T.C. MARMARA ÜNİVERSİTESİ

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AVRUPA SİYASETİ VE ULUSLARARASI İLİŞKİLER ANABİLİM DALI

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IN THE WESTERN BALKANS:

THE MACEDONIAN CASE

Yüksek Lisans Tezi

SEDA ARPACIK

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ABSTRACT

In this study, the peacebuilding efforts of the European Union in the Western Balkans is evaluated through an analysis of the Republic of North Macedonia. The study aims to assess the extent to which the EU has been able to restore a perpetual peace in the region after the bloody years in the 1990s. In the post-conflict era, the EU initiated positive peacebuilding process in the region with a prospect of EU membership. In this regard, firstly the EU's context of the peacebuilding is analysed from the social constructivist perspective. Then, the actorness of the EU while implementing its positive peace agenda is elaborated. As a case study, the peacebuilding process in the North Macedonia is examined. It tries to find an answer to the question of to what extent the EU has been able to transform and strengthen the governance of Macedonia and establish positive relations among ethnic groups in the country. The thesis concludes that even though the EU has achieved in securing and stabilising the region to a certain degree, it is a superficial peace. Nationalism still has potential to endanger the stability of the region. The EU needs to perform more efforts to establish a permanent peace.

Keywords: European Union, Western Balkans, Peacebuilding, the Republic of North Macedonia, Social Constructivism

ÖZET

Bu çalışmada Avrupa Birliği'nin Batı Balkanlar'daki barış inşa çabaları Kuzey Makedonya konusu üzerinden değerlendirilmiştir. Çalışma, kanlı geçen 1990'lardan sonra Avrupa Birliği'nin bölgede kalıcı bir barışı tesis etmede ne derece etkili olduğunu belirlemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Savaş sonrası dönemde AB, bölge ülkelerine verdiği üyelik perspektifiyle pozitif barış inşası süreci başlatmıştır. Bu bağlamda; öncelikle Avrupa Birliği'nin barış inşa çalışmaları sosyal inşacılık perspektifinden analiz edilmektedir. Sonrasında, Batı Balkan ülkelerindeki pozitif barış inşa sürecinde Avrupa Birliği'nin ne kadar etkin bir aktör olduğu değerlendirilmiş ve Birliğin Kuzey Makedonya'daki barış inşa çabaları irdelenmiştir. Bu çalışma, AB perspektifinin, Makedonya devleti nezdinde yarattığı olumlu yöndeki değişime de atıf yapmakla kalmamış, ülkedeki farklı etnik gruplar arasındaki ilişkinin görece olarak pozitif bir yönde evirildiğini de tespit etmiştir. Çalışma, Avrupa Birliği'nin bölgede barış ve istikrarı sağlamayı başarsa da bu barışın kalıcı değil, yüzeysel olduğunu savunmakta ve barışa yönelik en büyük tehdidin milliyetçilik kaynaklı olduğunu belirtmekte, sonuç olarak Avrupa Birliği'nin kalıcı bir barış için daha fazla çaba sarf etmesi gerektiğini vurgulamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Avrupa Birliği, Batı Balkanlar, Barış İnşası, Kuzey Makedonya Cumhuriyeti, Sosyal İnşacılık

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ABBREVIATIONS

CARDS   Community Assistance for Reconstruction, Development and Stabilisation Programme

CFSP   Common Foreign and Security Policy

DAC   Development Assistant Committee

DPA   Dayton Peace Agreement

DUI   Democratic Union for Integration

EC   European Community

ECU   European Currency Unit

ESDP   European Security and Defence Policy

EU   European Union

EUAM   European Union Administration of Mostar

EUFOR ALTHEA   European Union Force Althea

EULEX   European Union Rule of Law Mission

EUPAT   European Union Police Advisory Team

EUPM   European Union Police Mission

EUPOL PROXIMA   European Union Police Mission

FYROM   Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

HLAD   High Level Accession Dialogue

IPA   Instrument for Pre-Accession

ICTY   International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia

IR   International Relations

KLA   Kosovo Liberation Army

LN   League of Nations

NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
PHARE	Poland and Hungary Assistance for the Restructuring of the Economy
SAP	Stabilisation and Association Process
SDSM	Social Democratic Union of Macedonia
OFA	Ohrid Framework Agreement
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
TEU	Treaty on European Union
USA	United States of America
UN	United Nations
VMRO-DPMNE	The Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization – Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity
WEU	Western European Union

INTRODUCTION

During the siege of Sarajevo, on 2 May 1992, a Serbian cetnik burnt Sarajevo's largest post office, and wrote "Ovo je Serbia (This is Serbia)" on its wall. Later on, someone wrote "Budalo, ovo je posta (Idiot, this is a post office)" on the same wall.[1] In the same year, a Macedonian singer Rosana Sarik-Todorovska expressed the Macedonian people's fears of war by those words, "Today we are happy and healthy, tomorrow we may not be so."[2] However, neither the sense of humour that does not want to surrender to the war nor the fearful songs could prevent the coming war. When international actors conducting peace talks in the region also failed, first Bosnia and Herzegovina and then Kosovo became stages for the bloodiest conflicts in Europe in the 20th century.

In the aftermath of the Kosovo crisis, the international community agreed on cooperation to develop a strategy for stability and growth in the region named Stability Pact.[3] The aim was to replace the previous crisis response policies, which failed, with a comprehensive, long-term conflict prevention strategy. Although initiated by the European Union (EU), the Stability Pact was not an EU instrument. But the EU was determined to play a more active role for the sake of the security of the region and Europe. So, the EU leaders agreed that offering the prospect of membership and integrating the region with the Union is the best way for stability. They initiated Stabilisation and Association Process to move the region from security matters, to accession by using different instruments such as contractual relations, financial instruments and regional cooperation.[4]

Since then, the EU's agenda has moved from "one dominated by security issues to one of reconciliation and transformation of societies" (actions linked to positive peace building).[5]

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[1] "Ovo je pošta, budalo!" Aktivistice Inicijative mladih za ljudska prava obilježile 2. Maj", 2015, https://www.tacno.net/sarajevo/ovo-je-posta-budalo-aktivistice-inicijative-mladih-za-ljudska-prava-obiljezile-2-maj/?fbclid=IwAR0UTu6mxhLG8T82mbW4d03Thvva9nNfWr6gOLgeGwAIlvqz_eKbHqI3KDg (29.04.2020), **quoted in** Sen, B. , "Budala, Burası Postane! (Budalo, Ovo je Pošta)", *Birikim Magazine*, 2016, https://www.birikimdergisi.com/guncel/7970/budala-burasi-postane-budalo-ovo-je-po%C5%A1ta (29.04.2020)

[2] Phillips, J. , **Macedonia, Warlords & Rebels in the Balkans**, United States: Yale University Press, 2004

[3] Blockmans, S. , "Tough Love: The European Union's Relations with the Western Balkans", PhD Thesis, University of Amsterdam, 2007

[4] Skara, G. , "The Role of the EU as a Peacebuilder in the Western Balkans", *Romanian Journal of European Affairs*, 2014, Vol. 14, No. 4, pp.26-43

[5] European Parliament, "Peace and Security in 2018, An evaluation of EU peacebuilding in the Western Balkans", 2018, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/621816/EPRS_STU(2018)621816_EN.pdf (04.03.2020)

So, the EU gave a credible accession perspective in Thessaloniki Summit in 2003 and it became the key driver of transformation in the region.[6] In other words, the accession of Western Balkan countries to the EU, has become the principal component of the EU's agenda for peace.[7]

In the light of these developments, the research problem of the present study is whether the EU has been effective or not in implementing its positive peace agenda in the Western Balkans. However, in order to narrow down the scope of the thesis, the Republic of North Macedonia[8] is selected as the case study. There are two reasons for choosing Macedonia. The first one is the geo-political importance of the country. Macedonia has been the main cause of discomfort and conflict for the Balkan states since 1878.[9] Nearly all the Balkan countries maintained their domination because of the country's demographic structure. In the late 19th century, the existence of the Ottoman state in Macedonia created a balance against the possibility of conflict. [10] In the 20th century, in order to prevent irredentist tendencies, the Socialist Yugoslav administration, first introduced Macedonia as a separate political-territorial entity, then promoted the Macedonian national identity, and even created it according to some.[11] In the 21st century, the EU specifically put emphasis on Macedonia. Especially after the failure of Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) in Bosnia and Kosovo, the EU deployed military and police operations in the country.

The second reason is my personal experience. During my undergraduate study, I lived in Macedonia for four years. I studied with Albanians and stayed with people from different ethnic groups in a dormitory. In fact, the university, which I have attended, was founded for specific reasons. Following the adoption of the law in Macedonia, which allowed the founding of universities in Albanian language, it was founded by international donors with the initiative of OSCE. It was regarded as a model for multi-ethnic, multi-lingual higher education in the

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[6] European Commission, "A credible enlargement perspective for and enhanced EU engagement with the Western Balkans", https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/communication-credible-enlargement-perspective-western-balkans_en.pdf (02.04.2020)

[7] Ibid.

[8] As a result of a dispute with Greece over the name "Macedonia", Macedonia could not use its constitutional name 'Republic of Macedonia' for a long time. Instead, it was admitted under the provisional description the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. In June 2018, Macedonia and Greece resolved the conflict with an agreement that the country should rename itself "Republic of North Macedonia". This renaming came into effect in February 2019. The name "Macedonia" in short will be used in this study.

[9] Jelavich, B. , **History of the Balkans: Twentieth Century**, Cambridge University Press, 1999

[10] Gülboy, B. S. , "Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nın Başlangıcını Balkanlar Üzerinden Düşünmek", Okay, Y. and Babalı, T. (ed.), **Türkiye-Makedonya İlişkileri**, İstanbul: Doğu Kitabevi, 2012

[11] Bora, T. , **Milliyetçiliğin Provokasyonu Yugoslavya**, İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2018

South East Europe.[12] The most critical issue was the place of the campus. The university opened its campus in Tetovo, in October 2001 where ethnic conflicts occurred most intensely. So, I personally witnessed how the relation between ethnic groups was fragile and how much they were longing for a stable peace.

In 2001, when the ethnic clashes took place between Macedonians and Albanians in Macedonia, we may say that the EU played a key role in resolving the crisis and reached a kind of success compared to its previous experiences in the Balkans. After launching military and police operations in Macedonia, the EU granted candidate status to the country in 2005. However, the Greek veto of Macedonia's accession to NATO and EU and the nationalist policies of the ruling party VMRO-DPMNE brought the integration process to a stand-still.

In 2015, the country suffered from the worst political crisis since 2001 and came to the brink of civil war again. In order to solve the internal and external crises and bring the country back on its Euro-Atlantic path, the EU representatives again played an important role as the main mediators between the parties in the country and managed to sign Przino Agreement and then Prespa Agreement.[13] However, the effectiveness of the EU as a peacebuilder is still a question not only in Macedonia but also in the whole region. So, the main aim of this study is to examine the actorness of the EU in the Western Balkans and particularly in the Republic of North Macedonia within the context of peacebuilding efforts. In that regard, the study will be an in-depth examination of the EU's efforts using the qualitative data generated from the fieldwork carried out in autumn 2019.

The main argument of the thesis is that the European Union's efforts in the conflict-settlement can be assayed as rather successful, such as in 2001 ethnic crisis or 2015 political crisis in Macedonia. Nonetheless, while the enlargement policy is one of the most effective tools of the EU, regarding peace building, the hesitance in this enlargement narrative damages the Community's credibility and actorness in the region and particularly in Macedonia. It is true that the EU is helping the countries financially and technically for the reforms which are essential for positive peace. But nationalism, which still has potential to endanger the region's

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[12] South East European University, "History of SEEU", https://www.seeu.edu.mk/en/about/history (01.05.2020)
[13] Przino Agreement, http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_STATEMENT-15-5372_en.htm (01.02.2019)

stability, has not been prevented sufficiently. Although the EU has achieved establishing peace in the political arena to a certain extent, it is not a peace made at the base of society.

Theoretical framework

The study follows the social constructivist theory while examining the performance of the EU regarding its peacebuilding efforts in Western Balkans. According to Alexander Wendt, the father of social constructivism, shared ideas determine the structures of human association rather than material forces. Also, those ideas construct the identities and interests of actors. It is not given by nature.[14] The EU constituted its foreign policy towards the Central and Eastern Europe and Western Balkan countries mostly on its soft power (by diffusing its basic ideas, norms and values) rather than using material assets to prevent war. On the other hand, social constructivism defines community-based variables such as identity, norm, gender, migration in the context of security studies.[15] According to Wendt, the main factor affecting the conflict and cooperation decisions of states –the state behaviour- is determined by actors' conceptions of their own identities.[16]

On the other hand, the Copenhagen School also links security with the question of identity. According to the Copenhagen School scholars, the national and cultural symbols might become a defensive measure for a group identity.[17] As we witnessed in the Western Balkan states, identity can easily become an issue of security. It could be as a result of a separatist declaration of a political party leader or an attitude of a Macedonian police towards an Albanian. Or Greek society might perceive giant statues of Alexander the Great built in Macedonia, over which both Greece and Macedonia claims ownership, as a threat to their identity.

Methodology

The methodology used for the present study is a qualitative one whose data collection techniques are mainly semi-structured in-depth interviews, and observation. Qualitative research refers to data collection and analysis strategies relying upon the collection and analysis

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[14] Wendt, A. , **Social Theory of International Politics**, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 1999

[15] Tüysüzoğlu, G., "Political Scenery of the Balkans Within the Context of the Dichotomy of Conflict and Cooperation", *DergiPark Akademik*, 2012, Vol. 42, No.2, pp.83-110. http://dergipark.gov.tr/download/article-file/422081 (10.01.2020).

[16] Roe, P. , **Ethnic Violence and the Societal Security Dilemma,** London and New York: Routledge, 2005, pp.12

[17] Waever, O. , "Societal Security: the Concept", Waever, O. , Buzan, B. , Kelstrup, M. and Lemaitre, P. (ed.), **Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe**, United Kingdom: Pinter Publishers, 1993, pp. 17-40

of non-numeric data.[18] Qualitative research has strong theoretical foundations based on various disciplines such as sociology, anthropology or psychology and the aim is trying to understand human behaviour in its environment.[19]

Qualitative methodology is used in order to conduct in-depth studies of particular events, phenomena, regions, countries, organizations, or individuals. While conducting the study, researchers commonly generate theoretical propositions out of their empirical observations.[20] I have chosen the qualitative research method because my research was about the effects of peacebuilding efforts of the EU and I needed data from the field. I had to talk to people to get the in-depth knowledge and observe the political and social life in the country, also the relations between ethnic groups. So, the study mostly relies on semi-structured in-depth interviews, and observation notes as primary sources and also as secondary sources, it is based on official documents and scholarly literature.

For the interviews, a small number of people were taken as a sampling unit from three major ethnic groups living in the country, namely Macedonian, Albanian and Turkish people. I had conducted semi-structured interviews consisting of open-ended questions. I can say that, even though I asked the same questions to every ethnic group, both my and the contact person's identities affected the answers. While I got concise and clear answers from Albanian and Turkish people, Macedonians, especially when answering questions which touched on Macedonian nationalism, were more hesitant. Due to budget and time constraints, I did not have the chance to interview other locally relevant parties who may have role in the peacebuilding process such as the Albanian party leaders, non-governmental organization members and opinion leaders. I used a voice recorder while conducting interviews. The interviews took place either in the houses, or in cafes or in offices. After finishing the interviews, I decoded the voice recordings and extracted the main codes from the transcripts of the interviews. According to the codes which made up the main themes, I arranged the data. In this way, I was able to analyse the data I obtained from the field in a regular way. In addition to the interviews, the data and photos I obtained as a participant observer are included in this study.[21] As secondary sources, official documents and scholarly literature are used in the present study. For the literature

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[18] Lamont, C., **Research Methods in International Relations**, United States: Sage Publications, 2015
[19] Yıldırım, A. and Simsek, H. , **Sosyal Bilimlerde Nitel Araştırma Yöntemleri**, Seçkin Yayınları, 2018
[20] Lamont, pp. 78
[21] The photos taken by the author for this study are in the Appendix.

review, mostly the articles on the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), its peacebuilding efforts in the Western Balkans, particularly in Macedonia have been taken into account. The European Commission reports, government documents such as Przino Agreement, the declarations of political leaders and the EU representatives and news reports were also analysed.

Outline of the Study

The study is composed of three chapters. In the first chapter, theoretical framework of the thesis will be presented. Since the peacebuilding efforts of the European Union will be analysed from a social constructivist perspective, firstly, the historical development of constructivism and its basic tenets will be focused on. Then, the contributions of social constructivism to the European integration and the integration in the Western Balkans will be analysed. Also, the contributions of Copenhagen School to the security issue in the Western Balkans will be elaborated. Lastly, the concepts of peace, peacebuilding, negative and positive peace in the EU context will be defined.

The second chapter will focus on the EU's peacebuilding policies in the Western Balkan states. After giving brief information about the policies and instruments of the EU, it will elaborate the enlargement policy as a peacebuilding tool. The question of whether the Union is effective or not while trying to solve the long-standing disputes such as Kosovo-Serbia border dispute and establish peace in the region is tried to be answered.

In the third chapter, the efforts of the EU to achieve positive peace in North Macedonia will be examined based on the data generated from the observations and interviews made within the scope of qualitative research. First, the peaceful position taken by Macedonia during the disintegration of Yugoslavia will be discussed, and then the pluses and minuses of Ohrid Framework Agreement, signed after the ethnic crisis that erupted in 2001, will be briefly analysed. Along with the Ohrid Agreement, how the country has progressed in the EU integration process, the factors affecting the process and the reflection of the integration process on the relations between ethnic groups will be evaluated.

1. SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM AND PEACEBUILDING EFFORTS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

The focus of the chapter is the theoretical framework of the thesis. Through applying social constructivist approach, I will analyse the peacebuilding efforts of the European Union in the Western Balkans. Firstly, I will introduce the historical development of constructivism and concentrate on its basic tenets. Then, the contributions of social constructivism to the European integration and the integration in the Western Balkans will be analysed. The contributions of Copenhagen School to the security issue in Western Balkans will be elaborated, as well. At the end of the chapter, the concepts of peace, peacebuilding, negative and positive peace will be defined.

1.1. Social Constructivism

The League of the Communists of Yugoslavia adopted a program named "Yugoslavia's Way" in 1958 and tried to find a third way in the current international system by guaranteeing the full equality of all nationalities and minorities in the federation. The program proposed Yugoslav Socialist Patriotism which is not contrary to national consciousness but critical for the unity of Yugoslavia.[22] After the dissolution of Yugoslavia, this third way, the Yugoslavia's way also collapsed. The region witnessed the bloodiest days of human history with the awakening of nationalism. At the end, nations at war had to sign peace treaties under the leadership of NATO, UN and EU. Heavily criticized EU because of its passive stance in the war of Bosnia had to change its regional policy after Kosovo war, preparing to rebuild the region and establish a permanent state of peace and stability. To achieve this goal, the EU used one of its most effective tools, the enlargement policy.

Theories such as neorealism, neoliberalism and social constructivism have been used in explaining Balkan conflicts and the peacebuilding policies of international organizations in the region. It is possible to explain the issues of trust in the Balkan region with the security dilemma

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[22] Pribechevich, S. , **Yugoslavia's Way, The Program of the League of the Communists of Yugoslavia**, New York: All Nations Press, 1958.

of neorealism. We can also explain the existence of military power during peace operations in the same fashion, but the neorealist theory fails to explain the process of cooperation in the region afterwards.[23]

Neoliberalism's statement that even in anarchy, when faced with absolute gain, cooperation is possible, helps us explain the cooperation in the Balkan region but both theories neglect to answer the most vital problem of them all, the identity problem. In that regard, social constructivism, as an identity-based theory, is the most suitable theory while examining the conflicts in the Western Balkans and the efforts of European Union in transforming the region through its peacebuilding policies.[24]

Social constructivism focuses on the notion of shared ideas instead of material forces which defines the normative power of the European Union. The EU uses its norms and values known as the Copenhagen criteria while reconstructing the states and building peace in the Western Balkans. On the other hand, constructivism identifies social variables such as identity, norms, migration in the context of security studies which exactly defines the identity-security nexus in the Western Balkans.

1.1.1. The Historical Development of Social Constructivism

Social constructivism, which is debated to this day about it being a theory or not, attained an important place within International Relations (IR) discipline after 1980's. But constructivism has deeper roots. It is an old methodology which has the origins in 18th century. Italian philosopher Giambattista Vico argues that the nature was made by God and history was made by humans. History being very relevant to human affairs, was made by men and women and it is not foreign to us.[25]

Immanuel Kant is another philosophical pioneer of social constructivism. He argues that what people learn about their world will always be filtered through their minds thus always be subjective.[26] Another German philosopher Max Weber also points out that our social construct is different from our natural physical world. He argues that the most important feature of the

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[23] Tüysüzoğlu, G. , "Political Scenery of the Balkans Within the Context of the Dichotomy of Conflict and Cooperation", *DergiPark Akademik*, 2012, Vol. 42, No.2, pp.83-110. http://dergipark.gov.tr/download/article-file/422081 (10.01.2020).
[24] Ibid.
[25] Pompa, L., Vico**: Selected Writings**, Cambridge University Press, 1982.
[26] Jackson, R. and Sorensen, G., **Introduction to International Relations, Theories and Approaches**, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2013.

sociological knowledge is its subjective nature to which social constructivists also refer as the subjectivity of meaning.[27]

Social constructivist scholars focus on the social construction of the reality. According to constructivist, human and international relationships do not include material conditions. They claim that every aspect of the social world around us is made by us and it is not inherent. Everything in our world according to this fact is again made by us.[28]

If we want to identify social constructivism in the International Relations discipline, we have to look at the period after the end of the Cold War. The theories such as realism or neorealism fall behind in defining the international system after the Cold War. At that point, constructivist scholars introduce alternative explanations which the other theories neglect. They refer to ideas, identities and norms while explaining state behaviours and challenge both the material and rational perceptions. Their arguments stand neither on the materialist or normative side but seizes the middle ground between them.[29]

An American scholar, Nicholas Onuf introduces the label of constructivism to International Relations discipline in 1989 with his work "World of Our Making".[30] In his book, he claims that he is reconstructing the international relations discipline by a philosophical position which he calls constructivism.[31] He argues that people always construct or constitute social reality and defines politics as a social activity.[32]

In 1997, a Uruguayan professor of political science Emanuel Adler also points the importance of the constructivism for the study of International Relations and writes in his article "Seizing the Middle Ground: Constructivism in World Politics" as follows:

"Constructivism's importance and its added value for the study of International Relations lie mainly its emphasis on ontological reality of intersubjective knowledge

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[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Ruggie, J. , G. , "What Makes the World Hang Together? Neo-Utilitarianism and the Social Constructivist Challenge", International Organization at Fifty: Exploration and Contestation in the Study of World Politics. 1998, Vol. 52, No. 4, pp. 855-885. http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0020-8183%28199823%2952%3A4%3C855%3AWMTWHT%3E2.0.CO%3B2-8 (08.05.2020).

