

## **Round Table 'Italy and the Balkans: The Prospects of the Path of Accession to the European Union'**

**Q&A, 11 March 2022**

*Norway has several times rejected the referenda to avoid international relations with the Western Balkans countries, how does the EU intend to mediate this situation? Above all, is this reticence common to all EU Member States?*

**Mauro Aliberti**  
**(EU Law Student)**

*Could the current situation in Ukraine potentially affect the enlargement process of the European Union into the Western Balkans area, if so, in which way?*

**Elio Annunziata**  
**(International Relations Student, Member of EUWEB Secretariat)**

*Is the enlargement process for the Western Balkans meant to be the same as the one in 2004 with all the countries entering as a group despite their differences because, when they refer to "us", they refer to us as a whole, the "Western Balkans"? And, if so, wouldn't that be dismissing the differences between us in terms of development, economy, and especially foreign policy?*

*What do you think about the "Open Balkan" initiative? Could it be effective and help the countries? Is it a project of the country leaders as lots of media present it?*

*Given the Green Deal as a big clause of the EU enlargement now, where do the Western Balkans stand?*

**Ina Muhametaj**

**(Erasmus+Student from Albania)**

*Considering the countries involved and represented in this panel have significant cultural differences among them and in comparison with other EU Member States that of course were the main cause of conflicts arisen in the past decades, which are the real efforts put forward so far to guarantee that a full EU membership will not result only in a formal compliance with economic and political benchmarks? Is there any further discussion regarding the cultural values which should be considered as a main factor for a concrete and effective Union?*

**Francesco Maria Ricciardi**

**(PhD Candidate)**

*The Balkan Route is a serious humanitarian tragedy with thousands of migrants living in very difficult conditions and suffering violence, how can this problem be solved?*

**Michelangelo Pipelnino**

**(EU Law Student)**

*Zelens'kyj, the Ukrainian president, asked to the EU for an accelerated admission process to enter the Union. But it could be right to have this solicitation met despite the Western Balkans waiting all these years and having satisfied the requested criteria?*

**Chiara Verriola**  
**(EU Law Student)**

*By taking a look at the current tight situation with Hungary and Poland, a legitimate doubt that would rise is: are Western Balkans States actually willing to accept the primacy of EU Law and, in this sense, to abide by the judgements rendered by the European Court of Justice?*

**Ivan Ingravallo**  
**(Associate Professor of International Law, University of Bari)**

*The rule of law and good governance is at the core of the accession process, but does the Economic and Investment Plan or the Western Balkans or any other economic project shift this focus? Do you think that these kinds of economic plans are an alternative to the enlargement?*

**Lidia Iannibelli**  
**(Lawyer)**