain kind of belonging to Europe, the image of the Balkans from an EU perspective resembles the border obstructing their chances to Europeanize. (Imaginary) borders fade away, but do not disappear.

The essence of both the imaginary- and the physical borders relies on the impact these borders have on the Europeanization of the Western Balkans. As imaginary and physical borders are being removed, the essence of Europeanization is being touched. Over the years, the Balkans have taken on a certain fantasy structure, not of the homeland, but of the underbelly of Europe or the Western Other. It is proven that the collective consciousness of the Western-Europe about the (Western) Balkans is hard to change on short term. The negative images of the Balkans are still being reproduced in the political discourses of present-day Europe, while referring to the Balkans as a different region struggling with the legacy of its complicated past. The normative status of the Western European gaze remains the central problem of the balkanizing discourse and herewith distance between EU and the Western Balkans. It is like bridging a gap between the EU and the Western Balkans in terms of economics, living, culture, not so much on norms and values, since they are pretty much equal in that respect. Imaginary borders remain (or fade out in next generations). The physical border is barrier, but after removal this barrier is gone.

Nowadays most of the EU-politicians have acknowledged that the Balkans belong to Europe, politically and geographically. In becoming EU-members the Western Balkans should be transformed from 'non-European' to 'European' countries. This will not eject the national identity of each of the Western Balkan countries, but it may change their mentality in adapting with the various European Union standards. In general, the Western Balkans are helped when politics and business will be more closely aligned with each other and ideally with the EU too.

With the right incentives from the European Union on several key areas like democratic principles, human rights, regional cooperation and the rule of law, the image of the Western Balkans may change in a positive way over generations. The individual countries themselves will enter in different times, but they all have to be given the signal that they can enter EU when they satisfy certain requirements. The timeframe in which developments take place is set on a long-term schedule and differs for each of the Western Balkan countries. This transition process will not go without difficulties, since Europeanization does not only mean meeting with the EU requirements, but also rejecting its legacy of the past, which is probably the biggest challenge to overcome. On the long-term the Western Balkans may become Europeanized, not only on formal grounds but ideally as well in terms of behaviour. Whether the collective mind of Western Europe can switch to this new united EU, without referring back to the stereotypical perceptions of the Balkans past, remains a question mark for the time being.

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APPENDIX I: INTERVIEW AGENDA

Topic: Borders between the EU and Western Balkans:

“A special focus on Serbia”

Place, date and time: _____

Interviewee: _____

Organization/institution: _____

Position held: _____

| |
|---------------|
| Questionnaire |
|---------------|

Background information:

1. What is your professional background and what are/were the major responsibilities in your present/last job?

Main points of discussion:

- Borders (both imaginary and physical) between EU and Western-Balkans (the essence of the current borders between them) and a special focus on EU and Serbia;
- Geopolitical representations of the Western Balkans (in the EU);
- Europeanization process of Serbia (and the rest of the Western Balkans);
- Impact of Europeanization on the current borders;
- EU enlargement process from a Western Balkan perspective;
- Willingness of Serbia to enter the EU;
- Future role of Serbia within the EU and Western Balkans;
- The limit of EU-enlargement.

2. What is your present image of the borders between the EU and Western Balkans?

3. What is your present image of being part of the Western Balkans?
4. What borders are influencing the relations between the EU and the Western Balkans?
5. What impact do imaginary borders have on the relations between EU and Western Balkans?
6. How do you experience the existence of borders yourself in practical sense?
7. Do you think that the existing borders between Europe and the Western Balkans will change due to the process of Europeanization? Think of the geopolitical representations of the Western Balkans in the European Union anno 2011.
8. What is/are (according to you) the major difference(-s) between the EU and Western Balkans? For example concerning identity/values etc.
9. What is the biggest challenge for Serbia (and rest of the Western Balkans) to overcome in becoming a member of the European Union?
10. Why should the Serbia (and other Western Balkans) enter the European Union?
11. What does Serbia has to offer the European Union? / What do the Western Balkans have to offer the European Union?
12. The Balkans belong to the European continent because of their geographical proximity. Do you feel European?
13. Would the accession of Serbia (and other Western Balkan countries) to the EU affect their identity?
14. To what extent do you think new (imaginary) borders will occur when Serbia (and other Western Balkan countries) enter(-s) the European Union?

15. What do you think will be the future role of Serbia within the EU and Western Balkans?

Additional question:

16. During the years the Balkans have been (represented) as a somewhat frightening and ill-defined space. What area do you consider as being the Balkans? Please draw the given map



APPENDIX 2: LIST OF RESPONDENTS

(The below given respondents have been interviewed between June 2011 - July 2011).

Bosnian respondents

Interviewee: Hana Semanic
Institution: CEU, CENS
Position held: Research Assistant

Interviewee: Ana S. Trbovich
Institution: Centre for European
Integration and Public Administration
Position held: Director

Croatian respondents

Interviewee: Hrvoje Butković
Institution: Institute for International
Relations (IMO)
Position held: Research assistant

Interviewee: Mihailo Crnobrnja
Institution: FEFA (Faculty of economics
finance and administration)
Position held: Professor and dean

Interviewee: Marta Zorko, PhD.
Institution: University of Zagreb, Faculty of
Political Science
Position held: Teaching Assistant

Interviewee: Milan Mihajlovic
Institution: Red Door Hostel
Position held: Hostel owner

Serbian respondents

Interviewee: Igor Bandovic
Institution: European Fund for the Balkans
Position held: Programme manager

Interviewee: Milos Mihaljevic
Institution: Red Door Hostel
Position held: Hostel owner

Interviewee: Dr. Jovan Teokarević
Institution: University of Belgrade, Faculty
of Political Sciences
Position held: Assistant professor

Interviewee: Milos Popovic
Institution: PhD IRES
Position held: Student-assistant

Interviewee: Vukašin Pavlović
Institution: University of Belgrade, Faculty
of Political Sciences
Position held: Vice-Dean

Interviewee: Vesna Durić
Institution: Faculty of Political Science
(FPS)
Position held: Student at FPS

EU-citizens

Interviewee: John Shattuck
Institution: Central European University
Position held: President and Rector

Interviewee: Peter van der Bloemen
Institution: Embassy of the Kingdom of the
Netherlands, Political department
Position held: Former Second Secretary