[31] Onuf, N. G. , **World of Our Making: Rules and Rule in Social Theory and International Relations**, London and New York: Routledge, 2013

[32] Ibid.

and on the epistemological and methodological implications of this reality. Constructivists believe that International Relations consist primarily of social facts."[33]

Social Constructivism becomes popular in the IR realm especially among American scholars in the 1990's. In 1999, an American political scientist Alexander Wendt aims to establish a social theory for the international relations discipline by criticizing neorealism in his book "Social Theory of International Politics".[34] He argues that the end of Cold war left the scholars defenceless and accelerated the resurgence of the constructivist thinking about international politics.[35] According to Wendt, these difficulties stem from IR's materialist and individualist orientation. He argues that "Once we have properly separated material forces and ideas, we can see that the former explain relatively little in social life. Power and interest are important factors in international life, but since their effects are a function of culturally constituted ideas the latter should be our standing point."[36]

Social constructivism becomes one of the most important approaches when it comes to understanding and analysing international relationships and it is almost impossible not to refer to social constructivism when talking about foreign policy, international organizations, identity, anarchy and global civil society.[37] English school, which anticipates constructivist concerns and focuses on the social context of IR, also plays a role in promoting constructivism in the IR studies.[38]

Actually, there is a debate about whether social constructivism is an approach or theory. According to Onuf, constructivism is not only a theory but also a way to study social relations and it is a frame in which we can unite different theories.[39]

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[33] Adler, E. , "Seizing the Middle Ground: : Constructivism in World Politics", *European Journal of International Relations*, London: Sage Publication, 1997, Vol. 3, No.3, pp. 319-363.
https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1354066197003003003 (08.05.2020).
[34] Wendt, A. , **Social Theory of International Politics**, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Ibid.
[37] Büyüktanır, D. , "Toplumsal İnşacı Yaklaşım ve Avrupa Bütünleşmesinin Açıklanmasına Katkıları (Social Constructivism and Its Contributions to Explain the European Integration) " , *Ankara Avrupa Çalışmaları Dergisi (Ankara Review of European Studies)*. 2015, Vol. 14, No. 2, pp. 1-24
[38] Ulusoy, H. , "Revisiting Security Communities After the Cold War: The Constructivist Perspective", Center for Strategic Research, 2003
[39] Onuf, N. G. , **World of Our Making: Rules and Rule in Social Theory and International Relations**, London and New York: Routledge, 2013

Adler argues that social constructivism, unlike realism or liberalism, is not a political theory. Rather it is social theory on which constructivist theories of international politics are based. Constructivism occupies the middle ground between rationalist approaches and interpretive approaches. [40]

Austrian political scientist John Gerard Ruggie describes constructivism as "human consciousness and its role in international life." He argues that social constructivism remains more of a philosophically and theoretically informed perspective on and approach to the empirical study of international relations. [41]

Alexander Wendt defends the moderate version of constructivism that draws especially on structurationist and symbolic interactionist sociology. According to Wendt, social constructivism is not a theory of international politics and the international system is a hard case for constructivism on both social and construction counts.[42]

According to Jeffrey Checkel, an American academic, constructivists are in between rational choice theorists and post-modern writers and constructivism is widening the theory frame of international relationships. Constructivism enables the reassessment of neo-realism and neoliberalism ideas such as identity and interest in international politics.[43]

Martha Finnemore, an American constructivist scholar of International Relations and Kathryn Sikkink, a scholar of international relations, describe constructivism as an approach to social analysis that deals with the role of human consciousness in social life. They argue that constructivism makes claims about the nature of social life and social change as a social theory, but it does not make any particular claims about the content of social structures. Besides constructivism cannot produce specific predictions about political outcomes which would be tested in social science research.[44]

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[40] Adler, pp. 323
[41] Ruggie, pp. 856
[42] Wendt, **Social Theory of International Politics**, pp. 1
[43] Checkel, J. , "The Constructivist Turn in International Relations Theory", *World Politics*, 1998, Vol. 50, No. 2, pp. 324-348 https://www.jstor.org/stable/25054040?seq=1 (08.05.2020)
[44] Finnemore, M. and Sikkink, K. , "Taking Stock: The Constructivist Research Program in International Relations and Comparative Politics", *Annual Review of Political Science*, 2001, Vol. 4, No. 1, pp. 391-416 https://www.annualreviews.org/doi/full/10.1146/annurev.polisci.4.1.391 (08.05.2020)

1.1.2. Core Assumptions of Social Constructivism

Although there are various versions of constructivism, they share common concerns about how the social world around us is constructed. They define the world, so the international system and our knowledge about the world, as socially constructed. Onuf defines it in his book "Constructivism, A User's Manual" as "people make society end society makes people, which is a continuous, two-way process". [45]

According to constructivists, norms and ideas shared among agents are as important as the material world. They argue that agents and structures influence and constitute each other in a process. Constructivist refers agents as people who act on behalf of other people. [46] The politics of the states, which are the agents of international system, are also shaped through its perceptions about the other states. [47]

Another scholar who draws attention to the role of the norms and ideas, is Ruggie. He claims that "there is growing empirical evidence that normative factors in addition to states' identities shape their interests, or their behaviour directly. Some of these factors may be international in origin, others domestic." [48]

Another central issue of constructivism is the issue of identities and interests. Alexander Wendt argues that "the structures of human association are determined primarily by shared ideas rather than material forces, and that the identities and interests of purposive actors are constructed by these shared ideas rather than given by nature". [49]

Social constructivism, differentiating from realism and neo-realism, identifies community-based variables such as identity, norm, gender, migration in the context of security studies.[50] Since according to constructivism, social memory and perceptions have a great role on constructing international relations.[51] On the other hand, Wendt argues that the state decisions such as the conflict and cooperation decisions, are determined by the actors'

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[45] Onuf, N., "Constructivism, A User's Manual" , **International Relations in a Constructed World**, Kubalkova, V. , (ed.), Newyork: Routledge, 1998, pp.58-78.
[46] Ibid.
[47] Wendt, A., "On Constitution and Causation in International Relations", *Review of International Studies*, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press. 1998, Vol. 24, No. 2, pp. 101-117
[48] Ruggie, pp.856
[49] Wendt, **Social Theory of International Politics**, pp.1
[50] Tüysüzoğlu, pp.101.
[51] Frederking, B. , "Constructing Post-Cold War Collective Security", *The American Political Science Review*, 2003, Vol. 97, No. 3, pp. 363-378

conceptions of their own identities.[52] According to social constructivism, identities are constituted depending on international communication and interaction. So, adopting shared values extinguishes the possibility of identity-based conflicts. [53]

1.1.3. Its Contributions in Explaining the European Integration in the Western Balkans

The basic arguments of social constructivism such as the role of norms and identity in the social construction of international system cause the attention of the scholars in the European studies in the 1990s. The theories of European integration like federalism or functionalism remained incapable of defining the more complex structure of the European Union. While not rejecting the rational perspective of the integration, the scholars started to focus more on the social construction of issues such as identity or security.

The Social Constructivism gains popularity in the European studies with a publication in 1999. A special chapter named "Social Construction of Europe" in the *Journal of European Public Policy* forms the basis for further studies in this field. In that study, Christiansen, Jorgensen and Wiener criticize the constructivist scholars for not paying systematic attention to the construction of Europe and refer to the transformative power of European integration on the state system and its units. They argue that as well as integration itself, the agents' identity and their interests and behaviours have changed over the years. They theorize this aspect of change with constructivist perspective and note how the other integration theories neglect the process of identity formation. [54]

After then, constructivism takes an important place among the other substantive theories of European integration such as liberal intergovernmentalism or neofunctionalism. But some scholars like Thommas Risse argue that the social constructivism does not make any substantive claims about the European integration. According to Risse, the constructivist perspective may only complement rather than substitute any of integration theories. He argues that constructivist may refer to critical role of interstate negotiations such as intergovernmentalists or they might

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[52] Roe, P. , **Ethnic Violence and the Societal Security Dilemma,** London and New York: Routledge, 2005, pp.12
[53] Tüysüzoğlu, pp. 100
[54] Wiener, A., Jørgensen, K. E. and Christiansen, T. (ed.), **The Social Construction of Europe**, London: Sage Publications, 2001.

join the neofunctionalism readings and focus on the spill over effects and the role of supranational institutions. [55]

Also, in his study "Constructivist Approach to European Studies", Jeffrey T. Checkel defines constructivism in the European studies as a particular analytical orientation and argues that he is not interested in developing a specific constructivist theory of integration which can compete with intergovernmentalism or neofunctionalism. He focuses on three types of constructivist scholarships, their generic features and how they are being applied to European Union. [56] According to Checkel, "conventional constructivism examines the role of roles and identity in shaping international political outcomes. Interpretative constructivism explores the role of the language in mediating and constructing social reality. Radical constructivists emphasize the discourse-theoretical methods focusing on power and language."[57]

The enlargement policy of the European Union, especially the membership of Central and Eastern European countries sets a good example for social construction analyses in the European integration. The universal values and fundamental rules, accepted by the EU in the Copenhagen Summit in 1993, creates a common identity and sharing and a belonging for these countries.[58]

On the other hand, some can argue that social constructivism features the EU's identity and its role in the enlargement policy of the Union but it ignores the rational perspective, in other words, the economic or political interests of the member states while taking enlargement decisions. Also, social constructivism overlooks the disagreements of the member states during the actual negotiations.[59] In this regard, the attitude of France and Netherlands during the membership negotiations of North Macedonia and Albania might be questioned. Alexander Wendt also admits the limits of social constructivism while explaining the international system.

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[55] Risse, T. "Social Constructivism and European Integration" , Wiener, A. , Börzel, T. and Risse, T. (ed), **European Integration Theory**, Oxford University Press, 2018.

[56] Checkel, J. T. "Constructivist Approach to European Integration", Center for European Studies, University of Oslo, 2006, https://www.sv.uio.no/arena/english/research/publications/arena-working-papers/2001-2010/2006/wp06_06.pdf (09.04.2020).

[57] Ibid.

[58] Yılmaz, S. , A. , "Political Identitiy Building in the EU: A Constructivist Approach", Journal of Academic Inquiries, 2014, Vol. 9, No. 1, pp. 47-71 http://static.dergipark.org.tr/article-download/imported/5000046122/5000043432.pdf? (09.04.2020).

[59] Sedelmeier, U., **Constructing the Path to Eastern Enlargement: The Uneven Policy Impact of EU Identity**, Manchester University Press, 2005.

He argues that on the social side, while norms and law govern domestic politics, self-interest and coercion seem to rule the international politics. [60]

In the press release of the European Commission in 2018, the EU itself defines the enlargement process for Western Balkans as an investment in peace and declares as follows:

"The prospect of EU membership has a powerful transformative effect on the partners in this process, embedding positive, democratic, political, economic and societal change". [61]

What constructivism introduces here is the role that the basic values and norms of European Union, which are known as Copenhagen criteria and a condition for membership, shape the actors' identities and interests. The European integration perspective in the Western Balkans has also been a key strategy for reconstructing the states and societies after the conflicts. [62]

As an identity and social perceptions based theory, social constructivism is an important reference regarding the definition of the security issue in the region due to the fact that the basic reason of the conflicts in the Western Balkans is the feelings of hostility which are shaped by socially constructed ideas.[63]

Wendt refers to the security dilemma and defines it as a social structure. He argues that "A security dilemma is composed of intersubjective understandings in which states are distrustful that they make worst-case assumptions about each other intention."[64]

The cooperative or conflictual attitude of states in the Western Balkans are also constituted by the intersubjective understandings. For instance, the name dispute between Greece and North Macedonia has been shaped by intersubjective understandings. When the North Macedonians used the name of Alexander the Great for its airport or the Virginia Sun in

[60] Wendt, A. , **Social Theory of International Politics**, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
[61] The European Commission, "EU Enlargement Package 2018", 2018
https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/news_corner/news/enlargement-package-commission-publishes-reports-western-balkans-partners-and_en (09.05.2020)
[62] The European Parliament, "An evaluation of EU Peacebuilding in the Western Balkans", 2018,
 http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/620207/EPRS_STU(2018)620207_EN.pdf (06.04.2020)
[63] Tüysüzoğlu, pp.101
[64] Baylis, J. , Smith, S. And Owens, P. , **The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations,** New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.

its flag, Greece perceived this as a threat to its national sovereignty and vetoed Macedonia's membership to the EU and NATO for years.

1.2. The Copenhagen School and Societal Security

The Copenhagen School helps us define the conflicts and political crises in the Western Balkans with its social constructivism-based concept "securitization". On the other hand, "de-securitization" can offer the best options to evaluate the EU integration in the Western Balkans regarding peacebuilding policies which is the subject of this study.

The Copenhagen School of security studies is an academic school that employs a critical approach to security studies. Ole Waever, Barry Buzan and Jaap de Wilde are well-known scholars of the school. At the core of the school is the way in which many different types of security issues interact with domestic politics. [65]

Similar to the Social Constructivism, the Copenhagen School argues that security is intersubjective and socially constructed.[66] Waever defines security as "the move that take politics beyond the established rules of the game and frames the issue either as a special kind of politics or above politics". Securitization thus can be seen as a more extreme version of politicization. [67]

Copenhagen School scholars think that "any public issue can range from a nonpoliticized issue through politicized to a securitized one. When someone presents an issue as an existential threat, that issue is securitized, and it justifies emergency actions outside of political procedure." [68] Also, they argue that securitization has to be understood as an essentially intersubjective process. To prove the intersubjectivity of the process, they give an example of "tanks crossing the border". They argue that when we talk about tanks crossing the border some people will consider those tanks as hostile tanks, but a foreign tank could also be a part of peacekeeping force.[69]

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[65] Romaniuk, S. , N. , "Copenhagen School", Arrigo, B. (ed.) , **The SAGE Encyclopedia of Surveillance, Security and Privacy**, SAGE Publications, 2018

[66] Lamovska, S. , "Security is What the State Makes of It, The Greece Macedonia Name Dispute", Master of Arts Thesis, Central European University, Department of International Relations European Studies, 2012.

[67] Waever, O. , Buzan, B. , Wilde, J. , **Security, A New Framework for Analysis**, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998

[68] Ibid.

[69] Ibid.

Copenhagen School's securitization can be applied to many cases of insecurity throughout the Balkan region. A minority group may feel threatened by the policies of a state before securitization of these policies takes place. The threats might even be the cause behind mobilisation and transformation of these groups into ethnopolitical groups. Vojvodina Hungarians, Turks of Bulgaria and the Albanian Greeks might be the perfect examples. [70]

The rising ethnic conflicts not just in the former Yugoslavia, but also in various parts of the post-Soviet world after the Cold war, caused the rise of 'societal security' concept within the security studies. [71] According to Ole Waever, the relevant category in security studies has not been found in order to analyse the mentioned ethnic conflicts, and those conflicts conditioned the exploration of the concept 'societal security' by the Copenhagen School.[72] It was introduced by Barry Buzan in 1991 and redefined by the other Copenhagen School scholars Ole Waever, Morten Kelstrup and Pierre Lemaitre in *Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe*.[73] Waever argues that "The organizing concept in the societal sector is identity. Societal insecurity exists when communities of whatever kind define a development or potentiality as a threat to their survival as a community."[74] He differentiates between the state and societal security and claims that while survival for a state is its sovereignty, survival for a society is a question of identity. [75]

According to Weaver, different societies have different weak points. For instance, the dominant nations (e.g. Latvia or Macedonia) controlling a state or the nations controlling the government by suppressing the majority (e.g. Serbs in Kosovo until 1999) might be sensitive about the increase in the rival population or their rising fertility rate (e.g. Russians in Latvia, Albanians in Macedonia and Kosovo).[76]

Weaver also argues that "upholding the national, cultural symbols and dresses are one of the defensive measures of the societal security for the perseverance of the group identity".[77]

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[70] Tzifakis, N. , "Securitization and Desecuritization Dynamics in South-Eastern Europe", PhD Thesis, Department of Politics and International Relations, Lanchester University, 2002.
[71] Waever, O. , "The Changing Agenda of Societal Security", Brauch, H. G. et al. (ed.), **Globalization and Environmental Challenges**, Springer, 2008, pp.581-594
[72] Ibid. pp. 582
[73] Waever, O. , Buzan, B. , Kelstrup, M. and Lemaitre, P. , **Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe**, Pinter Publishers, 1993
[74] Waever, "The Changing Agenda of Societal Security", pp.582
[75] Waever, **Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe**, pp. 189
[76] Waever, "The Changing Agenda of Societal Security", pp.583.
[77] Ibid.

In the case of the former republics of Yugoslavia, which is the central concern of this study, identity can easily become an issue of security. It could be in the result of a separatist declaration of a political party leader or an attitude of a Macedonian police towards an Albanian. Especially the antiquation policies, e.g. building the statues of nationalist Macedonian figures by the right-wing ruling party VMRO-DPMNE in the city centre, may cause reactions of Albanian minorities.

1.3. Peace and Peacebuilding: The Conceptual Overview

The integration of Western Balkan countries to the EU seems the best tool for de-securitization of the region. The European Union which was established to make any war between Germany and France not merely unthinkable, but materially impossible as laid down by the Schuman Declaration, failed to secure the end of military conflict and bloodshed in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo. After the conflicts ended, the EU, with other international organizations, was engaged in the stabilisation and state-building processes of the region to establish permanent peace. [78]

Over the past two decades, the EU's policy for the region has moved from an agenda dominated by security issues to one of positive peace building. The EU focused on the perspective of the Western Balkan states' accession which has become the principal component of the EU's agenda for peace. The EU itself defines the enlargement process as an investment in peace and security in Europe. But before proceeding with the positive peace agenda of the Union, we have to focus on the meanings of the term's peace and peacebuilding and then the EU's context of peacebuilding. [79]

1.3.1. The Meanings of Peace

Literally, the word 'peace' is derived from the Latin Word 'pax', which means a pact, a control or an agreement to end war or any dispute and conflict between two people, two nations or two antagonistic groups of people.

Thomas Hobbes defines peace as the absence of war in his masterpiece De Cive, and he remains an important reference point in debates on this subject. According to Hobbes," peace

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[78] The European Parliament, "An evaluation of EU Peacebuilding in the Western Balkans", 2018,
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/620207/EPRS_STU(2018)620207_EN.pdf (06.04.2020)
[79] Ibid.

is temporal and it can show up only as a break during the permanent war."[80] Baruch Spinoza, one of the famous philosophers in the second half of 17th century, rejects Hobbes' definition of peace and defines it as a virtue, a state of mind, a disposition for benevolence, confidence and justice. [81]

An Afro-American human right activist Martin Luther King also is not satisfied with the definition of peace focusing only on the absence of tension. In one of his lectures in the Auditorium of University of Oslo, he defines peace as the presence of justice and says that "people must concentrate not merely on the negative expulsion of war, but on the positive affirmation of peace." [82]

Johan Galtung, who is a Norwegian sociologist and the principal founder of the discipline of peace and conflict studies, defines peace as "an "umbrella concept", a general expression of human desires, of that which is good, that which is ultimately to be pursued."[83] In his essay *Toward Perpetual Peace* first published in 1795, German philosopher Immanuel Kant creates a system that would move the world to the perpetual peace. While not denying the realistic perspective of the nature of state, Kant argues that a state of peace must be established. [84] According to Kant, the perpetual peace is possible at the end of the transformation of human relations but it is not an applicable project so the peace must be constructed gradually. Kant refers to federalism of free republican states as a system which could take the humanity to peace. [85]

Genevan philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau links war with the state system, and peace with the elimination of the state system. Rousseau, much like Kant, believes that "human morality and social awareness would flourish under a republican regime where public

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[80] Arends, F. , "From Homer to Hobbes and Beyond-Aspects of Security in the European Tradition", Brauch, H. G. et al. (ed.), **Globalization and Environmental Challenges**, Springer, 2008.
[81] Shekhar, H. , "Peace, The Ultimate Goal", 2018,
 https://www.observerbd.com/details.php?id=155930&fb_comment_id=2078037738897598_2078634855504553 (09.05.2020)
[82] King, M. L. , "The Quest for Peace and Justice", University of Oslo: Nobel Lecture, 1964,
https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/peace/1964/king/lecture/ (09.05.2020)
[83] Galtung, J. , **Theories of Peace, A Synthetic Approach to Peace Thinking**, Oslo: International Peace Research Institute, 1967
[84] Kant, I. , **To Perpetual Peace, A Philosophical Sketch**, Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 2003
[85] Ibid.

involvement and freedom is possible."[86] Even though Rousseau thinks that just and moral nations are possible, this does not entirely eliminate the possibility of war.[87] The former UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon defines peace as "living with others on the basis of tolerance, respect and mutual understanding and it cannot be decreed solely through treaties – it must be nurtured through dignity, rights and capacities of every man and woman."[88]

From the two major systems of peace policy -the balance of power and power monopoly- in the ancient times, the term peace has been a controversial one. [89] If we look at the historical development of peace-building policies, we see two different approaches: "power monopoly" and "federal approach". These approaches have been dominant after 14th century. Many thinkers throughout the history define the possible way to peace in different ways. Some refer to a single system controlled by a single political authority and some refer to an international organization consisting separate states.[90]

French lawyer and political pamphleteer Pierre Dubois in 1300s are in favour of a federation of Christian, sovereign states, with a council of nations. Dante Alighieri, an Italian poet, notes in his treatise *De Monarchia* (1310) that "peace is possible through a unique European princedom extending over all persons in time." On the other hand, in the age of Enlightenment, German philosopher Immanuel Kant points to the law of nations, based upon a federalism of free states. In 1623, French political writer Emeric Cruce criticises the search for political control of all Europe in his book *Nouveau Cynée*, known as a pioneer work on international relations, and is concerned with the federal idea. [91]

In addition to these two main approaches, in the 19th century, a confederal approach emerged which proposes to establish an organization for peaceful settlement of international problems. The confederal ideas were realized by the establishment of the League of Nations (LN) after outbreak of the First World War.[92] The First World War showed that many ideas

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[86] Yalvaç, F. , "Rousseau'nun Savaş ve Barış Kuramı: Adalet olarak Barış (Rousseau's Theory of War and Peace: Peace as Justice)" , Aydın, M. et al. (ed.), **Uluslararası İlişkilerde Çatışmadan Güvenliğe**, Istanbul: Istanbul Bilgi University Publication, pp. 17-41

[87] Ibid.

[88] UN News, "Peace means dignity, well-being for all, not just absence of war – UN officials", 2014, https://news.un.org/en/story/2014/09/476992-peace-means-dignity-well-being-all-not-just-absence-war-un-officials (09.05.2020)

[89] Galtung, J. , **Theories of Peace**, International Peace Research Institute, Oslo, 1967

[90] Ibid.

[91] Ibid.

[92] Ibid.

that had been tried to maintain peace, were invalid.[93] For the first time, the victory was less meaningful than ever. The Treaty of Versailles, which brought the World War I to an end, commenced debate on peace, its qualities and the ways to build it.[94] With the expiration of the old order by the First World War, a new vision of peace was introduced.[95]

International Relations discipline, which was founded after the First World War, also failed to develop an account of peace. It rather focused on the theoretical evaluations of international order, wars, and related developments in history. The concept of peace was only dealt indirectly within the context of the international order and wars. As a result, studies on the concept of peace in the discipline of International Relations have fallen under the shadow of studies on war.[96]

The early definitions of peace mostly refer to the absence of war or violence. Johan Galtung differentiates between the aspects of peace. He argues that peace is something more than just the absence of an organized group violence, it also contains an element of equality and an absence of exploitation. [97] Galtung refers to the absence of violence as negative peace, while he mentions about positive peace as "peace as a synonym for all other good things in the world community, particularly cooperation and integration between human groups, with less emphasis on the absence of violence".[98]

An American economist and peace activist Kenneth Ewart Boulding also argues that the concept of peace has both positive and negative aspects.[99] He claims that "on the positive side, peace signifies a condition of good management, orderly resolution of conflict, harmony associated with mature relationships, gentle and love. On the negative side, it is conceived as the absence of something – the absence of turmoil, tension, conflict and war." Boulding makes a metaphor with the origins of the term peace, which is derived from Latin word pax, pacis. He

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[93] Galtung, **Theories of Peace**, pp. 11.
[94] Richmond, O. , **The Transformation of Peace**, United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005, pp. 35
[95] Ibid.
[96] Sandıklı, A. and Kaya, E. , "Uluslararası İlişkiler Teoriler ve Barış (International Relations Theories and Peace)", Sandıklı, A. (ed.), **Teoriler Işığında Güvenlik, Savaş, Barış ve Çatışma Çözümleri**, Istanbul: Bilgesam Publication, 2012, pp. 133-161
[97] Galtung, **Theories of Peace**, pp. 12.
[98] Ibid.
[99] Boulding, K. , **Stable Peace**, University of Texas Press, 1978

says that "To pacify is to calm down childish behaviour and the pacifier is something to put baby's mouth when she or he cries". [100]

1.3.2. The Conceptual Origins of Peacebuilding

In his paper "Three Approaches to Peace: Peacekeeping, Peace-making and Peacebuilding" (1976), Johan Galtung coins the term "peacebuilding". [101] He firstly lists the inadequacies of the peacekeeping and peace-making processes and argues that the world no longer fits these approaches and there may still be war in both cases even the conflict is solved. Then, he proposes the term peacebuilding as an associative approach. According to Galtung, peace structures must be found that remove causes of wars and offer alternatives to war in situations where wars might occur. In this article, he also suggests a structure of peace based on norms and in that regard refers to the European Community and Nordic Countries. [102]

Nevertheless, the term "peacebuilding" enters the international lexicon with the report of the former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali in 1992. In his "An Agenda for Peace", he defines peacebuilding as a technique that expands the possibilities for both the prevention of conflict and the making of peace. According to Boutros-Ghali, "peacebuilding is an action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict." [103]

He argues that "peace-making and peacekeeping are required to halt conflicts and preserve peace once it is attained. On the other hand, post-conflict peace-building can prevent the recurrence of violence among nations and peoples." He advices for an effective post-conflict peace building, cooperative projects between states such as "projects that bring States together to develop agriculture, improve transportation or utilize resources such as water or electricity that they need to share, or joint programmes through which barriers between nations are brought down by means of free travel, cultural exchanges and mutually beneficial youth and educational projects." [104]

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[100] Ibid.
[101] Galtung, J. , "Three Approaches to Peace: Peacekeeping, Peacemaking, and Peacebuilding," Galtung J. (ed), *Peace, War and Defense: Essays in Peace Research Vol. II,* 1976, pp. 297-298.
[102] Ibid.
[103] Ghali, B. , "An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peacekeeping", Report of the Secretary General, United Nations, 1992 https://www.un.org/ruleoflaw/files/A_47_277.pdf (09.05.2020)
[104] Ibid.

John Paul Lederach, another scholar in the peace studies, pushes for expanding our understanding of peace and peacebuilding. According to Lederach, "peacebuilding is more than just reconstruction after conflict, it is using every process, approach and stage to transform conflict into sustainable peace."[105]

The Head of the Peacebuilding Interventions Programme at South Africa, Professor Tim Murithi thinks that building peace requires the promotion of social and economic justice, reform of political structures and the law. These aim to ease the burden of a community torn apart by war. However, they are not sustainable without reallocating resources. It is a political activity that wants to unify the social and economic spheres. [106]

The end of the Cold War opened a new era in international affairs. The dominant security doctrines of the Cold war had been expired. As Robert L. Rothstein notes that by the end of the cold war a contradictory situation emerged. While the pressure for peace increased and more than 80 peace accords were signed, the amount of intrastate conflicts rose sharply.[107] Since 1990, more than one third of world's countries have been directly affected by serious societal warfare. It was a period of intense insecurity, ethnic conflict, deadly violence massive refugee flows.[108]

This inevitably led to a rethinking of international priorities regarding peacebuilding policies. The doctrines, strategies and institutions that were developed during the Cold War to deal with issues of international peace and security were inadequate for dealing with many of these conflicts. [109]

At this point, the United Nations emerged as an active supporter of peacebuilding by the early 1990s. An Agenda for Peace (1992) linked the imperatives for peace and development. In his report, Ghali declared that the sources of conflict and war are pervasive and deep. According to Ghali, to eliminate those sources, the UN has to "promote respect for human rights and

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[105] Lederach, J. P. *, Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*, United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997
[106] Murithi, T. , **The Ethics of Peacebuilding**, Edinburgh University Press, 2008
[107] Rothstein, R. , "In Fear of Peace: Getting Past Maybe", Rothstein, R. (ed), **After the Peace: Resistance and Reconciliation**, Lynne Rienner Publisher, 1999, pp.1-28
[108] Marshall, M. and Gurr, T. R. , **Peace and Conflict 2003, A Global Survey of Armed Conflicts, Self-determination Movements, and Democracy**, University of Maryland: Center for International Development and Conflict Management, 2003
[109] Tschirgi, N. , "Peacebuilding as the Link between Security and Development: Is the Window of Opportunity Closing?", Newyork, International Peace Academy, 2003
https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/5cba/b090e4571a96f50d92491fd0064282d52a04.pdf (09.05.2020)

fundamental freedoms, sustainable economic and social development for wider prosperity, to alleviate distress and to curtail the existence and use of massively destructive weapons."[110]

Other international actors also addressed these twin goals -development and peace- through their policies and programs.[111] The publication of Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee's "The Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Guidelines: Helping Prevent Violent Conflict (1997) offered new ways of thinking about how to address violent conflicts. They provided both the rationale and the conceptual framework for linking development and security. [112] In their "Encouraging Effective Evaluation of Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Activities" report in 2007, they evaluated the conflict and peacebuilding prevention in two ways, operational and structural prevention. While the former one involves some form of crisis interventions, latter aims at transforming social, economic, political factors that may lead to violent conflict in the future.[113]

The former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan also draws attention to the changing concept of the peacebuilding and its relation with development in his report "Prevention of Armed Conflict" in 2001. He notes that "With the end of the Cold War, a new understanding of the concept of peace and security has emerged. A broader focus on the nature of sustainable peace and its building-blocks, such as social and economic development, good governance and democratization, the rule of law and respect for human rights, is supplementing the traditional concept of collective security." [114]

He also distinguishes the elements of the philosophy underlying the collective security system as; "first, preventing armed conflict is a more desirable and cost-effective strategy to ensure lasting peace and security than trying to stop it or alleviate its symptoms; and second,

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[110] Ghali, B. , "An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peacekeeping", Report of the Secretary General, United Nations, 1992, **quoted in** Otto, D. , "Whose Security, Re-imagining Post-Cold War Peacekeeping from a Feminist Perspective", Patman, R. (ed.), **Security in a Post-Cold War World,** Palgrave Macmillan, pp.67

[111] Tschirgi, pp. 13

[112] OECD CAD Task Force, "The DAC Guideliness, Helping Prevent Violent Conflict", OECD, 2001 http://www.cedoh.org/Biblioteca_CEDOH/archivos/00272%20THE%20DAC%20GUIDELINES%20HELPING%20PREVENT%20VIOLENT%20CONFLICT.pdf (09.05.2020).

[113] OECD DAC Network on Conflict, Peace and Development Co-operation and the DAC Network on Development Evaluation, "Encouraging Effective Evaluation of Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Activities: Towards DAC Guidance", Off-print of the OECD Journal of Development, 2007, Vol. 8, No. 3 https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/dcdndep/39660852.pdf (09.05.2020)

[114] Annan, K. , "Prevention of Armed Conflict, Report of the Secretary-General", United Nations General Assembly Security Council, 2001, https://www.un.org/ruleoflaw/files/2001cpreport[1].pdf (09.05.2020)

armed international conflicts are best prevented by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security are not endangered"[115]

1.3.3. The EU's Context of Peacebuilding

Another international actor, which is an active supporter of peacebuilding efforts, is the European Union. Actually, since its creation, the EU has been considered as a peace project. In 1943, Jean Monnet, French political and economic adviser, declared his vision for a peaceful united Europe. Monnet, Robert Schuman and the other founding fathers of the EU decided to establish peace, by pooling the coal and steel resources needed to conduct war. The idea was that if the production of coal and steel was shared by the two most powerful countries, France and Germany, it would prevent any future war.[116] Since then, community institutions and policies were built by the Europeans to pool their resources together and enforce peace and liberty. [117]

Johan Galtung defines this move as "the integration of human society". [118] He also refers to the development of positive relationships while establishing stable peace in his book *Theories of Peace* where he argues that cooperation is needed to develop positive relations and then it will help establish peace. He defines cooperation as "a pattern of interaction between nations so that there is an exchange of values between them, of commodities, services, knowledge, people etc. This is the opposite of isolation; it is interdependence between nations."[119] This is realized by the creation of single market among the member states of the European Union.

Coming from a purely economic union and later encompassing many policy areas, the EU focused on establishing peace in the entire globe. Since the Community was created in a post-war environment, the Europeans pooled their resources to preserve and strengthen peace and liberty and made peace a core value. [120] According to the treaties of the Community, the

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[115] Ibid.

[116]European Commission, "Jean Monnet: the Unifying Force Behind the Birth of the European Union", https://europa.eu/european-union/sites/europaeu/files/docs/body/jean_monnet_en.pdf (09.05.2020)

[117] Manners, I. , "Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms", 2002, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 2, pp. 235-58, http://www.princeton.edu/~amoravcs/library/mannersnormativepower.pdf (09.05.2020)

[118] Galtung, J. , "An Editorial", *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 1, No.1 , pp. 1-4
https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/002234336400100101 (09.05.2020)

[119] Galtung, **Theories of Peace**, pp.14

[120] Manners, pp. 240

EU "preserves peace, prevents conflicts and strengthens international security" (Article 21(2)).[121]

In the first EU Peace and Security Outlook, the EU declares that the promotion of peace goes hand in hand with any type of EU engagement in the world such as the common foreign and security policy, economic, financial and technical cooperation, humanitarian aid, common commercial policy, and neighbourhood policy. In other words, the integration itself has been the most important tool to achieve long-lasting peace for the EU. [122]

In 2012, when the EU was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of its efforts for peace,[123] the representatives of the EU focused on the Union's peace and security policies in a press release following acceptance of the award, adding "over the last sixty years, the European Union has reunified a continent split by the Cold War around values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights." [124]

After the end of the Cold War, the EU decided to intensify its relations with the eastern part of the continent with the ideal of united Europe.[125] However the dissolution of Yugoslavia, followed by ethnic conflicts in the region led the EU to redefine its peace and security policies. Along with civilian and military operations in the Western Balkans, the EU decided to integrate the ex-Yugoslav countries to the Union for establishing a stable peace. The next chapter will focus on the EU's peacebuilding efforts in the region and question the actorness of the EU in this process.

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[121] Juncos, A. and Blockmans, S. , "The EU's role in conflict prevention and peacebuilding: four key challenges", *Journal Global Affairs*, 2018, Vol. 4, No. 2-3, pp. 131-140
https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/23340460.2018.1502619?needAccess=true (09.05.2020)

[122] European Parliament, "Peace and Security 2018, Overview of EU action and outlook for the future", https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/620207/EPRS_STU(2018)620207_EN.pdf (09.05.2020)

[123] The Nobel Peace Prize for 2012, Nobel Media AB, 2020 https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/peace/2012/summary/ (09.05.2020)

[124] Stivachtis, Y. , Price, C. and Habegger, M. , "The European Union as a Peace Actor", Canadian Center of Science and Education*, Review of European Studies*, 2013, Vol. 5, No. 3
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/271060234_The_European_Union_as_a_Peace_Actor (09.05.2020)

[125] Özgöker, U. , and Batı, G. F. , **AB'nin Doğu Sınırı Balkanlar (Eastern Border of the EU, Balkans)**, Derin Publication, 2016

2. THE PEACEBUILDING EFFORTS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

On a shiny day of 1914 summer, the Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife Sophie travelled to Bosnia to inspect the imperial troops stationed there. When they were riding in an open carriage in Sarajevo, a 19-year-old Serbian nationalist Gavrilo Princip shot and killed Franz Ferdinand and his wife. This incident sparked the conflicts which turned Europe into a bloodbath. Founded to stop the endless wars, the EU found itself in a new war with the Yugoslav crisis. After then, the EC had to make an effort to stop the conflicts. So, the development of peacebuilding in the EU context was primarily caused by the Balkan crisis of the 1990s.

This chapter will focus on the EU's peacebuilding efforts in the Western Balkans which is still a vulnerable geography in terms of security of the continent. As the EU points out many times by its declarations, the EU's membership for the Western Balkans is in the Union's very own political, security and economic interest. It is a geostrategic investment in a stable, strong and united Europe based on common values.[126]

In this chapter, firstly, the peacebuilding operations of the EU through the world will be introduced. After giving brief information about the roots of the Yugoslav crisis in 1990s, it will focus on the EU's response to the crisis. Then, from the social constructivist perspective the changing politics and instruments of the EU while trying to stabilize the region will be analysed, focusing on the EU's enlargement policy as a peacebuilding tool. Lastly, the study will try to find answer to the question of whether the Union is effective or not while trying to solve the "Gordion Knots'[127] in the region such as imperfect state building process in Bosnia and Herzegovina or Kosovo-Serbia border dispute.

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[126] European Commission, "A Credible Enlargement Perspective for and Enhanced EU Engagement with the Western Balkans", Strasbourg, 2018, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/communication-credible-enlargement-perspective-western-balkans_en.pdf (09.05.2020)

[127] The Gordian knot is a legend associated with Alexander the Great. It is often used as a metaphor for a though problem.

2.1. The EU's Peacebuilding Operations in the World

The continent of Europe has been the scene of many bloody wars for centuries. The European Union, which was established to bring peace and stability to the continent after the Second World War, has prioritized establishing peace not only in continental Europe but in the globe over the years. The promotion of peace and security has become one of the fundamental pillars of the EU's external action,[128] as it is stated in its treaty (Article 3(5)) that the Union "shall contribute to peace, security, the sustainable development of the Earth.."[129]

There are many terms or concepts related to peacebuilding or to peacebuilding operations/activities are in the Treaty articles, such as the Article 11 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU), which refers to the objectives of CFSP, but there is no explicit reference to peacebuilding in the treaties.[130] While some criticise this deficiency, the term of peacebuilding is increasingly present in the EU lexicon.[131]

Peacebuilding is defined as the process of addressing the post-conflict transition phase and building reconciliation and peace in the EU context. It refers to a broad spectrum of activities from peacekeeping operations to governance reforms or border management.[132] When we look at the practices of peacebuilding policies, some scholars define the European integration itself as a giant peacebuilding project which was shaped after the World War II.

Civilian and military crisis management and the increasing number of missions deployed under the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) was crucial for the development of the EU's peacebuilding policies. The EU also developed numerous tools for conflict prevention and peacebuilding and published policy documents detailing the methods of addressing peacebuilding demands.[133]

The EU became very active with conflict prevention and peacebuilding across the world in the last decade. It has launched many operations using civilian and military force overseas.

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[128] European Parliament, "Peace and Security 2018, Overview of EU action and outlook for the future", https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/620207/EPRS_STU(2018)620207_EN.pdf (09.05.2020)

[129] Official Journal of the European Union, "Consolidated Version of Treaty of The European Union", 2008, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2008:115:0013:0045:EN:PDF (10.05.2020)

[130] Duke, S. and Courtier, A. , "EU Peacebuilding, Concepts, Players and Instruments", Blockmans, S. , Wouters, J. and Ruys, T. (ed.), **The European Union and Peacebuilding** (1-54), The Netherlands: T.M.C. Asser Press, 2010, pp. 21

[131] Ibid.

[132] Ibid. , pp. 29

[133] Natorski, M. , "The European Union Peacebuilding Approach: Governance and Practices of the Instrument for Stability", Frankfurt: Peace Research Institute, 2011 https://www.hsfk.de/fileadmin/HSFK/hsfk_downloads/prif111.pdf (10.05.2020)

With 6 ongoing military missions, 11 ongoing civilian missions, around 5 thousand people deployed in these missions, the EU aims to establish peace, prevent human trafficking and conflicts, strengthen international security and support the rule of law.[134]

Within the framework of these peacekeeping operations, women and girls who are subject to violence, discrimination or child marriages in Lesotho –an enclaved country within the border of South Africa- got support of the European Union to have their rights, including the right to access education, and to run their own business.[135] Another example for the EU's peacekeeping efforts concerns the Roma people who live in the Western Balkans. In recent years, the EU has increasingly been engaged in efforts to improve the social inclusion of Roma and combat discrimination and anti-Gypsyism.[136]

On the other hand, between 2016 and 2019, the EU committed around €8.85 billion of its external funding to support refugees and their host communities around the world, and this makes the EU a major donor for refugees.[137] Besides, in February 2020, the EU Ministers of Foreign Affairs reached a political agreement to launch a new operation on Libya in the Mediterranean Sea to implement the arms embargo imposed by the United Nations Security Council. [138]

Starting as a purely economic union of six European countries, the EU has become one of the major contributors of peace and prosperity around the globe. The EU identifies itself as a global actor that promotes integration as a means to support peace and prosperity and to overcome conflicts around the world.[139] The elaborations of the European Security Strategy in

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[134] European Union External Action, "Military and civilian missions and operations", 2019 https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/430/military-and-civilian-missions-and-operations_en (10.05.2020)

[135] European Union External Action, "The EU supports the fight for gender justice in Lesotho", 2019, https://eeas.europa.eu/topics/development-and-cooperation/67216/eu-supports-fight-gender-justice-lesotho_en (03.04.2020)

[136] European Union Agency for Fundemantal Rights, "Working with Roma: Participation and empowerment of local communities", 2016, https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2019-working-with-roma-summary_en.pdf (03.04.2020)

[137] European Union External Action, "Refugee Protection and Migration", 2020, https://eeas.europa.eu/topics/migration_en (04.03.2020)

[138] European Union External Action, "Libya: EU Ministers agree to launch new Mediterranean Sea operation to implement arms embargo", 2010, https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/japan/74842/libya-eu-ministers-agree-launch-new-mediterranean-sea-operation-implement-arms-embargo_en (03.04.2020)

[139] European Union External Action, "Conflict Prevention, Peace building and Mediation", 2017 https://eeas.europa.eu/topics/conflict-prevention-peace-building-and-mediation/426/conflict-prevention-peace-building-and-mediation_en (03.04.2020)

2003 and the more recent 2016 EU Global Strategy were the first efforts to widen the global presence of the EU. [140]

In the preamble of the EU Global Strategy, the former High Representative Federica Mogherini claims that the EU, which is built on the success of 70 years of peace, will continue to contribute to peace and security in the whole world.[141] She claims that with the term "Global", the EU does not refer just to a geography, it also refers to the wide array of policies and instruments such as military capabilities, job opportunities, inclusive societies and human rights. While pointing the military and civilian operations, Mogherini states that:

> "The European Union has always prided itself on its soft power – and it will keep doing so, because we are the best in this field. However, the idea that Europe is an exclusively "civilian power" does not do justice to an evolving reality. For instance, the European Union currently deploys seventeen military and civilian operations, with thousands of men and women serving under the European flag for peace and security – our own security, and our partners'. For Europe, soft and hard power go hand in hand."[142]

Additionally, in the European Parliament's study, "Peace and Security in 2018", the EU refers to its context of peacebuilding as:

> "… the modern definition of peace refers not only to 'an absence of war', but also includes elements of well-being: we demand more from peace. This positive dimension of peace is difficult to measure as it is a continuum, between inter-state war and positive public perceptions." [143]

While not denying the importance of hard power, the EU defines itself the best as a soft power. The EU is diffusing its norms and values through its instruments. It might be trade agreements with third countries or European Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy of the Union. It encompasses a wide range of activities and geography. The Western Balkans, which is the main motive for developing peacebuilding policies and still the most vulnerable geography for the EU, is in a process of transformation as part of the Enlargement and

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[140] European Union External Service, "A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy", 2016, https://eeas.europa.eu/archives/docs/top_stories/pdf/eugs_review_web.pdf (04.03.2020)
[141] Ibid.
[142] Ibid.
[143] European Parliament, "Peace and Security 2018, Overview of EU action and outlook for the future", 2018, pp. 14 https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/620207/EPRS_STU(2018)620207_EN.pdf (09.05.2020)

Neighbourhood Policy. That is why European Parliament has also published the study entitled "Peace and Security in 2018: An evaluation of EU peacebuilding in the Western Balkans" that focuses on the European Union peacebuilding efforts in the Western Balkans. In this paper, the EU Parliament evaluates "the EU's engagement in the region to assess the extent to which the Union has been able to transform and strengthen the governance, economy and resilience of the region. While examining the performance of the EU, it analyses the entire spectrum of activities from 'negative peace' to 'positive peace'."[144]

2.2. The EC's Response to the Dissolution of Yugoslavia

In 1986, an American historian, Fergus M. Bordewich, wrote an article in *New York Times* magazine named "Yugoslavia Since Tito", describing the situation in Yugoslavia in the six years since Tito's death. [145] While picturing a military parade in Belgrad, he wrote as:

"Beneath a slaty sky, long columns of soldiers and jet fighters screeching overhead, Yugoslavia today is a daunting landscape of competing nationalisms, of resurgent religion, of economic disorder, of bureaucratic paralysis, of pluralists who would dismantle the one-party state and neo-Stalinists who would suppress them."

In his article, Bordewich argued that Tito was the symbol of nationhood, he unified a war-torn region, and his people achieved important feats in education and industry and instated a system of worker self-management. But he failed to give Yugoslavia a permanent national unity and purpose. After his death, conflicts and jealousies which had previously been buried, arose. [146]

Even though the state of depression in Yugoslavia after Tito's death was voiced by many writers, politicians and academics, the western governments only took up this issue after separatist discourse had been on the rise in the region. Actually, there were strong signs of a political revolution coming in Yugoslavia centred on Serbia since the late 1980's. [147] In 1988, Slobodan Milosevic, the leader of the Serbian Communist Party, with the backing of a new

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[144] European Parliament, "Peace and Security in 2018, An evaluation of EU peacebuilding in the Western Balkans", 2018, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/621816/EPRS_STU(2018)621816_EN.pdf (04.03.2020)

[145] Bordewich, F. , "Yugoslavia Since Tito", The New York Times Magazine, 1986, Vol. 6, pp. 54, https://www.nytimes.com/1986/04/13/magazine/yugoslavia-since-tito.html (10.05.2020)

[146] Ibid.

[147] Cviic, C. , "Who's to Blame for the War in Ex-Yugoslavia?", *World Affairs*, 1993, Vol. 156, No. 2, pp.72-79 https://www.jstor.org/stable/20672379?seq=1 (10.05.2020)

populist alliance with the nationalists, cancelled the autonomy of Kosovo and Vojvodina provinces. In 1989, the pro-Milosevic forces had captured power in Montenegro in a coup. They also organized the Serbs in Bosnia in opposition against government in Sarajevo.[148]

The Greater Serbia project that Milosevic adopted and his policies led the leaders of other ethnic groups such as Slovenia and Croatia react to the threat he posed. The Bosnian leader Alija Izetbegovic also admits in his autobiography that his people took up arms in spite of embargo when the Serbian leader attacked first Slovenia and then Croatia. [149]

This Serbian campaign of reassertion alarmed opinion in Croatia and Slovenia and led to a dramatic rise in pro-independence sentiment. When they began to make the first moves towards independence, "Yugoslavia crises" became high on the agenda of western governments (USA and EC countries).[150] But before then they choose to keep silence. Actually, before the fall of Berlin Wall, Yugoslavia was serving as a buffer zone between the East and West for the United States. But when it fell, the USA had no motivation in supporting a Socialist Yugoslavia.[151] So, the Yugoslav crisis was not a priority on the USA agenda as well as that of the European Union. As the State Secretary of USA James Baker stated in a trip to Belgrade, the Americans got no dog in this fight. [152]

The situation for the EC countries was different from USA. The war was in their backyard. At first, the EC preferred to ignore the possibility of potential problems, despite the existence of many indications for a possible disaster.[153] The EC viewed Croatia and Slovenia as a threat to the stability of the region while viewing the communist Yugoslav government as a stabilizing force.[154] To keep Croatia and Slovenia from leaving Yugoslavia, the EC offered 870 m ECU loan to the federal government of Yugoslavia.[155]

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[148] Ibid.

[149] Izetbegovic, A. , **Inescapable Questions: Autobiographical Notes**, The Islamic Foundation, 2003

[150] Ibid.

[151] Serwer, D. , **From War to Peace in the Balkans, The Middle East and Ukraine**, Palgrave Macmillan, 2019

[152] Brands, H. W. , **The Use of Force After the Cold War**, Texas A&M University Press", 2000

[153] Marolov, D. , "The EU policy towards the dissolution of Yugoslavia Special emphasis on the EU"
policy towards the Republic of Macedonia", *Analytical Journal*, 2012, Vol. 4, No. 2, pp.89-109
https://www.academia.edu/35578395/The_EU_policy_towards_the_dissolution_of_Yugoslavia_Special_emphasis_on_the_E
U_policy_towards_the_Republic_of_Macedonia (11.05.2020)

[154] Ibid.

[155] Cviic, pp.74

Some scholars argue that this preference for the status quo in the Balkans characterizes the general Western policy towards the dissolution of Yugoslavia in early years of the crisis.[156] Some claim that the West-backing status quo was interpreted by Serbian hardliners as the green light for their campaign which deepened the scope of the conflict.[157] One may argue that this position of the EC – preferring status quo in the region no matter what happens in reality- has been the dominant position of the EU in the Western Balkans, which will be discussed specifically in the context of the EU-North Macedonia relations in the following chapter.

After the referendum for secession in Slovenia, the EU could no longer ignore the potential problem in Yugoslavia. From this point, the EU changed the direction of its foreign policy from inactive to active.[158] In the early summer of 1991, the chair of the EC Foreign Affairs Council Jacques Poos addressed the community as an exit door for the Yugoslavia crisis with those famous words: "This is the hour of Europe - not the hour of the Americans. If one problem can be solved by the Europeans, it is the Yugoslav problem. This is a European country and it is not up to the Americans. It is not up to anyone else." [159]

The course of history showed that those words would not mean anything. Some argue that Poos was confident while claiming solving the Yugoslav problem is the issue of Europeans, he mostly trusted in the western liberal democratic ideas, the market economy and the victory of the Cold War. Also, he wanted to address a growing Europe, which was gaining independence from its protector and partner, the USA. The Cold War had been won; it was time for Europe to take some of the burden in the region.[160]

On 27 August 1991, an Arbitration Commission was established by the EC to provide legal opinions, dealing with a range of issues of international law including the questions of statehood, recognition, self-determination and succession of Yugoslav republics. [161] Even they declared that only Slovenia and Macedonia met the conditions for recognition, Macedonia was not recognized as a result of Greek veto. Instead, the EC recognized the independence of

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[156] Lukic, R. and Lznch A. , **Europe from the Balkans to the Urals, The disintegration of Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union**, Oxford University Press, 1996, pp. 253
[157] Cviic, pp. 74
[158] Marolov, pp. 93
[159] Glaurdic, J. , **The Hour of Europe: Western Powers and the Breakup of Yugoslavia**, London: Yale University Press, 2011
[160] Ibid.
[161] Blocksman, S. , "Tough Love: The European Union's Relations with the Western Balkans", Doctor of Philosophy University of Amsterdam, 2007

Slovenia and Croatia which had failed to comply with the provisions concerning the special status for minorities. [162]

With the declaration of independence of Slovenia and Croatia, it was clear that Milosevic and Serbian nationalism would dominate the rest of Yugoslav Federation.[163] The Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic, who had advocated the integrity of Yugoslavia until that moment, declared independence but with no army, hoping that the international community would help. After then, a brutal and deadly war began, and that help was received three years later.

The efforts of the EC, USA and UN were inefficient. The same year that the Bosnian war started, the EC developed its Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP).[164] With the creation of CFSP, the EU was supposed to provide a more unified and efficient voice in security matters. Yet it could not do this during the Bosnian war.[165] The diplomatic attempts, sanctions, conferences or the plans such as the Vance-Owen Plan to end the war in Bosnia did not give any result.[166]

The European Union was carrying out the operations in cooperation with other actors in the region such as UN or OSCE. With the Washington Agreement signed in 1994, the administration of Mostar City was placed under the control of the European Union from 1994 to 1996.[167] The European Union Administration of Mostar (EUAM) was the first peace operation that the EU undertook alone and also the first civilian crisis management of CFSP. But the EU again was criticized in this case because of its inefficient administration. One can argue that while the Union was doing great with reconstructing the roads, buildings or infrastructure of the city, it was not very successful to eliminate the root causes of conflict in Mostar. [168]

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[162] Ibid.
[163] Serwer, pp.31
[164] Ibid.
[165] Skara, G. , "The Role of the EU as a Peacebuilder in the Western Balkans", *Romanian Journal of European Affairs*, 2014, Vol. 14, No. 4, pp. 26-43
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/293103320_The_Role_of_the_EU_as_a_Peacebuilder_in_the_Western_Balkans (11.05.2020)
[166] Öner, A. , Ş. , "Savaştan Brüksel Yoluna, Bosna Hersek'in Dünü ve Bugünü", Sandıklı, A. and İsmayıl, E. (ed.), **Küresel Riskler ve Bölgesel Krizler,** Istanbul, Bilgesam Publication, 2017, pp. 67-98
[167] Blocksman, pp.185
[168] Ibid.

The role of the Union was quite decreased with the establishment of Balkan Contact Group in 1994, consisting of the USA, Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, Germany, and France to coordinate the responses of the crisis. The USA and Contact Group came to the forefront as regards solving the crisis. [169] At the end, it was the NATO operations which ended the active war in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Actually, the failure to prevent and end the conflicts on its doorstep has put into question the credibility of the EU, which defines itself as a global actor and a peace project. The EU has been subject to strong criticism from scholars such as Christopher Hill. In his article "The Capability-Expectation Gap" dated 1993, Hill analyses the international role of the EC and identifies a gap between what it had been expected from the EU and what the EU was actually able to deliver. [170] Hill defines the extent of demands from the EC unmanageable such as stability and democracy for the Eastern Europe or a solution for the Yugoslav crisis. [171] He argues that the Community does not have the resources or the political structure to be able to respond the demands. [172]

Roy H. Ginsberg is another scholar who refers to the lack of resources of the EU. In his book "The European Union in International Politics", Ginsberg evaluates the political impact of the EU. He claims that the EU's inexperience and underdeveloped capabilities to operate as a civilian actor in a zone of war caused a trouble. According to Ginsberg, the EU got burned in former Yugoslavia. [173]

The Bosnian leader Aliya İzetbegovic was one of the most disappointed persons in this case. He expressed his feelings against the European Community in an interview in 1994 with the following words: "Who can believe that Europe will turn a blind eye to a genocide, concentration camps and tolerate a war against a country. But this is what happened and still happens, and we are all bewildered." [174]

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[169] Öner, pp.93

[170] Toje, A., "The Consensus-Expectations Gap: Explaining Europe's Ineffective Foreign Policy", Oslo: Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies, 2008, Vol. 39, No.1, pp.121-141
https://s3.amazonaws.com/academia.edu.documents/699184/Final_Proofs_Toje__SD.pdf (11.05.2020)

[171] Hill, C. , "The Capability-Expectations Gap, or Conceptualizing Europe's International Role", Journal of Common Market Studies, London School of Economics, 1993, Vol.31, No. 3, pp.305-328
https://paulbacon.files.wordpress.com/2013/10/waseda-teaching-euir-fall-2013-hill-1993.pdf (11.05.2020)

[172] Ibid.

[173] Ginsberg, pp. 85

[174] Izetbegovic, A. , **Inescapable Questions: Autobiographical Notes**, The Islamic Foundation, 2003

2.3. The EU's Actorness after Dayton Peace Accords

Following the end of the war and the signing of the Dayton Agreement in 1995, the EU took a step to strengthen its role in the region. In order to support the implementation of Dayton Agreement and to encourage democratisation through regional projects, the 'Process for Stability and Good Neighbourliness in South-Eastern Europe' – the so called 'Royaumont Process' - started under the leadership of the EU. [175]

Royaumont Process was the first EU initiative aimed at stabilizing the South East Europe. It was launched in December 1996 under the French EU Presidency[176] and focused on promoting peace and stability and good neighbourliness in the region. They aimed to launch major joint by all governmental and non-governmental operators and groups in civil society in order to maintain dialogue and cooperation. According to the action plan of the EU Council, "this framework of dialogue and cooperation would make it possible to overcome divisions and differences and thus create at all levels of civil society the trust needed to build a network of good neighbourly relations between States, a factor for stability in the region as a whole."[177]

As a complement to the Royaumont Process, the EU launched its own "Regional Approach" to develop bilateral relations with the ex-Yugoslav countries plus Albania in 1997.[178] The aim was to develop the regional co-operation in south-eastern Europe and bilateral relations between the EU and the individual countries of that region. It included regional cooperation, market economy reforms, the protection of minorities, the rule of law and respect for human rights.[179] To restore economic cooperation with each other, the EU offered financial assistance and unilateral trade preferences to the countries.[180]

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[175] Ehrhart, H. G. , "Prevention and Regional Security: The Royaumont Process and the Stabilization of South-Eastern Europe" , OSCE Yearbook, 1998, pp. 327-346 https://ifsh.de/file-CORE/documents/yearbook/english/98/Ehrhart.pdf (11.05.2020)

[176] Bendiek, A. , "The EU in South East Europe: Peace Consolidation and Differentiation", Debardeleben, J. (ed.), **The Boundaries of EU Enlargement, Finding a Place for Neighbours**, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008, pp.222-237

[177] Offical Journal, "Common Position of 9 November 1998 defined by the Council on the basis of Article J.2 of the Treaty on European Union, concerning the process on stability and good-neighbourliness in south-east Europe", 1998 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A31998E0633 (11.05.2020)

[178] Öner, A. , Ş. , "Savaştan Brüksel Yoluna, Bosna Hersek'in Dünü ve Bugünü", Sandıklı, A. and Ismayıl, E. (ed.), **Küresel Riskler ve Bölgesel Krizler**, (67-98), Istanbul, Bilgesam Publication, 2017

[179] Babuna, A. , "European Integration, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Stability in the Western Balkans: A New Strategy", Perceptions: *Journal of International Affairs*, 2014, Vol. 19, No. 2, pp. 1-32 http://static.dergipark.org.tr/article-download/7c56/eccf/7eb1/JA92DZ54RJ/5c497631b37c4_1c37ab69f408b42bb5fdd12b7b16bc7f.pdf? (11.05.2020)

[180] Blocksman, "Tough Love: The European Union's Relations with the Western Balkans", pp.244

As part of Regional Approach, the EU established some political conditions special to the Western Balkan countries, apart from regional and economic cooperation. The EU declared that any consideration of establishing contractual relations depends on the willingness of the countries while meeting those criteria.[181] Ensuring refugees' return home, implementing the Dayton Peace Agreement, cooperating with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) were some of those criteria.[182]

The EU's regional approach recognised that all political issues and conflicts in the region were interconnected parts of a large chaos.[183] This approach was very significant in the sense of showing the EU's changing policy towards the Balkans in the second half of 1990s. Although the EU's efforts looked good on paper, in reality, regional cooperation and bilateral relations scarcely progressed.[184] At the end, the outbreak of Kosovo War again disabled the policies of the EU so the Union had to enhance its peacebuilding efforts. [185]

In 1998, armed conflict erupted between Serbian military and police forces and the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). Over 1,500 Kosovar Albanians died, and 400,000 people were forced flee from their homes.[186] The EU followed an active diplomacy to resolve the conflict as it did in the Bosnian War. Under the Contact Group, Germany and France acting together, tried to discourage President of Federal Republic of Yugoslavia Slobodan Milosevic to use violence against the Albanians in Kosovo but Milosevic disregarded those efforts.[187] The European Union took a range of new restrictive measures against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia such as arms and oil embargo, and travel restrictions.[188] It adopted visa ban in 1998 on persons who have responsibilities in repressive actions in Kosovo. However, Milosevic was not on the list until May 1999, when the EU decided that a negotiated resolution with Milosevic is improbable.[189]

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[181] Ibid.

[182] Özgöker, U. , and Batı, G. F. , AB'nin Doğu Sınırı Balkanlar (Eastern Border of the EU, Balkans), Derin Publication, 2016, pp.50

[183] Blocksman, "Tough Love: The European Union's Relations with the Western Balkans", pp. 247

[184] Ibid

[185] Öner, A. , Ş. , "Savaştan Brüksel Yoluna, Bosna Hersek'in Dünü ve Bugünü", Sandıklı, A. and Ismayıl, E. (ed.), Küresel Riskler ve Bölgesel Krizler, (67-98), Istanbul, Bilgesam Publication, 2017

[186] Blocksman, "Tough Love: The European Union's Relations with the Western Balkans", pp.87

[187] Demirtaş, B. , "AB'nin Dönüştürücü Gücü ve Batı Balkanlar'da Demokratikleşme Süreci", Ankara Üniversitesi Avrupa Toplulukları Araştırma Ve Uygulama Merkezi, pp.179-210.
 http://ataum.ankara.edu.tr/wp-content/uploads/sites/360/2018/12/Demirtas-30.-Yil-Armagani.pdf (11.05.2020)

[188] Blocksman, "Tough Love: The European Union's Relations with the Western Balkans", pp.157

[189] Ibid.

Despite the diplomatic efforts of international community and the sanctions, the violence in Kosovo blazed out again at the beginning of 1999. The Contact Group met on 29 January 1999 to give a new political impetus to find a peaceful solution. However, when the final attempts to persuade President Milošević failed, NATO launched its air campaign under the banner of Operation Allied Force.[190]

During the 11 week bombing of NATO, the EU Ministers for Foreign Affairs initiated a Pact, for a "long-term stabilisation, security, democratisation, and economic reconstruction and development of the region, and for the establishment of durable good-neighbourly relations among and between them, and with the international community."[191] Although initiated by the EU, the Stability Pact was not an EU instrument. It was a political declaration of commitment and a framework agreement of cooperation to develop an international strategy for stability and growth in the region.[192] The aim was to replace the previous policies of crisis intervention, which failed and caused NATO intervention without the UN Security Council Authorization, with a comprehensive, long-term conflict prevention strategy.[193] The establishment of the Stability Pact was a turning point in the approach towards the Balkans for the international community but especially for the EU.[194]

On the other hand, as a result of ineffectiveness of the EU in both Bosnia and Kosovo war, the EU was convinced that in order to play an important role on the international stage, it was necessary to develop military capabilities. In its 'Declaration on Strengthening the Common European Policy on Security and Defence', at the Cologne Summit in 1999, the EU agreed to transfer the responsibility of decision-making and the capacity for action in the area of the 'Petersberg tasks' from Western European Union (WEU) to the EU.[195] In the Summit, the EU declared that "The Union must have the capacity for autonomous action, backed up by

[190] Blocksman, "Tough Love: The European Union's Relations with the Western Balkans", pp.89
[191] European Council, "1999/345/CFSP: Common Position of 17 May 1999 adopted by the Council on the basis of Article 15 of the Treaty on European Union, concerning a Stability Pact for South- Eastern Europe", 1999 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A31999E0345 (09.03.2020)
[192] Blocksman, "Tough Love: The European Union's Relations with the Western Balkans", pp. 248
[193] Ibid.
[194] Babuna, pp. 5
[195] European Council, "Cologne European Council Declaration on the Common Policy on Security and Defence", 1999, https://www.cvce.eu/en/obj/cologne_european_council_declaration_on_the_common_policy_on_security_and_defence_4_june_1999-en-ee393bf3-d96f-46b8-8897-15546a0e1c0d.html (10.03.2020)

credible military forces, the means to decide to use them, and a readiness to do so, in order to respond to international crises without prejudice to actions by NATO."[196]

At a conference in Brussels in July 1999, the European Union's Former Special Envoy to the Yugoslavia and also the co-chairman of the Dayton Peace Conference, Carl Bildt commented on the decisions taken at the summit. He said that "the decisions were taken by the Europeans, who felt there had been too much of an American show" referring to the NATO bombings in Kosovo. He stated that CFSP was born in Bosnia and the ESDP was born in Kosovo. [197]

With the evolution of the CSDP, the EU has contributed to the management of conflict prevention and peacekeeping mission in a range of countries around the world.[198] In the Western Balkans, the EU has deployed 6 missions in total, which have different aims. The EU operations deployed in the Western Balkans were namely the EUPM and EUFOR/Althea in Bosnia Herzegovina, the CONCORDIA, EUPAT in North Macedonia and EUPOL Proxima, and the EULEX operations in Kosovo. CONCORDIA and EUFOR/Althea were the military ones, which were aimed at ensuring the implementation of Dayton Agreement and Ohrid Framework Agreement[199] and preventing the destabilisation of the region. On the other hand, civilian operations were aimed at consolidating the rule of law and order, fighting organized crime and corruption, maintaining public peace, including the minority groups in the police sector, establishing a multi-ethnic justice and police system etc.[200]

2.3.1. Stabilisation and Association Process

After the Kosovo War, the EU changed its attitude and engagement policies towards the Balkans. In order to bring the region closer to the European Integration and in this way to stabilize the region over a long term, the EU initiated a normative framework.[201] It transformed its Regional Approach into a more sophisticated process: Stabilisation and Association Process

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[196] Ibid.
[197] Bildt, C. , "ESDP: What Lessons for the Future" , European Union Institute for Security Studies, 2009
https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/ESDP_10-Bildt_speech.pdf (10.03.2020)
[198] Skara, pp.31
[199] Ohrid Agreement is the peace deal signed by the government of North Macedonia and ethnic Albanian representatives on 13 August 2001 by the mediation EU and USA representatives.
[200] Skara, pp.31
[201] Rama, M. , "The European Integration Perspective in Western Balkans", Master of Arts Thesis, Lunds University, Department of Political Science, 2010

(SAP) which was developed with the prospect of eventual EU membership.[202] The aim was to move the region from the security matter, to the accession by using different instruments such as contractual relations (Stabilisation and Association Agreements), financial instruments and regional cooperation.[203] With this new approach, the EU leaders agreed that the best way to import stability to the region, was to engage the Western Balkan countries in the process of integration by offering the prospect of membership. [204]

It was the Santa Maria da Feira European Council in June 2000, in which it explicitly decided to offer EU membership to the Western Balkan countries. The Conclusions have summarized the EU's new approach as follows:

> "The European Council confirms that its objective remains the fullest possible integration of the countries of the region into the political and economic mainstream of Europe through the Stabilisation and Association process, political dialogue, liberalisation of trade and cooperation in Justice and Home Affairs. All the countries concerned are potential candidates for EU membership. The Union will support the Stabilisation and Association process through technical and economic assistance. The Commission has already presented proposals to the Council to streamline and accelerate the procedures for disbursement of assistance and the early extension of asymmetrical industrial and agricultural trade benefits to the Balkan States." [205]

The EU leaders reiterated their wish to contribute to the consolidation of democracy and to give support to the process of reconciliation and cooperation between the countries in the region in the Zagreb Summit of November 2000.[206] By highlighting the importance of the implementation of the conditions, they again declared that "the way is now open to all the countries of the region to move closer to the European Union as part of the stabilisation and association process."[207]

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[202] European Commission, "Stabilisation and Association Process", 2016, https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/policy/glossary/terms/sap_en (09.03.2020)
[203] Skara, pp.37
[204] Ibid.
[205] European Council, "Santa Maria da Feira European Council Presidency Conclusions", 2000, https://www.cvce.eu/en/obj/conclusions_of_the_santa_maria_da_feira_european_council_19_20_june_2000-en-042a8da3-def7-44ac-9011-130fed885052.html (11.03.2020)
[206] European Council, "Zagreb Summit Final Declaration", https://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/er/Declang4.doc.html (11.03.2020)
[207] Ibid.

The Stabilisation and Association Process of the Union was strengthened later at the Thessaloniki Summit in 2003. This Summit represented a new important step in the relationship between the EU and the Western Balkans.[208] By reaffirming that the future of the Balkans is within the European Union, the EU shifted its politics from post-conflict stabilisation to integration into European structures through adoption of European standards.[209] This was a strong strategic perspective and an impetus to prevent further hostilities in the region.[210]

The political scientists Thomas Risse and Antje Wiener, who work on the theories of European integration, claimed that the decision to gather the Eastern European countries under the European Union roof would eliminate any prospective war in the Balkans and reduce the harsh criticism regarding the lack of performance of the EU during the Yugoslav crisis.[211] Scholars of International Relations discipline Simon Duke and Aurelie Courtier also put an emphasis on the enlargement policy while referring to the Community's peacebuilding efforts and instruments. According to Duke and Courtier, "the EU's enlargement policy is, in a loose sense, a peacebuilding exercise".[212]

Also the EU itself defines the enlargement policy as one of the most effective tools that "reinforce peace, democracy and stability in Europe" and a key driver for economic and political reforms for the applicant countries.[213] As European officials were fond of saying, the EU's exit strategy for Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo and Macedonia is the possibility of their entry to the Union.[214]

Apparently, the prospect of integrating the Western Balkans into the EU formed a valuable peacebuilding tool after the bloody years in Balkans. In 2005, in an article in the *New York Times*, Olli Rehn, -the former European Commissioner for Enlargement- portrays enlargement policy as one of the most important instruments for European security as follows:

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[208] European Commission, "EU-Western Balkans Summit Thessaloniki, Press Release", 2003, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/PRES_03_163 (11.03.2020)
[209] Ibid.
[210] Rama, pp. 24
[211] Wiener, A. , Börzel, T. and Risse, T. (ed.) , **European Integration Theory**, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2009
[212] Duke and Courtier, pp. 35
[213] Council of the European Union, "Council conclusions on enlargement and stabilisation and association process", 2011, https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/genaff/126577.pdf (11.03.2020)
[214] Belloni, R. , **The Rise and Fall of Peacebuilding in the Balkans**, Palgrave Macmillan, 2019

"Myths and perceptions aside, enlargement is a great success story. It has proved to be one of the most important instruments for European security. It reflects the essence of the EU as a civilian power; by extending the area of peace, stability, democracy and the rule of law."[215]

Other scholars Marc Weller and Stefan Wolff argue that the EU remains the largest donor and the organization with the biggest presence throughout the region, having contributed significantly, partly in cooperation with third parties, to the stabilization of the countries there and to their reconstruction to date.[216] Francois Duchene, who introduced the concept of 'civilian power' in 1970's to characterise the EU's role in the world politics, conceives the EU as a model of reconciliation and peace not just for the territory of its own but also for other regions in the world. According to Duchene, even though the EU does not have any military assets, it still has influence on the other actors in the international arena by operating non-military tools like trade and diplomacy.[217]

2.4. The European Integration in the Western Balkans from a Constructivist Perspective

When considering the EU's enlargement to the Western Balkans, the constructivist approach seems to be the most appropriate contributor that fits into this study. While arranging a formula for establishing peace in the Western Balkans, the EU represented norms and values as a conditionality principle. Then, on their way to EU membership, the Western Balkan states and societies underwent a transformation by adopting those norms and values. As Alexander Wendt, the father of social constructivism, argues, the structures of human association are determined primarily by shared ideas rather than material forces. [218] Rather than using material assets, the EU tried to solve the problems by using its soft power.[219]

Charlotte Bretherton and John Vogler, who analyse the actorness of the EU from the constructivist perspective, argue that "the 'soft' security of the EU provided by development

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[215] Rehn, O. , "Enlargement is a Success Story", the New York Times, 2005, https://www.nytimes.com/2005/06/18/opinion/olli-rehn-enlargement-is-a-success-story.html (11.03.2020)

[216] Weller, M. and Wolff S. , "Bosnia and Herzegovina Ten Years After Dayton: Lessons for Internationalized State Building", *Ethnopolitics*, Routledge, 2006, Vol. 5, No. 1, pp. 1-13

[217] Özer, Y. "The European Union as a Civillian Power, The case of the EU's Trade Policy", *Marmara Journal of European Studies*, 2012, Vol. 20, No. 2

[218] Wendt, **Social Theory of International Politics**, pp.1

[219] Yılmaz, pp. 65

assistance and humanitarian aid is considered to be more efficacious than the 'hard' security of military defence."[220] However, they emphasize the cases where traditional civil instruments may be inadequate such as the Yugoslav crisis, and they argue that in more troubled neighbours, some form of military intervention was needed. But, in any case, as a promoter of norms and values, the EU prevents conflict and promotes prosperity among its Member States, and with its external practices of cooperative engagement with third countries. [221]

The social constructivists also put emphasis on the transformative impact of the EU and argue that in the process of integration, agents' identity and subsequently interests and behaviour equally change.[222] From another perspective, Schimmelfenning claims that the values of the community are constituted by its members, as the members shoulder a normative obligation and start to share the identity of an international community; this in turn causes the member states to adhere the constitutive values and norms of the community.[223]

An American scholar Andrew Moravcsik, who introduced liberal intergovernmentalist theory of European integration, goes further and claims that access to the EU trading bloc might be the most powerful policy instrument for promoting peace and security in the world today.[224] At this point, the Stabilization and Association Process and the bilateral trade agreements with the Western Balkan countries serve as a pacifier in the region. Also, Bretherton and Vogler focus on the EU's economic and commercial means and claim that this power on its relations with third countries, makes the EU an actor from the social constructivist perspective. [225]

2.5. Stand-Still[226] Period in the Western Balkans and Gordion Knots of the Region

As noted above, the Stability Pact and Stabilisation and Association Process replaced and updated the European Union's Regional Approach. While the Stability Pact focuses on regional cooperation in the fields of politics, economic and security, the SAP was intended to

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[220] Bretherton, C. And Vogler, J. , **The European Union as a Global Actor**, London and New York: Routledge, 1999, pp. 185
[221] Ibid.
[222] Wiener, Jørgensen, and Christiansen, **The Social Construction of Europe,** pp.2
[223] Yılmaz, pp. 65
[224] Moravcsik, A. "Striking a New Transatlantic Bargain", *Foreign Affairs, JSTOR Journals*, Vol. 82, No. 4. Marmara University Data Base (15.03.2020)
[225] Bretherton and Vogler, pp.72
[226] It is a a condition in which all movement or activity has stopped (Cambridge Dictionary). In this study, it is being used as a metaphor to describe the very slow progress of the integration process in the Western Balkans.

upgrade bilateral relations between the EU and the Western Balkan countries.[227] Within this process, the Western Balkan countries underwent structural reforms as a consequence of post conflict reconstruction and membership accession. Through financial instruments such as Community Assistance for Reconstruction, Development and Stabilisation Programme (CARDS) or Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA), the EU improved the economic performance of the Western Balkan countries.[228] A huge budget was set by those programmes to assist those countries to fulfil the Copenhagen Criteria.

Some specific conditions for the region -known as Copenhagen Plus- were introduced in this process.[229] Chief among those criteria were the requirement of full cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), facilitating the return of refugees, regional cooperation and reconciliation, the resolution of bilateral conflicts (such as name dispute between Greece and Macedonia) or of statehood dilemmas (Serbia and Kosovo).[230]

Even though the Thessaloniki Summit had created great expectations for the Balkan countries, among the seven countries of the Western Balkans, only one of them, Croatia, succeeded in joining the EU until now. The EU's approach regarding the enlargement to the Western Balkans was fraught with challenges. Firstly, the resistance of Serbia and Croatia to cooperate with the ICTY became the main difficulty for the integration right after the Thessaloniki Summit. Then, fresh memories of war kept alive the ethnic nationalism which has potential to arise out of any disagreement. Besides, the recognition of Kosovo and the border disputes between Serbia and Kosovo have been and still are among the most challenging issues. The incomplete state building process and the separatist attempts of Republika Srpska in Bosnia Herzegovina is another case.

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[227] Blocksman, "Tough Love: The European Union's Relations with the Western Balkans", pp. 303

[228] Skara, pp. 38

[229] Demirtaş, pp. 193

[230] Balkans in Europe Policy Advisory Group, "The Unfulfilled Promise: Completing the Balkan Enlargement", Centre for South East European Studieso of the University of Graz, 2014 https://www.balkanfund.org/publib/biepag/Unfulfilled-Promise-Completing-the-EU-Enlargement-to-the-Balkans.pdf (12.05.2020)

In addition to this, Prof. Dr. Blerim Reka[231] introduces "non-traditional security threats" in his article.[232] According to Reka, the region suffers from organised crime and corruption more than traditional security threats such as terrorism. Reka argues that "destroyed economies of countries and their trade routes, in the post-conflict context, created a more favourable environment for the organized crime. Organised crime and corruption have no borders, no ethnic, religious, or any other potential belonging." [233] From Reka's arguments and the European Commission's annual reports, it is obvious that in the post-conflict stabilization processes and the move towards Euro-Atlantic integration, organised crime and corruption are among the most challenging issues in the whole region.

Even though the organised crime is one of the main problems of all countries in the region, they have different challenges in the domestic realm and show different performances on their way towards Euro-Atlantic integration. While Montenegro is mentioned about to be member by 2025, Kosovo has not still been able to get candidate status. The region still has unsolved problems described as Gordion Knots. The EU has succeeded to solve one of these problems. It is the name conflict between Macedonia and Greece. Macedonia is continuing to work on to be the country which takes the most determined steps towards integration. This subject will be evaluated in the following chapter. Nonetheless, Serbia's hesitated approach to fulfilling the reforms, the separatist voices and structural problems in Bosnia Herzegovina and the border dispute between Kosovo and Serbia are still waiting to be resolved.

The ethnic conflicts during the 1990's approve that Serbia is one of the most critical countries regarding the stability of the region. Serbia without clear borders, had been posing serious risks for the region as a whole and still has border disputes with its neighbours.[234]

The EU has initiated policies towards the promotion of rule of law and to support the domestic efforts to strengthen democracy in Serbia.[235] The European integration process for Serbia began in 2001, right after the first democratic elections for the parliament. The SAP has

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[231] Prof. Dr. Blerim Reka is an ethnic Albanian scholar from North Macedonia. He is currently the Minister of European Integration of Kosovo.
[232] Reka, B. and Marleku, A. , "Non-traditional Security Challenges as a Main Security Threat to the Western Balkan Countries", *Europolity*, 2018, Vol. 12, No. 2
http://europolity.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/VOL-12-NO2_Marleku_Europolity.pdf (12.05.2020)
[233] Ibid.
[234] Gligorov, V. , Kaldor, M. and Tsoukalis, L. , "Balkan Reconstruction and European Integration", The Hellenic Observatory, The European Institute, LSE, 1999
http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/3319/1/Balkan_Reconstruction_and_European_Integration.pdf (13.05.2010)
[235] Rama, pp. 19

been employed to build the rule of law in political and economic domains. The promotion of these values is to a large extent based on security dilemma because without a democratic Serbia, there is always a risk of instability in the Balkans. [236] However, due to the internal divisions among Serbian political elites – pro-Russian and pro-western groups – and the unwillingness to cooperate with ICTY, the integration perspective was interrupted mostly in Serbia.

Serbia officially applied for the European Union membership in 2009, and accession negotiations are currently ongoing. Negotiations are expected to be completed by the end of 2023, and Serbia will be allowed to join the Union by 2025. However, it is being argued that Serbia does not perform enough concerning the implementation of reforms. The progress that Serbia achieved is significantly behind the other Western Balkan countries.[237] Especially in the areas of fighting against corruption, organized crime and the normalisation of relations with Kosovo, Commission reports that limited progress has been made and Serbia needs to put more efforts.[238]

The Kosovo issue is certainly the hardest issue that Serbia must resolve in its membership process. After the end of the war in 1999, Kosovo was placed under international administration[239] and in 2008 it declared its independence which Belgrade[240] has not officially recognised until now. Kosovo's recognition issue does not only concern Serbia, five other EU member-states[241] did not recognize the independence, either. This harms the credibility of the EU's foreign policies as an actor with one voice, but it is not within the scope of the present study.

Besides the sovereignty dilemma, another hard issue between Belgrade and Pristina[242] is the Mitrovica Bridge which is placed on Ibar River in North Kosovo and has caused conflicts between Kosovar Albanians in the south and Serbs living in the north of the bridge. To end the conflicts and border dispute between two nationalities, the idea of territory swap was suggested which the EU representatives strongly opposed. The former High Representative of the EU in

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[236] Ibid.

[237] Berkum, S. and Bogdanov, N. , **Serbia on the Road to EU Accession,** United Kingdom: CPI Group LTD, 2012

[238] European Commission, "Key findings of the 2019 Report on Serbia", 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/de/COUNTRY_19_2780 (13.05.2020)

[239] The United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) is the officially mandated mission of the United Nations in Kosovo. UNMIK was established pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1244, which was passed on 10 June 1999. In that Resolution, the UN decided to deploy in Kosovo, under United Nations auspices, international civil and security presence.

[240] Belgrade is the capital city of Serbia.

[241] Spain, Greece, Slovakia, Cyprus and Romania

[242] Pristina is the capital city of Kosovo.

Bosnia-Herzegovina, Paddy Ashdown, commented on the land swap between Serbia and Kosovo as a dangerous attempt. He said that, "Moving borders like this will not solve divisions, it will deepen them. Sustainable peace can only come when we learn to live in multi-ethnic communities, rather than re-drawing borders to create mono-ethnic ones."[243]

Like Serbia, in Kosovo, the EU devoted its resources, -military, financial and human- to repairing the damage of war and fostering reforms in the state-building process. On the other hand, to solve outstanding issues for both countries to progress on their European path, in 2011, the EU facilitated negotiations between two countries, named as Belgrade-Pristina dialogue.[244] The negotiations were conducted on three main issues, namely regional cooperation, freedom of movement and rule of law.[245] In this dialogue, the EU did not act only as a mediator. Its representatives had competences in the agenda-setting, and they proposed solutions. The whole negotiation process has been linked to the EU's enlargement strategy.[246]

In 2013, the Brussel Agreement was signed between two governments. According to the agreement, it is accepted that Pristina's constitution and judicial system are valid on the whole territory of Kosovo and without any reference to Serbia. Also, it is acknowledged that Serbia and Kosovo will join the EU separately, without blocking the other's entry. It is an implicit recognition of Kosovo's sovereignty since only sovereign states can be a member of the EU. Although Serbia officially upholds its no-independence position, by signing this agreement, it has implicitly recognized Kosovo's sovereignty.[247] Even though some hostile declarations are still made by the parties, Serbia and Kosovo agreed on a series of bilateral agreements.

Another challenging issue for the European integration is the structural problems of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Bosnia, along with other Western Balkans countries, was declared as a potential candidate for the EU membership during the Thessaloniki Summit in 2003. Since then, a number of agreements between the EU and Bosnia-Herzegovina have entered into force, the last one being the Stabilisation and Association Agreement in 2015. On the other hand, the

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[243] Delauney, G. , "Kosovo-Serbia talks: Why land swap could bridge divide", 2018, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-45423835 (18.03.2020)

[244] European Union External Action, "Dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina", 2020, https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/349/dialogue-between-belgrade-and-pristina_it (18.03.2020)

[245] Marciacq, F. , "The European Union's Involvement in the Settlement of Bilateral Disputes in Western Balkans, Serbia's Kosovo Issue and Macedonia's Naming Issue", University of Luxembourg, ECPR General Conference, 2014 https://ecpr.eu/filestore/paperproposal/b634814a-f23a-450d-832e-49e451f8491b.pdf (13.05.2020)

[246] Ibid.

[247] Serwer, pp. 85

EU continues to deploy considerable resources in Bosnia-Herzegovina within the framework CFSP.[248]

However, the first and the biggest challenge on the country's way to the EU membership seems to be its structural problem. The Dayton Peace Agreement (DPA) ended the active war in Bosnia but also brought a complex political structure and state-level decision-making mechanism.[249] Any reform project might be vetoed since it does not meet the super-majority threshold in the Parliament. The political system encourages political leaders of three ethnicities to operate along ethno-nationalist lines and this weakens the Bosnian statehood.[250] Actually one may claim that, while the Dayton has a great success in maintaining a negative peace, it presents a structural obstacle to the establishment of positive peace. [251]

Another criticism about the Dayton Peace Agreement is that it causes a democratic deficit by its nature. Actually, some may argue that any international trusteeship arrangements such as those in Bosnia and Herzegovina or in Kosovo involve very serious dilemmas. Because, to bring a state from a civil war to peace and prosperity almost inevitably means that democracy is being imposed from the outside. In the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina, for example, the authority of High Representative may refer such kind of intervention which is not good in democratic terms.[252]

Apart from the structural problem arising from Dayton, the country suffers political instability right now. The economy needs further reforms and the people in the country need greater ethnic integration.[253] In Bosnia-Herzegovina, where the Yugoslav war was most intense, the ethnic groups of the country have poor trust in one another and also in the international organizations which mostly failed during the war. When any leader takes a nationalist attitude on a subject, immediately others take a nationalist stand, as well. Especially nowadays, the

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[248] European Commission, "Bosnia and Herzegovina", https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/countries/detailed-country-information/bosnia-herzegovina_en (20.03.2020)

[249] Öner, pp. 75

[250] Galyan, A. , "Learn as We Go: The European Union's Involvement in Constitution Building in the Post-conflict Western Balkans", Sweden: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 2014 https://www.idea.int/sites/default/files/publications/the-european-unions-involvement-in-constitution-building-in-the-post-conflict-western-balkans.pdf (13.05.2020)

[251] Knudsen, T. , B. and Nielsen, C. , A. , "International Trusteeship and Democratic Peacebuilding: The EU in the Balkans", Blockmans, S. , Wouters, J. and Ruys, T. , (ed.), **The European Union and Peacebuilding**, The Netherlands, T.M.C. Asser Press, 2010, pp. 407-432

[252] Knudsen and Nielsen, pp. 417

[253] Serwer, pp. 42

secessionist rhetoric is again spreading from the Bosnian Serb-majority entity of Republika Srpska. The leaders of Republika Srpska are insisting on Bosnia's dissolution.[254]

Many argue that Bosnia is at risk of becoming a failed state and has been forsaken by the EU.[255] According to a Bosnian political scientist Jasmin Mujanovic, "the EU has completely abandoned the idea of substantive constitutional and political reform in Bosnia. The Brussels has failed to challenge the local elites and status quo.[256]Aleksandar Brezar, a Bosnian journalist is also warning about the fragile situation of Bosnia in his article as follows:

> "For those who still believe in a single, unified Bosnia, the days of blundering naivety are long gone. Scarred by the experience of the past three decades, Bosnians are painfully aware that this multicultural, multi-ethnic project is under serious threat. More than ever, we need Europe's help. If Europe allows Bosnia to fall victim to ethno-nationalist forces, it will be sealing its own fate, as well as ours."[257]

Now the Bosnian people ask for the EU to take them from Dayton process to accession to the EU. They argue that the EU should be braver and more ambitious because the risk of doing nothing is great. Since Dayton Peace Agreement created an unjust and unsustainable system, Bosnia is now facing the risk of disintegration. So, the EU must help Bosnia to rebuild a new political structure and a make a new constitution.[258]

2.6. Enhanced EU Engagement with the Western Balkans

With the prospect of EU membership, the Balkan states gained momentum on the way to stabilization and democratization in the first decade of millennium. Among the countries of former Yugoslavia, Croatia and Slovenia became the EU members, Serbia, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Albania, acquired formal candidate status, and Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo are waiting for the candidacy. But the unresolved internal problems of the Western

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[254] Brezar, A. , "Bosnia is close to the edge. We need Europe's help", 2019, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/may/29/bosnia-europe-econmy-ethnic-nationalist (20.03.2020)
[255] Tisdall, S. , "Complacent Europe not ready for another Balkan meltdown", 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/oct/06/complacent-europe-balkans-meltdown-russia (20.03.2020)
[256] Mujanovic, J. , "The EU and the Crisis of Democracy in the Balkans", *Sage Journals, Political Insight*, 2018, Vol. 9, No. 1, pp. 9-11 https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/2041905818764698 (13.05.2020)
[257] Brezar, A. , "Bosnia is close to the edge. We need Europe's help", 2019, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/may/29/bosnia-europe-econmy-ethnic-nationalist (20.03.2020)
[258] Falatar, B. , "Bosnia is at risk of becoming a failed state. Does the EU want that on its doorstep?", 2019, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/nov/12/bosnia-crisis-eu-europe (20.03.2020)

Balkan countries, the economic crisis in Europe, rising far-right movements and lastly the Brexit issue caused the stand-still clause in the enlargement process. On the other hand, the political protests which started in 2013 across the region, show that something is going wrong. According to Freedom House[259] reports, the average democracy score for the region -excluding Slovenia- has been in steady decline since 2010, and in 2016 it came back to the same value recorded 12 years earlier, in 2004.[260]

With the declaration of the former European Commissioner for enlargement Joannes Hahn in 2014, that no new members will be joining the EU for the next five years, the EU officially showed the Western Balkan countries the "waiting room".[261] In that speech, by referring to the Western Balkans, Hahn also said that "This tragic European region needs a European perspective. Otherwise the old demons of the past will reawaken." [262]

Like Hahn noted, the old demons reawakened. Several Balkan capitals were hit by anti-government protests. The people demanded fair elections, freedom of speech and mostly reacted against the high level of corruption. On the other hand, in 2015, when a great number of migrants wanted to pass to Europe through the Balkan territory, the European Union had to review its enlargement strategy towards this region. The EU was not worried about only the migrants, also about "the increased radicalisation and high numbers of foreign fighter originating from Western Balkans."[263]

In October 2015, European Commission Former President Jean-Claude Juncker convened the leaders of Western Balkan countries and they agreed on 17-point plan of action. The aim was to provide refugees and migrants along the Western Balkans route with shelter, food and healthcare and to manage the migration flow and borders.[264] In its Global Strategy Paper dated 2016, the EU again drew attention to the importance of the region regarding the migrant issue and recognised the need for "political reform, the rule of law, economic convergence and good neighbourly relations in Western Balkan countries."[265]

[259] The U.S based non-governmental organization that conducts research and advocacy on democracy, political freedom, and human rights.

[260] Csaky, Z. , "Nations in Transit 2016, Back Where We Started in the Balkans", Freedom House, 2016, https://freedomhouse.org/article/back-where-we-started-balkans (18.03.2020)

[261] Juncker, J. , C. , "A New Start for Europe", European Commission Press Corner, 2014, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/SPEECH_14_567 (18.03.2020)

[262] Ibid.

[263] European Parliament, "Peace and Security in 2018, An evaluation of EU peacebuilding in the Western Balkans", pp.25

[264] European Commission, "Western Balkans Migration Route: 17-point plan of action", 2015, https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-is-new/news/news/2015/20151026_1_en (14.05.2020)

[265] European Union External Service, "A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy", pp. 27

In 2017, in an informal meeting of the European Council, the heads of states discussed the situation in the Western Balkans, and they agreed on the need of continuing with the reform path. In the press conference after the meeting, the former president of the Council Donald Tusk reaffirmed the support of the Union to the countries of the region and said that "I hope this positive signal from the EU will be heard in the region." [266]

How much Tusk's message was heard by the Balkan states is open to question but the next year the EU adopted an enhanced EU Enlargement Strategy for the Western Balkans. In the Communication from the Commission, the EU again underlined the importance of the region with the following words: "It is a geostrategic investment in a stable, strong and united Europe based on common values."[267] From that moment the representatives of the Union and the heads of states started to visit the region frequently. The EU acted as a mediator in the political crisis in North Macedonia and also succeeded in solving the name dispute between Greece and North Macedonia. On the other hand, the Belgrade-Pristina dialogue was put on the fast track.

At the time of writing this thesis, the countries and institutions of the Union are discussing a new enlargement strategy for Western Balkans because in October 2019, France blocked the enlargement process by vetoing the opening of accession negotiations with North Macedonia and Albania. The former President of the European Council Donald Tusk and the former President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker criticized the French move. Moreover, Juncker called the French veto "a historic mistake".[268] While France and nine other EU countries proposed a model for a negotiation structure, the European Commission came up with an official proposal for a refreshed enlargement approach in February 2020. [269]

Even though the European Union was harshly criticized for enlargement fatigue, it was rather successful in the peacebuilding efforts in North Macedonia, when comparing with the

[266] European Council, "Informal meeting of the 27 heads of state or government", 2017, https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/23619/170303-euco-background-brief-final.pdf (19.03.2020)

[267] European Commission, "A credible enlargement perspective for and enhanced EU engagement with the Western Balkans", 2018, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/communication-credible-enlargement-perspective-western-balkans_en.pdf (19.03.2020)

[268] Cvetanoska, L. , "North Macedonia won't be joining the E.U. anytime soon. Did the E.U. lose its peak leverage?", 2019, https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/11/14/north-macedonia-wont-be-joining-anytime-soon-did-eu-lose-its-peak-leverage/ (19.03.2020)

[269] Lazarevic, M. , Maric, S. and Subotic, S. , "Yet Another Credible EU Perspective", 2020, https://europeanwesternbalkans.com/2020/02/08/yet-another-credible-eu-perspective/ (19.03.2020)

other Balkan states. It could manage to solve the political crisis in 2015 when the country was at the edge of a civil war. Besides, in 2018 it could succeed in solving the name dispute between Greece and Macedonia by making the ground ready for the signing of Prespa Agreement. North Macedonia moved from the edge of a civil war to the Euro-Atlantic path again with the efforts of the Union. But the effectiveness of the Union in implementing its positive peace agenda, the deficiencies of the peacebuilding process and the Macedonian people's thoughts about the role of the EU are elaborated in the next chapter.

3. PEACEBUILDING EFFORTS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION IN THE NORTH MACEDONIA

If someone wants to analyse the peacebuilding efforts of the EU in Western Balkans, The North Macedonia appears one of the most important laboratories. Macedonia, called "oasis of peace" as it remained free from ethnic conflicts during the disintegration of Yugoslavia, witnessed internal confusion at the beginning of a new century. Sitting on the peace table through the mediation of international actors, this small Balkan country has turned its face to Euro-Atlantic integration since then.

In this chapter, the policies the EU pursued to achieve positive peace in Macedonia, which officially became a candidate in 2005 and the effectiveness of these policies will be examined. First, the peaceful position taken by Macedonia during the disintegration of Yugoslavia will be discussed, and then the Ohrid Framework Agreement, signed after the ethnic crisis that erupted in 2001, will be briefly analysed. Along with the Ohrid Agreement, how the country has progressed in the EU integration process, the factors affecting the process and the reflection of the integration process on the relations between ethnic groups will be evaluated from the social constructivist perspective. The examination will be based on the data generated from the observations made and in-depth interviews carried out with three ethnic groups in Macedonia in autumn 2019.

3.1. Peaceful Secession from Yugoslavia and the Relations with the European Union

During the disintegration of Yugoslavia, nationalist tendencies escalated, and the conflicts broke out first in Slovenia and then Croatia when they wanted to break away from Yugoslavia. Then in 1992, one of the bloodiest wars in Europe history started in Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, Macedonia succeeded to remain free from ethnic conflicts until 2001. In this section, first the peaceful secession of Macedonia from Yugoslavia is examined and then the focus shifts to the relations between Macedonia and European Union.

With its official name the North Macedonia, one of the successor states of the former Yugoslavia, declared independence in 1991. Actually, the Macedonians, together with the Bosnians, pressed for some kind of 'asymmetrical federation' of Yugoslavia but the other republics did not accept it.[270] Even though the declaration of independence outraged the president of Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Slobodan Milosevic, Macedonia was able to secede from Yugoslavia peacefully.[271] With the request of Macedonian President Kiro Gligorov, the UN deployed peacekeeping forces in the country. The international community, during this phase, often referred to Macedonia as "oasis of peace" as it remained free from conflicts.

However, in the shadow of the wars in its neighbourhood, the transition from a Yugoslav-style communist society to Western-oriented democratic society was not such easy. The Albanian and Serb population in the country opposed the independence and boycotted the referendum for independence. They were worried about losing their rights.[272] But these disputes did not turn into an active conflict and at the end they succeeded to reach a political compromise.[273]

Actually, most of the Macedonians feared from what was happening in their neighbourhood and spreading of war to their country. A Macedonian singer Rosana Sarik-Todorovska has expressed their fears by a song named "Sviri mi cigane ('Play for me, Gypsy')" which became a summer hit in 1992. There was a striking sentence in the song: "Today we are happy and healthy, tomorrow we may not be so."[274]

One of the interviewees, the leader of a political party, Recep,[275] defined this transition period as thorny regarding economic, social situation and security matters. Recep said that "During the Yugoslav conflicts, Skopje was not too far away from Sarajevo or Zagreb, of course

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[270] Phillips, J. , **Macedonia, Warlords & Rebels in the Balkans**, United States: Yale University Press, 2004

[271] Lakkam, J. and Punthong, W, "Crossing the Bridge over Troubled Water, The European Union and Peacebuilding in Macedonia", *Sripatum Review of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 2018, Vol. 18, No. 2 , pp.158-168 https://so05.tci-thaijo.org/index.php/spurhs/article/view/151065/110570 (17.05.2020)

[272] Ibid.

[273] Xhemaili, M. , "The Role of Political Leadership in Macedonia in Function of EU Integration", *European Journal of Social Sciences Education and Research*, Vol. 3, No. 3, pp. 98-108

[274] Phillips, pp. 49

[275] In this study, pseudonyms are used to preserve the confidentiality of the people interviewed.

we have been affected. But I think, the multicultural structure of Macedonia has given our subconscious tolerance, so we have not had a war."[276]

When it declared independence, Macedonia applied to the European Community for recognition, but it was blocked by Greece because of the country's name. At the European Council in Lisbon on 27 June 1992 the Community declared that they prepared to recognize the Republic within its present borders under a title which did not include the term "Macedonia".[277] On the other hand, The United Nations admitted Macedonia as a member on 8 April 1993, under the temporary name of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM).[278]

Just one year after the declaration of independence, Macedonia appointed its representative in Brussels and in 1995 the parties established diplomatic relations for a wide range of cooperation in the fields of trade, financial operations and transport. A year later, Macedonia became a full partner in the PHARE programme.[279] Being able to avert ethnic conflicts until 2001, then, it became the first country in the region which signed the Stabilisation and Association Agreement.

3.2. The Ethnic Conflicts in the Early 2000s and Ohrid Framework Agreement

Macedonia has managed to break up with Belgrade peacefully –with the support of UN and EU-, but the ethnic groups in the country were not happy with the new state. After Macedonia declared its independence, it adopted its first constitution in November 1991. The statement "Macedonia is established as a national state of the Macedonian people"[280] was added to the preamble of the new Constitution. Turks and Albanians lost their position as the founding nations which had existed in the previous constitution, so only the Macedonian people were accepted as the founding nation. It was not acceptable for other nationalities. Therefore, Albanians took to the streets to oppose the constitution. It can be said that this constitutional

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[276] Interview with Recep, 22.09.2019, Skopje

[277] European Court of Justice, "Order of the Court of 29 June 1994. - Commission of the European Communities v Hellenic Republic. - Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia - Serious international tension constituting a threat of war - Action under the second paragraph of Article 225 of the EC Treaty - Interim measures. - Case C-120/94 R.", 1994, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:61994CO0120 (21.04.2020)

[278] Phillips, pp. 56

[279] Government of Republic of North Macedonia, "Timeline of the relations with EU", 2020, http://www.sep.gov.mk/en/content/?id=8 (29.03.2020)

[280] "Macedonia (Republic of)'s Constitution of 1991 with Amendments through 2011", 2020, https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Macedonia_2011.pdf?lang=en (29.03.2020)

change was the starting point of ethnic problems that would arise in Macedonia in the following years.[281]

The economic fluctuation and the problems with high-level education in the mother tongue also paved the way for conflicts. There was no guarantee for minority-language education at the university level in the new constitution. In 1994, University of Tetovo[282] was founded as an Albanian-language university by the Albanian community's initiative and it ended with the protests of Macedonians and street clashes. The university was closed, and the rector was sentenced in prison.[283]

In the late 1990s, Macedonia was affected by the Albanian uprising in Tiran – the capital of Albania -, then the crisis in Kosovo. In 1999, thousands of Albanians migrated to Macedonia because of the pressure of nationalist Serbs in Kosovo.[284] The National Liberation Army (NLA) of Albanians, which was founded with the former fighters of Kosovo Liberation Army, started guerrilla activities in mid-2001. The conflicts began in February 2001 and resulted in "more than 200 casualties, among whom over sixty were Macedonian soldiers and policemen. More than 100,000 persons were exiled or internally displaced." [285]

Ali, who was working as a journalist during the conflict in 2001, tells us what happened as follows: "We had the potential to be another Bosnia. On the way home in the evening, I saw the lights of a few classes in the primary school of our neighbourhood. I looked at my neighbours who were leaving the school with a bag. Inside the school, Macedonian police was distributing weapons in exchange for an identity card. I entered the house; I saw my neighbours carrying a kalashnikov. I thought about what to do. I thought of Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is exactly what happened in Bosnia. But it had not been like Bosnia, the intervention came."[286]

It appears that the multi-ethnic structure of Macedonia is both a great chance and an important risk factor. There is tolerance especially among the people in the middle-aged group

[281] Koyuncu, Ç. A. and Yılmaz, S. , "Analysis of Sustainability of Stability in Macedonia in terms of the Ohrid Framework Agreement", *International Journal of Social Inquiry*, 2018, Vol. 11, No. 1, pp. 155-181

[282] Although it was founded in 1994, Macedonian government did not recognized it as a state university until 2004.

[283] Phillips, pp. 69

[284] Koyuncu and Yılmaz, pp. 162

[285] Brunnbauer, U., "The implementation of the Ohrid agreement: ethnic Macedonian resentments", *Journal on Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues in Europe*, 2002, Vol.1, pp. 1-23, https://www.ssoar.info/ssoar/bitstream/handle/document/6215/ssoar-jemie-2002-iss_1-brunnbauer-the_implementation_of_the_ohrid.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y&lnkname=ssoar-jemie-2002-iss_1-brunnbauer-the_implementation_of_the_ohrid.pdf (29.03.2020)

[286] Interview with Ali, 21.09.2019, Skopje

who lived in the Yugoslav period. They lived in the same neighbourhood for years and had shopping from the same bazaar. However, different ethnic groups with the same rights became second-class citizens with the establishment of this new state and the Macedonian superiority emerged in political and social life. Although this might have caused unrest from time to time, Macedonian citizens avoided war with the impact of what they saw especially in Bosnia Herzegovina.

But the game changed with the crisis in Kosovo and Macedonia failed to prevent 2001 conflicts. One of the Macedonians interviewed for this study, Alexander, describes the 2001 crisis as an imported war from Kosovo. According to Alexander, there was no shortage of personal rights for Albanians in Macedonia, and it was not the Albanians living in Macedonia who fought against the Macedonian police in 2001.[287] They were all imported from Kosovo. Actually, ethnic Macedonians in general, think that there was no problem between Albanians and Macedonians until 2001 because Albanians used to have their individual rights and the existing problems arose with the provocation of neighbouring countries. As a matter of fact, Albanians and Turks claim that they were deprived of their individual rights over time. Macedonian superiority, especially in the military and law enforcement agencies, has become an element of fear for the other nations.

When an ethnic conflict erupted in Macedonia in 2001, the international community, in particular the EU, which had failed to respond decisively to the break-up of the former Yugoslavia, took action as soon as possible to prevent conflicts. The Ohrid Framework Agreement (OFA)[288] was signed between the government of Macedonia and ethnic Albanian representatives on 13 August 2001. In addition to ending the active conflict, the agreement has served as a constitutional framework for securing the future of democracy in the country and promoting the development of Euro-Atlantic integration of Macedonia.[289] The key role the EU played in the resolution of the conflict demonstrated how far the Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) had developed since the early 1990s.[290] The requirement for the

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[287] Interview with Alexander, 29.09.2019, Ohrid
[288] The Ohrid Framework Agreement is known as Ramkoven Agreement in Macedonia
[289] OSCE, "Ohrid Framework Agreement", 2001, https://www.osce.org/skopje/100622 (01.04.2020)
[290] Mace, C. , "Operation Concordia: Developing a 'European' Approach to Crisis Management?", *International Peacekeeping*, 2004, Vol.11, No.3, pp. 474-490
https://ams.hi.is/wp-content/uploads/old/Edward%20Operation%20Concordia.pdf (17.05.2020)

implementation of the OFA later became one of the most critical conditions for the EU membership.

The EU made use of a range of instruments - financial, civilian and military - in a coordinated manner to guarantee the implementation of OFA. The EUFOR Concordia was the first military operation of the EU and the aim was to contribute further to a stable and secure environment and to allow the implementation of the OFA.[291] On 15 December 2003, the EUFOR Concordia was replaced by an EU Police Mission, code-named EUPOL PROXIMA. In line with the objectives of the OFA and the Stability and Association Process (SAP), the mission aimed to promote the gradual stabilisation of the country.[292] The most important aim of the mission was addressing the issue of inequitable representation of minorities in the police.

Hasan, a shopkeeper, who has been working in the Ottoman Bazaar in Skopje for many years, emphasized the importance of the EUPOL PROXIMA in the interview. According to Hasan, by the decline in the ratio of Macedonian population in law enforcement after the Ohrid agreement, the Macedonians lost their superiority and the Muslim population felt relieved since especially Albanian and Turkish Muslims were afraid of arbitrary treatments of Macedonians until then.[293]

The OFA ended the ethnic conflicts in 2001 in Macedonia and established a peaceful environment. There have been many changes both in the constitutional and legal terms and in the field of ethnic rights in practice. The preamble of the constitution has also been changed. The constitution in 1991 was defining Macedonia as a nation state of the 'Macedonian people'. This phrase was removed, and the new constitution started with an expression as "The citizens of the Republic of Macedonia" which is much more ethnically inclusive one.[294]

Another interviewee Nezhdet, who is an Albanian academician, stated that "OFA changed the character of the state from a mono-ethnic to multi-ethnic society and institutionalized the multicultural character of Macedonian society, effectively turning

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[291] European External Action Service, "Missions and Operation, Concordia", http://www.eeas.europa.eu/archives/csdp/missions-and-operations/concordia/index_en.htm (31.03.2020)
[292] Ionnidess, I. , "EUPOL PROXIMA /EUPAT (fYROM)", Giovanni Grevi, Damien Helly and Daniel Keohane (ed.), **European Security and Defence Policy; The First Ten Years**, European Union Institute for Security Studies, 2009, pp.187-200
[293] Interview with Hasan, 22.09.2019, Skopje
[294] Ilievski, Z. and Taleski, D. , "Was the EU's Role in Conflict Management in Macedonia a Success?", *Ethnopolitics*, 2009, Vol. 8, No. 3. pp.355-367
https://www.academia.edu/1207127/Was_the_EUs_Role_in_Conflict_Management_in_Macedonia_a_Success (17.05.2020)

Macedonia into a multicultural state." According to Nezhdet, the main aim of the agreement was to promote a peaceful and harmonic development of the society, thus to respect the ethnic and religious interests of all the citizens; an equal representation of all ethnic groups.[295]

The OFA introduced consociationalism,[296] yet the main focus of the agreement was the relation between two ethnic groups, namely Macedonians and Albanians. All other communities in Macedonia were largely ignored in the agreement as well as in the implementation process. Ronan Macnamara who has worked for several years under various humanitarian and security organisations such as the UN and OSCE in the Balkans, draws attention to the deficiencies of the agreement regarding the rights of other minorities. He argues that the international community needs to stop to treat Macedonia as a battleground between Albanians and Macedonians. The country is also home to hundreds of thousands of people from other ethnic groups. Slavic Muslims for instance, have to align themselves with either ethnic Macedonians or ethnic Albanians so as to gain more political access since they are not recognized as a separate entity. [297]

But the main objection point of the OFA is that the personal rights of minorities are granted according to their population rate. If a minority group has a population of over 20 percent, they can use their mother tongue as an official language, or they can be represented in public institutions according to their population rate. [298]

One of the Turkish politicians in the country, Recep, expressed the disappointment of Turkish minority about this agreement. Recep believes that OFA was signed between two nationalities and it ignored the others. The rate condition in OFA is disturbing the other minorities which are under 20 percentage. He said that "If we are going to be a society, it is strange to divide this society by numbers. We are not the ratio; we are human beings. In the

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[295] Interview with Nezhdet, 01.10.2019, Tetovo

[296] Consociationalism is the power-sharing model of governance in a multi-ethnic state. There are four main characteristics of consociationalism; grand coalition, proportionality, segmental autonomy, and mutual veto. For further information, https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/spsr.12384

[297] Macnamara, R. , "Slavic Muslims: The Forgotten Minority of Macedonia", *Security and Human Rights*, 2013, Vol.23, No.4, pp.347-356
 http://0212wo8fl.y.http.eds.b.ebscohost.com.proxy2.marmara-elibrary.com/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=3&sid=e9c9c4ac-1fe7-454a-886e-56c47de26de3%40sessionmgr103 (02.04.2020)

[298] Framework Agreement, OSCE, 2001, https://www.osce.org/skopje/100622?download=true 02.04.2020

1976 constitution, Turkish was the third official language. They took away these rights from us with the constitutional amendments."[299]

During my stay in Tetovo, where the Albanian population is high, I met an Albanian academician Gezim. He agreed with Recep and said that with the Ohrid agreement, the nations became percentages. He expressed his feelings with the following words:

"We were human beings; we became numbers with Ohrid Agreement. You can use Albanian language for 20 percent, Turkish for 3 percent and Romanian for 1 percent. With such a perspective, you cannot lead to peace. For example, there is a Retro Roman minority in Switzerland, their population is thirty thousand and their language is the official language in Switzerland. They have their own cantons. This is the way it should be. Yes, I live in Tetovo and I am over 20 percent in this city. But what if I want to exercise my rights in another city where Macedonian population is high. I have no rights then. People are treated not by quality, but by the population in that city."[300]

Even the Macedonians criticize this percentage condition of the agreement. According to Alexander, it is not fair that people can get a job based on their nationality instead of qualifications. He said that social justice cannot be achieved this way.[301]

Actually, the population rate of minorities is another topic of discussion in the country. Since the independence, just two censuses have been held in Macedonia. According to the last census in 2002, of the 2,022,547 people in Macedonia, while 64.17% are Macedonians, Albanians made up 25.17% and Turkish people 3.85%.[302] Since the representation of minorities and share of public resources are linked with the population –the logic of Ohrid Agreement- , the population rate becomes more important. The Albanians claim that their population size is much more than asserted in the census, meanwhile Macedonians oppose it. Frankly, the fact that no census has been conducted in the country since then, makes this debate more significant.

As a result, the Ohrid agreement, signed with the mediation of the EU and the United States of America, has stopped the conflicts in the country and aimed to transform the structure

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[299] Interview with Recep, 22.09.2019, Skopje
[300] Interview with Gezim, 02.10.2019, Tetovo
[301] Interview with Alexander, 29.09.2020, Ohrid
[302] "Census of Population, Households and Dwellings in the Republic of Macedonia", 2002, http://www.stat.gov.mk/Publikacii/knigaX.pdf 28.05.2020

of the country from a mono-ethnic to a multi-ethnic one with constitutional and legal changes. However, just like Dayton Peace Agreement, the OFA has some structural problems. The fact that the agreement ignores minorities other than the Albanians in the country and the article gives individual rights according to the population rate, are some of these problems. Nevertheless, minorities in the country are partly satisfied with the rights they have earned compared to the pre-Ohrid period and they expect the EU to be more insistent on the implementation of these achievements.

In my interview with Ali, he also pointed the importance of Ohrid Agreement regarding the minority rights. According to Ali, ethnic minorities did not have rights before Ohrid Agreement. He said that,

> "We were treated as second-class citizens. For example, we would go to the hospital, there would be no doctor. Macedonians did not used to hire doctors from other nationalities. We were deprived of many rights. Some balances changed after 2001. Some criteria were set with the initiative of the EU and the USA such as fair representation principle. Many improvements have been made since then. But there are still shortcomings in this regard."[303]

3.3. Macedonia's Integration Process from the Social Constructivist Perspective

In the Thessaloniki European Council in 2003, Macedonia – along with the other Western Balkans countries – was identified as a potential candidate. Macedonia applied for full membership in March 2004 and the EU granted candidate status to Macedonia in December 2005.[304] Even though the European Commission recommended that accession negotiations be opened in 2009 and it repeated the recommendation every year, and the Council of the EU decided to open negotiations in late March 2020. But a date for the beginning of negotiations has not still been set. In this section of the chapter, from the social constructivist perspective, the positive peacebuilding efforts of the EU in post-conflict context and Macedonia's integration process to the EU are evaluated. First, how Macedonia progressed on the way to the EU is analysed and then the external and internal challenges in this process are presented.

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[303] Interview with Ali, 21.09.2019, Skopje
[304] European Commission, "North Macedonia", 2020,
 https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/countries/detailed-country-information/north-macedonia_en (25.05.2020)

Finally, the effectiveness of the EU's mediation efforts in overcoming those challenges is questioned.

On the occasion of the ceremony marking the end of the EU Police Mission EUPOL PROXIMA, the EU High Representative for CFSP Javier Solona declared that European Union's relationship with the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia was moving from post-crisis stabilisation to pre-accession integration.[305] As Solana declared, EU's peace agenda in Macedonia has shifted from negative peace -the absence of war- towards agenda of positive peace which is linked to the removal of systematic root causes of structural violence. Through the process of reforms regulated by the Union, Macedonia is expected to consolidate peacebuilding efforts – particularly on governance and rule of law issues. It was a fundamental prerequisite in this process. [306]

With the carrot of eventual membership, the EU has often dictated its own standards, norms and rules in the country. As social constructivist scholars argue, norms and ideas shared among agents are as important as the material world. They argue that agents and structures influence and constitute each other in a process[307] which refers to the Europeanisation process of Macedonia in this case. Alexander Wendt also emphasizes the role of ideas. He argues that the identities and interests of purposive actors are constructed by these shared ideas.[308]

Johan Galtung who is the first scholar differentiating the aspects of peace as negative and positive, suggests a structure of peace based on norms by referring to the European Community. Defining the EU as a normative power, Ian Manner also refers to "centrality of peace" as the first basic norm of the EU. He argues that the EU's normative difference comes from its historical context since it was created in a post-war environment by reviling nationalisms.[309]

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[305] Solana, J. , "Statement by Javier SOLANA, EU High Representative for CFSP, on the occasion of the ceremony marking the end of the EU Police Mission in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", 2005 https://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/declarations/87469.pdf (03.04.2020)

[306] European Parliament, "An evaluation of EU Peacebuilding in the Western Balkans", 2018, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/620207/EPRS_STU(2018)620207_EN.pdf (04.04.2020)

[307] Onuf, N. , "Constructivism, A User's Manual" , **International Relations in a Constructed World**, Kubalkova, V. , (ed.), Newyork: Routledge, 1998, pp.58-78.

[308] Wendt, **Social Theory of International Politics**, pp.1

[309] Manners, I. , "Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms", 2002, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 2, pp. 235-58, http://www.princeton.edu/~amoravcs/library/mannersnormativepower.pdf (09.05.2020)

As Manner mentioned, the EU, which has managed to bring peace to the western part of the continent by confronting nationalism after the Second World War, is trying to do the same for the eastern part of the continent today. It is the task of the EU to bring peace and stability to Macedonia, which managed to stay away from an active conflict until 2001, but then fell into the deadly trap of nationalism. As the constructivists claim, the EU is trying to fulfill this task through mutual interaction, by rebuilding the state, the state institutions and society based on universal norms and values.

However, as the European Parliament made criticisms about the enlargement process in its 2018 report, since the Euro crisis in 2008, the EU seems to have slowed down the integration process, rather than accelerating it in Western Balkans. In the report, it is mentioned that "Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker's announcement in 2014, considered unfortunate by some, that no future enlargement was to be expected during his term, reinforced exasperation in the region (at government and societal levels) and further slowed much needed reforms."[310]

In the case of Macedonia, there were two important factors that slowed down the integration process. One of them was the disagreements of Macedonia with its neighbours, especially, the name dispute with Greece. Another obstacle was the VMRO-DPMNE party, known with its nationalist policies, which came to power in 2006.

3.3.1. External Challenge: The Name Dispute with Greece and the Prespa Agreement

The Macedonian ethnicity has always been the most disputed issue in the Balkans. The Bulgarians asserted that Macedonians and their language is a branch of the Bulgarian nation and language while the Greeks claimed that Macedonia is a sacred part of Greece. The Serbs insisted that it was southern Serbia and the Albanians claimed that much of Macedonia was part of great Albania, which is the homeland of the ancient Illyrians. The Macedonians' true identity was contested for centuries because of their heterogeneity in ethnic terms. [311]

When Macedonia declared independence with the name of "Republic of Macedonia", Greece asked Macedonia to change it since the name "Macedonia" was referring also to the Greek Northern Province and Greece accused the new Republic of using the name for its

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[310] European Parliament, "An evaluation of EU Peacebuilding in the Western Balkans", pp.25
[311] Phillips, pp. 15

irredentist aim. According to Greece, the ancient Macedonian Kingdom was an integrative part of Greek History. Although Macedonia declared that it does not have any irredentist purpose and went through some constitutional arrangements and changed the flag to which Greece objected, no realistic solution could be found between the two countries for many years.

Skopje was admitted to the UN as "The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", a temporary reference which was used in other international bodies for years. The recognition of Macedonia as an independent state, with a name that includes the term 'Macedonia', disturbed Greece. Thereafter, Greece intensified the propaganda to veto the accession of Macedonia to the EU and NATO. At the end of 2008, during the NATO summit in Bucharest, Greece blocked the invitation of Macedonia to join NATO, although Macedonia had fulfilled the requirements. [312]

On the other hand, in Macedonia, the nationalist policies of the ruling party, Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization – Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity (VMRO-DPMNE) Party, escalated the name dispute. The leader of VMRO-DPMNE, Nikola Gruevski, aimed to construct a Macedonian history and identity by emphasizing a connection to ancient Macedonia, which disturbed the neighbours of the country as well as the minorities living in the country. Gruevski's government named the airport in Skopje and the main highway going through the country as Alexander the Great. Giant statutes of two historical figures, Alexander the Great and his father Phillip II, over whom both Greece and Macedonia claims ownership, were built in the centre of Skopje.[313] This annoyed Athens and they perceived this move as another provocation.

A fundamental principle of constructivist theory is that people act toward objects, including other actors, on the basis of the meanings that the objects have for them.[314] This is what exactly happened between Macedonia and Greece. For instance, when Macedonia decided to use the Vergina Sun -the symbol found on Phillip II's lamax- or renamed its airport as Alexander the Great, it provoked fear and insecurity in Greece. They created a security

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[312] Kafedjiska, V. , "Macedonia in the Waiting Room of the European Union, Betrayed Hopes", *International Journal of Advanced Research*, 2018, Vol. 6, No. 2, pp.1835-1841
http://www.journalijar.com/uploads/947_IJAR-22274.pdf (17.05.2020)
[313] The photos taken in the city centre is in the Appendix.
[314] Wendt, A. , "Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics", *International Organization*, 1992, Vol. 46, No. 2, pp. 391-425
https://courses.helsinki.fi/sites/default/files/course-material/4594742/Wendt.pdf (06.04.2020)

dilemma. As Alexander Wendt argues, "Security dilemmas are not given by anarchy or nature. The forms of identity and interest constitute such dilemmas."[315]

Like constructivists, Copenhagen School theorists also argue that "the senses of threat, vulnerability and (in)security are socially constructed rather than objectively present or absent."[316] In addition to international security, Barry Buzan has introduced the term "societal security" which is about situations when societies perceive a threat in identity terms.[317] In the case of societal security, the survival is about the preservation of identity. The scholars argue that upholding the national, cultural symbols and dresses are the defensive measures of the societal security. [318]

In this case, the government of Greece or the Greek society perceived the use of those national and cultural symbols as a threat to their sovereignty. On the other hand, Greece's refusal to recognize their country's name was interpreted as a threat to the identity of ethnic Macedonians.[319]

The turning point in the name dispute came with the change in government in Macedonia in 2017. The new centre-left Prime Minister, Zoran Zaev and his Greek counterpart Alexis Tsipras aimed to resolve the dispute. Backed by the European Union representatives, the prime ministers of two countries reached an agreement under the auspices of the United Nations in 2018. [320] Macedonia adopted "The Republic of North Macedonia" as its official name. On the other hand, Greece agreed not to object to Macedonia's application or membership in international multilateral and regional organizations and institutions such as the EU or NATO. [321]

Although this agreement was protested by the nationalists of both countries, one of the biggest obstacles has been overcome regarding the stability of the region. As stated in the agreement itself, it was signed "on the need to strengthen peace, stability, security and further promote cooperation in South-eastern Europe."[322]

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[315] Ibid.
[316] Buzan, Waever and Wilde, **Security, A New Framework for Analysis**, pp.57
[317] Waever, Buzan, Kelstrup and Lemaitre, **Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe**, pp.185
[318] Ibid.
[319] Lamovska, pp. 22
[320] Marusic, S. , J. and Zivanovic, M. , "Timeline: The Path to Macedonia's 'Name' Deal", 2018, https://balkaninsight.com/2018/09/29/macedonia-name-deal-timeline-in-pictures-09-28-2018/ (07.04.2020)
[321] Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, "Final Agreement for the Settlement of the Differences as described in The United Nations Security Council Resolutions 817 (1993) and 845 (1993), the Termination of the Interim Accord of 1995 and the Establishment of a Strategic Partnership between the Parties", 2018, https://vlada.mk/sites/default/files/dokumenti/spogodba-en.pdf (08.04.2020)
[322] Ibid.

On the other hand, the blocking of Macedonia's Euro-Atlantic integration has created an immense credibility problem for the EU in Macedonia.[323] At the beginning of the crisis, the EU claimed that the name dispute was a bilateral issue which means that the Union had failed to act as a neutral mediator.[324] The European Parliament also emphasized the slow reaction of EU to the name dispute and admits that it negatively impacted the motivation of political leaders for implementing reforms arising from the OFA and the country faced nationalist tensions, corruption and misrule. [325]

Also, the Commission, which recommended opening negotiations with the country in its reports every year since 2009, warned the Community regarding the credibility of enlargement process and reported as:

> "Failure to act on this recommendation poses potentially serious challenges to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and to the EU. This calls into question the credibility of the enlargement process, which is based on clear conditionality and the principle of own merits. The lack of a credible EU perspective puts at risk the sustainability of the country's reform efforts."[326]

The Prespa Agreement irritated some ethnic Macedonians. One of them was Alexander who defined the Prespa Agreement as an insult to the Macedonian people and a fascist practice. He said that "Show me a piece of land so that it does not have the right to use its constitutional name and give up its name to become a member of an international organization. It is something like a deal with Hitler."[327]

Nevertheless, the people interviewed for this thesis study mostly agreed that this name dispute had to be resolved in some way. In fact, the EU was too late to do this. If the problem had been solved before, it would not be so painful, perhaps a better deal could be reached. Another Macedonian interviewee, Dimitri, supported the deal. According to Dimitri, if the parties had reached an agreement in the 1990s, it would have been much better for Macedonia.

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[323] Ilievski and Taleski, pp. 365

[324] Messas, K. , "Failure in Former Yugoslavia: hard lessons for the European Union", Danopoulos, C. P. and Messas, K, (ed.), **Crises in the Balkans: Views from the Participants**, Westview Press, 1997, **quoted in** Ilievski, Z. and Taleski, D. , "Was the EU's Role in Conflict Management in Macedonia a Success?", Ethnopolitics, Vol. 8, No. 3. pp.355-367

[325] European Parliament, "An evaluation of EU Peacebuilding in the Western Balkans", pp. 36

[326] European Commission, "Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council, Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2013-2014", 2013
https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/key_documents/2013/package/strategy_paper_2013_en.pdf (12.04.2020)

[327] Interview with Alexander, 29.09.2019

He said that "Under these conditions, this agreement is optimal. Yes, it was a more privileged agreement for one side, but it would have been worse if it had been late more."[328] Another Macedonian, Maja, thinks that the agreement did not harm the Macedonian identity. According to her, both Macedonia and Greece made concessions.[329] One of the Slavic Muslims living in the country, Leyla said that the agreement never bothered her because the Prespa Agreement made it possible for Macedonia to be a part of NATO, and she hoped that the same would happen for EU membership, as well.[330]

What about the Albanians? What are they thinking about the Prespa Agreement? As seen in the interviews, they seem to be more delighted than the Macedonians. An Albanian lawyer, Shpresa said that the name dispute was not the problem of Albanians. The important one was the relations with neighbours and the process of EU membership.[331] Albanian academician Nezhdet defined the Prespa Agreement as the best solution. He said that "For fourth of century we faced great problems in international relations as a result of Greek veto. And thanks to the EU initiatives and democratic approach of the Zaev government, this problem was solved."[332] Another academician Gezim thinks that it is the Gruevski's government which deepened the name crisis so much. According to Gezim, if Gruevski did not annoy Greece with his nationalist policies, perhaps a much better deal would be reached.[333]

3.3.2. Internal Challenges in the Process of EU Integration

After stopping the active conflicts with the Ohrid Agreement, the EU intensified its peacebuilding efforts in Macedonia. With a membership perspective in 2005, it funded the country for reforms in many sectors such as democracy and governance, rule of law, fundamental rights, and education, strengthening civil society, employment and social policies with instruments like IPA.[334]

In order to accelerate the peacebuilding process, which was undermined by not only Greek veto but also by the political instability inside the country, the EU has made generous financial and technical assistance to Macedonia. Yet, this assistance caused a peacebuilding

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[328] Interview with Dimitri, 03.10.2019, Tetovo
[329] Interview with Maja, 03.10.2019, Tetovo
[330] Interview with Leyla, 30.09.2019, Ohrid
[331] Interview with Shpresa, 04.10.2020, Tetovo
[332] Interview with Nezhdet, 01.10.2019, Tetovo
[333] Interview with Gezim, 02.10.2019, Tetovo
[334] EU Instrument for Pre-accession (IPA) - Overall statistics, https://euprojects.mk/ (09.04.2020)

process to be in a top-down direction rather than one which engaged local people in a bottom up manner.[335] When the process did not include the local people and the citizens of the country, it did not have an influence on the society. More than this, these funds – which were left to the hands of political elites – have become materials for ethnic separations from time to time. This is due to the fact that the sources were mostly used by ethnic elites to garner political support for themselves and they were shared among the elites' ethnic groups.[336]

The Albanian academician interviewed, Gezim, claimed that sources such as funds, grants and projects sent by the EU for reforms are shared among the relevant authorities without being announced to the public. Gezim said that,

> "Does the EU contribute to peace through funds, yes, but everything is problematic. People don't know how to apply for those funds. For example, there are university projects that have never been announced. Because when they announce the projects, Albanians and Turks will also apply. According to the percentile account, they have to admit those applications. In order not to do this, they refuse most of the EU funds by saying that no application has been made."[337]

Actually, the ethnic division is mostly derived from the political structure of the country. The political parties in Macedonia are founded on ethnicity base and they are all mono ethnic. Even though in theory, their doctrines are based on demos, in practice they attract voters by policies focusing on their ethnicities.[338] So, most of the political issues gravitate around the interethnic relations. That is why when any political conflict takes place, it could simply cause a potential escalation of ethnic relations. [339] In other words, there is always a possibility of the re-ignition of ethnic conflicts since the ethnic game is still employed in the political realm. This, in turn, poses a challenge to the EU's peacebuilding momentum in the country. However, the EU still has a potential to bring about peaceful changes as it is witnessed in the last political crisis in Macedonia.[340]

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[335] Lakkam and Punthong, pp.162
[336] Ibid.
[337] Interview with Gezim, 02.10.2019, Tetovo
[338] Xhemaili, pp. 102
[339] Lakkam and Punthong, pp. 163
[340] Ibid.

The government of VMRO-DPMNE offered an enthusiastic reforming program when they came into power in 2006 but in the following years the party officials started to ignore the principle of separation of powers. They started to control nearly all public employment decisions. Also the judicial power was used for the interests of the ruling party and the media came under the strict control.[341] In addition, Gruevski and his government tried to build a strong state identity based on Macedonia's ancient history. They collocated lineage, history and religion with ethnicity, not only in their rhetoric but also in their policies.[342] Regarding the EU integration, for sure there was a general consensus on the aim of being a member of the EU, but the implementation of reforms has slowed down due to the unwillingness of ruling party.[343]

Following the country's non-invitation to NATO because of its continued naming dispute with Greece, the ruling party announced a project named "Skopje 2014". The project consisted mainly of the construction of colleges, museums and government buildings, as well as the erection of monuments depicting the historical figures from the region of Macedonia. The project, which was for reasserting the Macedonian identity, disturbed not only Greece, it was perceived as a threat to identity also by the other nationalities in the country.

The Albanian lawyer Shpresa are one of those people who think that the Gruevski's government and its projects were representing only one nation. She expressed that, "Macedonia has a multi-ethnic structure and a very old, colourful history, like ancient Macedonia or Ottoman Empire. All these had to be represented in that project. I think, Macedonian people do have an identity problem. Some claims that they are Slavic and some ancient Macedonians."[344]

The academician Nezhdet was even more annoyed about what the government was doing. He said that,

> "When VMRO-DPMNE came into power, Gruevski started a 'Macedonian Cultural War' which has been the dominant strategy of the ruling party. This strategy draws 'the borders of the differences' between 'us' and 'them' in a militant way. Democratic

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[341] Borjan, G. , "Macedonia's Empty Democracy", New Eastern Europe, 2015 http://neweasterneurope.eu/old_site/articles-and-commentary/1612-macedonia-s-empty-democracy (11.04.2020), **quoted in** Xhemaili, M. , "The Role of Political Leadership in Macedonia in Function of EU Integration", *European Journal of Social Sciences Education and Research*, Vol. 3, No. 3

[342] Andreassen, M. ,D. , "If you don't vote VMRO you're not Macedonian", Master of Arts Thesis, Department of Social Anthropology, University of Bergen, 2011

[343] Xhemaili, pp. 102

[344] Interview with Shpresa, 04.10.2019, Tetovo

Macedonia is being determined as 'Ethnic Macedonia'. They tended to minimize the Albanian factor by all means by using a limited democracy. This led to inter-ethnic and inter-religious tensions. The people build up prejudices against one another in the same society"[345]

The uncertainty stemming from the name dispute has damaged the country's confidence in the EU and has strengthened the position of Macedonian government, which was not so enthusiastic about reforms. At the end of 2011, in order to speed up reforms and overcome the stand-still situation arising from the name dispute, the European Commission launched a so-called High-Level Accession Dialogue (HLAD) for Macedonia. The former Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy Stefan Fule defined the objective of HLAD as "to put the EU integration to the forefront of the domestic agenda and give it a new boost".[346] On the other hand, he reminded that HLAD does not replace accession negotiations but it forms a bridge to them.[347]

Even though the Dialogue created enthusiasm and was interpreted as an additional impetus for Macedonia, it was also interpreted as a justification for the status quo position of Macedonia.[348] It was questioned that "whether this Dialogue has generated a progress in the Macedonian accession process towards EU, or is it just a "sophisticated tool" for delay of the start of the negotiations with Macedonia." [349]

In fact, this dialogue was not only creating a dilemma, but also it was preparing the ground for the criticism of "stability over democracy" for the EU. In other words, the EU not only accepted the existence of a status quo in the country, it also preferred this status quo instead of democracy for the sake of stability. The Macedonian State Secretary for European Affairs Kalinka Gaber defines the enlargement process of Macedonia by a dichotomy framed in a 'stability over democracy' narrative. She argues that the EU tolerates the semi-autocratic and

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[345] Interview with Nezhdet, 01.10.2019, Tetovo
[346] European Commission, "HLAD: Brussels and Skopje Enter more Demanding Round of Dialogue", 2012, https://ec.europa.eu/archives/commission_2010-2014/fule/headlines/news/2012/05/20120507_en.htm (15.04.2020)
[347] Ibid.
[348] Karadjoski, M. , "The High Level Accession Dialogue for Macedonia: Advantages and Disadvantages", *Journal of Liberty and International Affairs*, 2015, Vol. 1, No.1 http://e-jlia.com/papers/558703853_vol1_num1_pap3.pdf (18.05.2020)
[349] Ibid.

illiberal leaders in the region as long as they deliver on the key minimum demands, guaranteeing that their countries do not collapse in utter chaos.[350]

Allegedly, one of those leaders was the Macedonian Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski who has a signature under the HLAD process. He has been accused by his efforts to establish an authoritarian and nationalist regime in his country. The Macedonian scorecard gradually weakened day after day in the areas such as well-functioning government, low levels of corruption, free flow of information which are the main pillars of positive peace. According to Freedom House report in 2014, the democracy score of the country was worse than the one in 2005. The most problematic areas were democratic governance, the freedom of media, and corruption.[351]

Table I: Nations in transit ratings and averaged scores, 2005-2014 [352]

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Electoral Process	3.00	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.50	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25
Civil Society	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25
Independent Media	4.25	4.25	4.25	4.25	4.25	4.25	4.50	4.75	4.75	5.00
National Democratic Governance	4.00	3.75	3.75	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.25	4.25	4.25
Local Democratic Governance	4.00	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75

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[350] Ibid.
[351] Freedom House, "Macedonia, Nations in Transit", 2014
 https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/17.%20NIT14_Macedonia_final.pdf (17.04.2020)
[352] Ibid.

Judicial Framework and Independence	3.75	3.75	3.75	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.25	4.25
Corruption	5.00	4.75	4.75	4.50	4.25	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.25
Democracy Score	3.89	3.82	3.82	3.86	3.86	3.79	3.82	3.89	3.93	4.00

The EU, which identifies itself as a global actor in establishing democracy and peace throughout the world, has been silent on these worrying tendencies and Gruevski had remained in power, even it has resulted with a breakdown of democracy and the rule of law.[353]

On 24 December 2012, during the adoption of the 2013 annual budget, the members of opposition party, Social Democratic Union of Macedonia (SDSM), and journalists were removed from the Parliament chamber by the security personnel. So, the ruling party could approve the budget for 2013 without any media coverage and political opposition. This incident -known as "Black Monday"- has been the start of a political crisis that brought the country to the brink of civil war. After the Black Monday, the opposition party boycotted the parliament and declared that they will also boycott the local elections in 2013. Although the EU was later an intermediary and it persuaded SDSM not to boycott the elections, the tension between the parties did not decrease.

The next year, SDSM boycotted the Parliament for a long period while claiming that the general election process in 2014 was not fair and democratic. The members of the Party said that Gruevski's government has been running a massive wiretapping[354] programme.[355]

[353] Gaber, K. , "Crippled Liberal Democracy, Where did the EU fail in the Western Balkans and how can it regain its credibility?", Clingendael Spectator, 2017, https://spectator.clingendael.org/pub/2017/4/where-did-the-eu-fail/ (12.04.2020
[354] In February 2015, the leader of SDSM Zoran Zaev claimed that more than twenty thousand people, politicians, academicians, activists, journalists, businessmen, religious leaders and members of the judiciary, were subject to illegal wiretrapping, operated by the prime minister Nikola Gruevski and secret police chief Saso Mijalkov. After signing the Przino Agreement, the EU appointed a special prosecutor in order to inquire those allegations.
[355] Macdowall, A., "Fears for Macedonia's fragile democracy amid 'coup' and wiretap claims", 2015
 https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/feb/27/fears-macedonias-fragile-democracy-amid-coup-wiretap-claims
(15.04.2020)

Starting from October 2014, the citizens of Macedonia took out to the streets to protest the government which continued for months.

The political instability also endangered the already fragile relationship between the two ethnicities in Macedonia. In March 2013, after former NLA commander Talat Xhaferi was appointed as the defence minister, ethnic Macedonians held angry demonstrations. The following day Albanians took out to the streets and at the end, both protests turned out to be violent.[356]

Another problematic issue on the Albanian side was the position of the largest ethnic Albanian party, the Democratic Union for Integration (DUI). DUI was being criticised among Albanians for having allegedly close ties with the governing party VMRO-DPMNE. In October 2014, a building of the Macedonian government was attacked by two projectiles and a group which were claimed to have ties with the dissolved NLA, took responsibility of the attack with a letter. In the letter, they complained about the discriminative policies of the government, the implementation of Ohrid Agreement and called for international intervention.[357] The next year, in Kumanovo, 18 people, including eight police officers, were killed during the clashes between ethnic Albanians and Macedonian police officers. It was the highest number of casualties at one time since the conflict in 2001. After the Kumanovo conflict, the number of protestors increased, and they accused the government for provoking ethnic tension.

The risk of destabilisation in the country mobilised the EU institutions to become involved in mediation between the main actors of the dispute.[358] The Commission issued 'Urgent Reform Priorities' based partly on recommendations provided by a group of independent senior rule of law experts, who were brought in to analyse the situation. In parallel, the Commissioner Johannes Hahn, with the help of three members of the European Parliament,

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[356] Freedom House, "Nations in Transit, Macedonia", 2014
 https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/17.%20NIT14_Macedonia_final.pdf (12.04.2020)
[357] Marusic, S. , J. "'Liberation Army' Claims it Shelled Macedonian Govt", 2014
https://balkaninsight.com/2014/11/07/new-%C3%ACliberation-army%C3%AE-claims-attack-on-macedonian-government-hq/ (16.04.2020)
[358] Szpala, M. , "Macedonia: A fragile compromise after EU mediation", Center for Eastern Studies,
2015, https://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/analizy/2015-07-29/macedonia-a-fragile-compromise-after-eu-mediation, (16.04.2020)

negotiated with the parties and the negotiations ended with a political agreement in June 2015 named Przino Agreement.[359]

The mediation efforts of the EU during the crisis and the role of EU representatives in signing of the Przino agreement were commented as rather successful. One of the Parliamentarians Richard Howitt, who was also part of the talks, described the deal as "pulling the country back from the brink".[360] Besides the personal efforts of Commissioner Hahn, the choice of those Parliamentarians was also a strategic issue. Because those Parliamentarians have also played a successful role in mediating the parliamentary crisis in Albania in 2014 and were chosen according to the political spectrum of Macedonian political parties.[361] By this specific configuration, the parties could build confidence. Another key issue in the mediation process was the formulation of strict deadlines for every substantial reform.[362] These included electoral reforms, followed by the organization of early elections, and the appointment of a Special Prosecutor to investigate the wiretapping scandal.[363]

On the other hand, when the talks between the parties and reforms have stalled during the implementation process of Przino Agreement, the EU announced that it was cutting the €27m assistance for Macedonia through its Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance. Besides, in the implementation process, the EU Member States (Germany, the UK, Italy, France and the Netherlands) agreed to establish a Special Envoy Model. Germany appointed a special envoy Johannes Haindl (German Ambassador to Vienna) in order to put pressure on the Macedonian government to deliver on reform priorities. He worked closely with the other ambassadors, the EU and USA.[364]

Despite all these efforts, the political crisis deepened on March 1, when the former President of Macedonia, Corge Ivanov refused to grant SDSM leader Zoran Zaev the mandate

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[359] European Commission, "Commission Staff Working Document, The Former Republic of Macedonia, Report 2015", 2015, https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/key_documents/2015/20151110_report_the_former_yugoslav_republic_of_macedonia.pdf (16.04.2020)

[360] Marusic, S. , J. , "Hahn Brokers Deal Ending Crisis in Macedonia", 2015, https://balkaninsight.com/2015/07/15/macedonia-warring-leaders-struck-crisis-deal/ (17.04.2020)

[361] Coibion, T. , "How Effective is the EU as a Mediator? The Case of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", EU Diplomacy Papers, College of Europe, 2017 file:///C:/Users/LENOVO/Downloads/edp-1-2017_coibion%20(1).pdf (18.05.2020)

[362] Ibid.

[363] Xhemaili, pp. 104

[364] European Parliament, "Peace and Security in 2018, An evaluation of EU peacebuilding in the Western Balkans", pp. 34

to form a government. Besides, in April 2017, during the election of Talat Xhaferi (former NLA commander) as the Speaker of Parliament, the VMRO-DPMNE activists entered in the Parliament, held violent demonstrations and injured the MPs of the new government.[365]

Finally, in May 2017, Macedonia's parliament has approved a new Social Democrat-led coalition government, headed up by Prime Minister Zoran Zaev. As he declared in his speech, integrating the country into the EU and NATO was one of his key goals.[366] Since then Zaev, as he promised, started to talk with Bulgaria and Greece in order to remove the obstacles in front of Macedonia's European Union and NATO memberships. Bulgaria was also blocking Macedonia from obtaining a start date for negotiations with the EU by claiming that Macedonians and their language is a branch of the Bulgarian nation and language. With the efforts of Zaev's government, the parties have signed a Friendship Agreement in August 2017 which Bulgaria gave up its veto rights. The next year, Macedonia managed to sign Prespa Agreement with Greece which was the biggest obstacle on its Euro-Atlantic path.

3.4. Assessing the Extent of the EU's Effectiveness as a Peacebuilder in Macedonia

Quite evidently, the European Union, as in the 2001 crisis, once again liberated the country from the brink of a civil war, ensured the establishment of a new government and turned the country back on the Euro-Atlantic route. While the Friendship and Prespa agreements signed with neighbouring countries, and Przino agreement that helped overcome the political crisis in the country, have accelerated the steps of the country towards EU and NATO membership, these agreements strengthened the actorness of the EU as a peacebuilder in the region.

Especially, after the signing of the Prespa agreement, the EU has been described as an influential actor in Macedonia. Financial Times defined the Prespa Agreement as the West's biggest diplomatic achievement since Dayton Peace Accord.[367] In the Commission reports, the role of Prespa Agreement for Europe's stability has been underlined by those words; "This

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[365] Marusic, S. , J. , "Macedonia Shaken by Violence in Parliament", 2017, https://balkaninsight.com/2017/04/28/macedonia-calms-down-after-parliament-violence-04-27-2017/ (18.05.2020)

[366] Ibid.

[367] Barber, T., "Renaming of North Macedonia a rare Balkan diplomatic success", Financial Times, 2019 https://www.ft.com/content/c5c77a76-4a29-11e9-bde6-79eaea5acb64 (20.04.2020)

agreement strengthens good neighbourly relations and sets an example of reconciliation for the region and Europe as a whole."[368]

However, the timing and structure of the intervention and the disruptions in the implementation process, cast a shadow on the success of the EU. Based on my interviews with people from three different ethnic groups and observations two years after the crisis, I can easily say that the Macedonian people have no reservations about integration into the EU, except for a small group of Eurosceptic Macedonians. The referendum held after the Prespa Agreement is the clearest proof of this. Although the participation rate is low due to the objection to the name change, the 91.5% of voters supported the EU and NATO memberships by accepting the name deal. Because they think that they are already a small country and they should be attached to a Pact such as NATO or the EU for both the security and economic stability of their country.

When I asked "Does Macedonia have to be a member of EU or NATO?", the Turkish origin Recep said that "Macedonia must decide if it will stay on the axis of Russia or integrate into Europe. The transition period must end. Geopolitically where we belong is NATO and EU".[369] The Albanian academician Gezim also pointed to the Russia's influence in the country. According to Gezim, in order to decrease the effect of Russia, Macedonia must first be a member of NATO and then join the EU. In any case, he defended that Macedonia has to integrate with a Pact since it is a small country and has no army.[370] Another Albanian academician Nezhdet referred to ethnic tensions and argued that the EU and NATO membership is the best solution.[371] The Albanian lawyer Shpresa also thinks in the same way. She said that, "If there was harmony between nations like in Yugoslavia, then the EU membership was not necessary. The fact that lasting transition process, the tension between ethnic groups forced Macedonia to the EU. Because the minority rights like education in mother tongue, free market economy, all these will make Macedonian citizens feel more secure."[372]

Slavic Muslim Leyla drew attention to the migration rate to the EU countries because of the low level of welfare in Macedonia. She said that,

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[368] European Commission, "North Macedonia 2019 Report", 2019,
https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20190529-north-macedonia-report.pdf (20.04.2020) pp.53
[369] Interview with Recep, 22.09.2019, Skopje
[370] Interview with Gezim, 02.10.2019, Tetovo
[371] Interview with Nezhdet, 01.10.2019, Tetovo
[372] Interview with Shpresa, 04.10.2019, Tetovo

"I do not think Macedonia will be a developed and prosperous country without the EU and NATO memberships. People want to do their job, but the way to do this is to belong to a political group. That is why young population wants to live in other EU countries. The day when Macedonia becomes a member of EU, it will begin to advance."[373]

Nevertheless, these interviewees think that the peace process in which the EU is involved, including the agreements, is still problematic. There are many reasons behind this. Firstly, as mentioned before, the international peace interventions are already creating a dilemma for democracy. For example, Turkish politician Recep interviewed for the study described the Przino agreement as "rapid, temporary and non-democratic intervention in the name of democratization", while the others argued that the political crisis in 2015 could not be solved by itself. Government was not functioning, and the public order had collapsed. The EU's intervention had become a necessity.[374]

The second reason is the damaged credibility of the EU, especially with its silent attitude towards the name issue. Macedonian Alexander and Dimitri claimed that the EU has applied double standard because even after Macedonia has met all the conditions, the accession negotiations have not started yet. They showed Bulgaria and Romania as an example. According to them, these two countries, which have the same standards, are members of the EU and in this case Macedonia's exclusion is not acceptable. Alexander, who had gone to university in Bulgaria, said that "I was there when Bulgaria became a member of NATO and the EU. Nothing has changed. Only the emblems on military equipment have changed, which Russian was before. So, the EU membership has nothing with economic growth or democracy."[375] Also Turkish origin Hasan agreed with Macedonians. He argued that, "Even though Macedonia is a member of the EU now, not much will change. Macedonia will be like Bulgaria. Bulgaria is a member but still has economic and social problems."[376]

Some of the interviewees like Maja, Gezim, Shpresa said that the EU contributed to peace, but disruptions in implementation were ignored. According to them, the EU is not doing enough supervision. Especially the judges and lawyers complain about the implementation of

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[373] Interview with Leyla, 30.09.2019, Ohrid
[374] Interview with Recep, 22.09.2019, Skopje
[375] Interview with Alexander, 29.09.2019
[376] Interview with Hasan, 22.09.2019, Skopje

reforms. According to a Macedonian candidate judge Dimitri, the EU is helping in the democratization process but declaratively. It remains superficial. Reforms are taking place, laws are passing, but the implementation part is missing, and there is not enough control.[377] Albanian lawyer Shpresa also argued that "EU's mechanisms are very soft. The sanctions should have been tougher. The dates given for the reforms should not have been so flexible."[378]

According to the Eurobarometer survey with 1017 Macedonian citizens in 2019, 57 percent of Macedonian citizens trust the European Union. While the proportion of those who do not trust the EU remains at 37 percent, the proportion of those who trust their own state is only 33 percent. While these rates reflect the Macedonian citizens' distrust in their countries' political system and politicians, more than half of the population prefer to trust the EU despite the shortcomings of the process. Nonetheless, when asked "what does the EU mean to you personally" in the same survey, freedom to travel, work and study and economic prosperity were the most common answers, whereas only 19 percent of interviewees referred to peace.[379]

The European Union is rebuilding the pillars of positive peace in the country with the reforms it requires for membership. After the political crisis has been overcome and the name agreement has been signed with Greece, the country has a more stable profile. For example, the presidential election that took place in 2019, has received full marks from OSCE. In its report, OSCE Observers agreed that "The campaign took place in a calm and peaceful environment. Fundamental freedoms of assembly and expression were respected, and the election participants were able to campaign freely and without hindrance."[380] Now, the country is being prepared for a new general election.

In the light of these developments, this study argues that even the EU has helped the Western Balkan countries financially and technically to establish a permanent peace, those efforts remain limited. Nationalism, which is a chronic disease of the Balkan countries, has not been prevented sufficiently. Although the EU has achieved peace in the political arena to a

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[377] Interview with Dimitri, 03.10.2019, Tetovo
[378] Interview with Shpresa, 04.10.2019, Tetovo
[379] European Commission, "Standard Eurobarometer 91, The Republic of North Macedonia, 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/Survey/getSurveyDetail/yearFrom/1974/yearTo/2019/surveyKy/2253 (27.05.2020)
[380] OSCE, Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, "Republic of North Macedonia, Presidental election, ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report", 2019, https://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/north-macedonia/428369?download=true (22.04.2020)

certain extent, it is not a peace made at the base of society. During my stay in Skopje, I witnessed the peaceful scenes like in the Yugoslav period. For instance, a Macedonian woman was selling bagel pastries in a bazaar which mostly Albanians and Turkish are shopping, but in general, the communication between ethnic groups is limited, especially among the young population.

When I asked the interviewees "what would happen if a conflict arouse in any part of Balkan states", they all agreed that nobody wants war any more. A Turkish national Cüneyt claimed that "Here is the Balkans and there is always a possibility of conflict. But it does not happen unprovoked, somebody provokes it. But now, nobody think that the war is beneficial anymore. The people here are now conscious."[381]

Macedonian lawyer Maja also thought that politicians provoke people's nationalist emotions for their own interests. They emphasize nationalism and escalate the tension to get votes in the elections. But the actual picture is not as they show. These folks have always been able to live together.[382]

On the other hand, another interviewee Leyla thought that ethnic tension will not end. She is working as a teacher in a high school and she said that in her school, there had been an ethnic debate between an Albanian and a Macedonian and they were fired and added that:

> "There was no conflict then. But I do not think nationalism in the Balkans will come to an end. This would be the name problem today, the language problem tomorrow. Even the length of a minaret could be a matter of conflict. Macedonians named the neighbourhood where Turks and Albanians live in Ohrid as 'subtopia'[383]. And these judgments will not change even if we become a member of the EU."[384]

These people, who have already experienced the destructive effects of war very closely, do not really want another war on their land. However, there is a sense of nationalism that is sometimes inflated. According to some, it is financed from the outside, and to some, it is a

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[381] Interview with Cüneyt, 29.09.2019, Ohrid
[382] Interview with Maja, 03.10.2019, Tetovo
[383] Subtopia is the neighbourhood where mostly low-income people live in. It is used as an expression of scorn.
[384] Interview with Leyla, 30.09.2019, Ohrid

political material for politicians. Others explain it in two sentences: This is the Balkans. Nationalism never ends.

The Turkish journalist Ali also spoke about a symbolic war that still exists. This is an ongoing war, especially between Macedonian and Albanian local governments. Ali summed up this silent war as follows:

"For example, a municipality is building a crossroads, if it belongs to Macedonians, they put a pilgrimage sign, if it belongs to Albanians, they put a double-headed eagles. One is building a church, the other is mosque. Regardless of the need. Just to disturb the other group. Ethnic groups are racing symbols. The EU is trying to keep it under control. So, I am not saying that nationalism will disappear completely, but it will be kept under control. It will not come to a level of social conflict. It remains as a local tension."[385]

The Turkish politician Recep was also not so hopeful for social peace. According to Recep, a permanent peace is not possible at the moment, but good relations continue between ethnic groups and can continue within the framework of mutual respect.[386] Albanian academician Nezhdet thought that sustainable peace is possible only if policies of multicultural or binational society are implemented. He argued that, "Managing of the perceptions of the other and otherness is crucial at this point. Denationalization of the state is the main issue. Macedonian people are making steps from ethnocentric perspective to multinational dimension right now."[387]

Today, the EU has succeeded in bringing people from different ethnic groups working together in the same government office, thanks to the criteria it requires for membership. As always, they start the day by drinking macchiato and chatting about their daily lives. In fact, their understanding of life is not very different from each other. But although this conversation takes place very sincere in some places, it can sometimes arise from necessity. The relationships between ethnic groups are directly affected by the population of the place where they live in. People are more integrated in more mixed cities, and more prejudices exist where a single group is dominant in terms of population. As Leyla mentioned, the length of a mosque minaret can still cause violent reactions. However, while I was going to university in Macedonia 15 years

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[385] Interview with Ali, 21.09.2019, Skopje
[386] Interview with Recep, 22.09.2019, Skopje
[387] Interview with Nezhdet, 01.10.2019, Tetovo

ago, it would be dangerous to travel in the evenings, in the places where Macedonians make up the majority, whereas today many Macedonians can work under a Muslim woman in a government office. Or when somebody wants to work in a boutique, it is a great advantage for him/her to know Albanian. Tired of fighting, these people are looking for ways to live in peace with a longing for the Yugoslav era. Despite all its shortcomings in the process, the EU contributes a lot to this quest.

CONCLUSION

In this thesis, the peacebuilding efforts of the EU in Western Balkan countries are examined from the social constructivist perspective, by focusing on the case of North Macedonia. The purpose of studying peacebuilding process in the Western Balkans is to increase the awareness about how nationalism may cause great sufferings and to support any efforts to establish peace in this territory. As a case, Macedonia was chosen because of its geo-political importance stemming from the demographic structure of the country.

While carrying out the research, the qualitative method has been used. I have conducted semi-structured interviews with a small number of people from three major ethnic groups living in the country, namely Macedonian, Albanian and Turkish people. During my stay in Macedonia for the research, in addition to the interviews, I had chance to observe the social and political life in the country and the relations among ethnic groups. These constitute the primary sources. The data and photos I obtained as a participant observer are also included in the study. Official documents and scholarly literature have been used as secondary sources.

The main argument of the thesis is that the European Union has been an effective peacebuilder in Western Balkans to a certain extent. The EU achieved its initial objectives while settling the conflicts in Macedonia such as the ethnic crisis in 2001 or political crisis in 2015. Nevertheless, establishing a perpetual peace in the eastern part of the continent still needs more efforts. The enlargement policy of the Union is one of the most effective tools while building positive peace. However, the hesitance in this enlargement narrative damages the Union's credibility and actorness in the region and particularly in Macedonia.

The EU is promoting positive peace through its generous financial and technical assistance, but this assistance causes a peacebuilding process to be in a top-down direction. So, when the local people are not engaged in the process, the efforts remain superficial. Moreover, the funds, which the EU provides, are left to the hands of ethnic elites, and are used to garner political support for themselves. Therefore, those funds may become materials for ethnic separations from time to time. Both the EU's position on its enlargement policy, especially in Greece, and the usage of EU funds have strengthened the populist and nationalist discourse in

the country. Since the ethnic game is still employed, we can argue that the nationalism still has potential to endanger the stability of the region.

To substantiate the argument of the thesis, an overall assessment of peacebuilding efforts in the Western Balkans has been made, focusing on the process in Macedonia. The European Union, which was founded to establish peace and stability in Europe after the Second World War, is currently conducting peace-building operations in various parts of the world. The EU defines itself as a global actor and a peace project,[388] and also states in the Lisbon Treaty Article 2(5)), that the Union "shall contribute to peace, security, the sustainable development of the Earth.."[389]

Among all regions, the Balkan Peninsula has a particular importance for the Community. As the EU representative declared many times, a problem of stability in the Western Balkans threatens the entire continent. Therefore, the integration of this region to the Union is in the Union's very own political, security and economic interest. It is actually a geostrategic investment for a stable, strong and united Europe.[390]

During the dissolution of Yugoslavia, the EU wanted to play an active role and declared that "it is the hour of Europe. Europeans will solve the Yugoslav problem."[391] However, the efforts of the EU remained fruitless, and the Western Balkans witnessed the bloodiest conflicts after the World War II. After signing the Dayton Agreement which ended the Bosnian war, the EU took a step to strengthen its role in the region. In order to promote peace and stability and good neighbourliness in the region, it started the Royaumont Process and then adopted the Regional Approach. However, the EU had to change its strategy with the outbreak of the conflict in Kosovo in 1998. After the conflict was brought to an end with NATO's intervention, in order to stabilize the region, the EU initiated a normative framework.[392] It transformed its

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[388] European Union External Action, "Conflict Prevention, Peace building and Mediation", 2017 https://eeas.europa.eu/topics/conflict-prevention-peace-building-and-mediation/426/conflict-prevention-peace-building-and-mediation_en (03.04.2020)

[389] Official Journal of the European Union, "Consolidated Version of Treaty of The European Union", 2008, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2008:115:0013:0045:EN:PDF (10.05.2020)

[390] European Commission, "A Credible Enlargement Perspective for and Enhanced EU Engagement with the Western Balkans", Strasbourg, 2018, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/communication-credible-enlargement-perspective-western-balkans_en.pdf (09.05.2020)

[391] Glaurdic, J. , **The Hour of Europe: Western Powers and the Breakup of Yugoslavia**, London: Yale University Press, 2011

[392] Rama, M. , "The European Integration Perspective in Western Balkans", Master of Arts Thesis, Lunds University, Department of Political Science, 2010

Regional Approach into Stabilisation and Association Process with the aim of moving the region from the security issue, to the accession process. In other words, the EU shifted its agenda from negative peace (the absence of war)[393] to positive peacebuilding, which is embodied in the EU enlargement process. It constituted its foreign policy towards the region mostly on its soft power. As constructivist scholars argue, by diffusing its basic ideas, norms, and values, rather than using material assets, the EU aimed to establish peace in the region. With those norms and values, the EU intended to create a common identity and a belonging for those countries which diminishes the possibility of conflict.

Within this process, as a consequence of post conflict reconstruction and prospect of membership, the countries in the region strived for structural reforms and the EU helped those countries through financial and technical instruments. However, this transformation process slowed down after the global financial crisis of 2008 in Europe. The divergence of opinion among the EU member States on enlargement policy also helped slow down the process which damaged the EU's credibility in the region. Also, this dilemma created by the Union allowed autocratic and nationalist policies to find ground in the region. In the meantime, there were many unresolved issues such as the name dispute between Macedonia and Greece or Kosovo-Serbia border dispute. The secessionist rhetoric again showed up in Bosnia-Herzegovina and anti-democratic practices by the Macedonian government have increased. Unfortunately, the EU has been silent on all these worrying tendencies.

The anti-government protests that started throughout the region in 2013 and the subsequent migration crisis reminded once again how important the Balkan territory is for the EU. From that point, the EU turned its attention to the region again and had to revise its enlargement strategy. In order to end the Kosovo-Serbia dispute, the EU facilitated high level dialogue for the normalisation of relations between Belgrade and Pristina and at the end Brussels Agreement was signed in 2013. However, some issues such as the status of Kosovo remained unsolved and both countries still have major problems in the integration process to the EU.

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[393] Galtung, J. , **Theories of Peace, A Synthetic Approach to Peace Thinking**, Oslo: International Peace Research Institute, 1967

Bosnia and Herzegovina, on the other hand, remains a country that the EU still insists on ignoring. Due to its constitutional structure, the reform process is progressing very slowly in this country, as well. Besides, the separatist rhetoric of the Republika Srpska has recently gained momentum. In other words, even though there is no active conflict for the Western Balkans, the EU should pay more attention to eliminating the causes of conflict.

In the Republic of North Macedonia, which is the main focus of this study, the EU first acted in the political crisis as a mediator between the parties after a long period of ignorance and ended the crisis by an agreement. Thereafter, the new government in Macedonia and Greece reached an agreement on the name issue after 27 years. The EU succeeded to turn the country back to its Euro-Atlantic path. However, the timing and structure of the intervention of the EU and the disruptions in the implementation process overshadows the efforts of the EU. Based on the data received from the field, it is claimed that the majority of the population supports the EU and NATO membership. However, they think that the peacebuilding efforts of the Union are insufficient. The Union contributed to peace, but disruptions in implementation of reforms were ignored. On the other hand, the enlargement fatigue really damages the EU's credibility in the region. Most of the interviewees to whom I talked think that the decisions are taken by politically. Regarding the ethnic relations in the country, the EU has failed to build a society living in peace. Even though the ethnic groups reach a compromise in the political realm by the mediation efforts of the EU, there is always a possibility for tension in the society. The EU must first show that it is sincere in its efforts and rebuild trust with the society. In doing so, the primary target group should be the society itself, not the politicians that people already do not trust. If the European Union manages to do this, it will be integrated with a society that has already turned its face to Europe and laid the foundations of lasting peace in the region.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: Interview Questions

Part 1. Demographic Information

1. What is your name?
2. How old are you?
3. What is your ethnicity?
4. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
5. What is your job?

Part 2. Macedonia and Its Relations with the European Union

1. How do you evaluate the democratization process of the North Macedonia? What do you think about the role of the European Union in this process?
2. What do you think about the Ohrid Agreement? Have the basic principles of the agreement like non-discrimination or equal representation been implemented? What about the reactions of the agreement in society?
3. What do you think about the mediation efforts of the Union in solving the political crisis in 2015 and Przino Agreement?
4. How do you feel about the name deal with Greece? Did the Prespa Agreement disturb you?
5. How did the "nationalist" policies of the former government of Macedonia affect the ethnic groups other than Macedonians?
6. What if an ethnic conflict erupts in somewhere in Macedonia or Western Balkans? How this affect the relations of ethnic groups in Macedonia?
7. Is the best course of action for Macedonia the integration of itself into the EU and NATO?
8. Does the EU contribute to peace? How?
9. How is a sustainable peace possible?

APPENDIX 2: Photos

Photo 1: Skopje City Centre. The monument to Alexander the Great, officially named "Equestrian Warrior" and the Archaeological Museum.

Photo 2: Skopje City Centre. The Building of Delegation of the European Union

Photo 3:   Skopje City Centre. The Monument to the father of Alexander the Great, King Philip II of Macedonia.

Photo 4:   Skopje City Centre. The Monument to the father of Alexander the Great, King Philip II of Macedonia.

Photo 5: One of the streets of the Old Skopje Bazaar named "European Road".

Photo 6: Skopje City Centre. "Bridge of Civilizations" with the statues of historical figures from the region, from ancient to medieval times.

Photo 7: Skopje City Centre. One of the statues on the Bridge of Civilizations; Gabriel of Lesnovo, a Bulgarian hermit and saint who lived in 11th century.
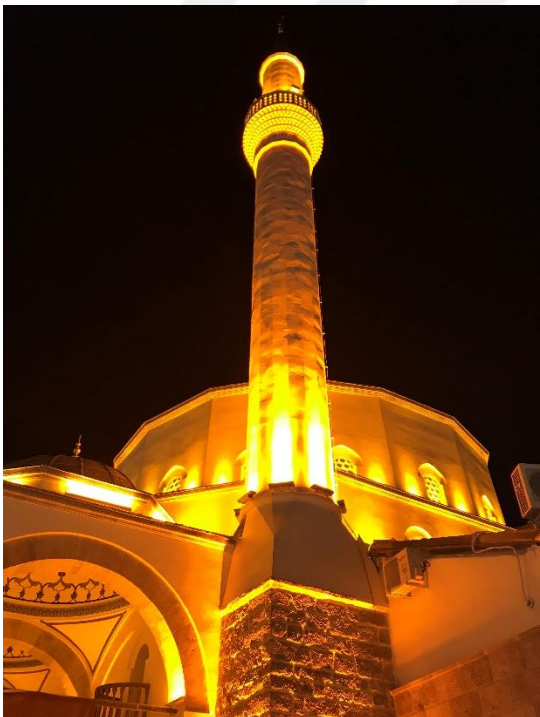

Photo 8: Old Bazaar, Ohrid. Ali Paşa Mosque which was an issue of debate among ethnic groups due to the length of its minaret in 2019.

Photo 9: Struga. A view of River Drim.

Photo 10: Tetovo. The Arabati Baba Tekke, owned by Bektashi Community of Macedonia.