

Roundtable and Debate

Kosovo in Europe: Ten Years of Contested Statehood in unsettled neighbourhood

Western Balkans Reflection Forum Series – the Berlin Process and EU Enlargement Strategy

22 March 2018

Prishtinë, Swiss Diamond Hotel, Sheshi Nëna Terezë

The 2017 Western Balkans Summit of Trieste was the fourth annual conference held in the framework of the **Berlin process**. It was attended by the heads of state or government, foreign ministers and the ministers of economy of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia, Germany, Austria, France, Italy, the UK, Croatia, Slovenia, as well as by the EU High Representative Mogherini and Commissioner Hahn. The Italian hosts also invited the incoming Bulgarian EU Presidency to the meeting, under the auspices of which the forthcoming EU-Western Balkans Summit will be held, in Sofia on 17 May 2018. After years of out of the radar, the Western Balkans seem to be back on the agenda of the EU.

The Berlin process has certainly contributed to this achievement. But its initial objective, beyond keeping the impetus of European integration, was to further “real additional progress” in the region. While the Summit of Trieste reconfirmed the EU’s commitment to support Western Balkan’s path into the EU, the implementation of previous commitments by both the EU and Western Balkans’ governments remains fraught with question marks. The **Western Balkans Reflection Forum** held in Trieste in June 2017 has highlighted key issues regarding the implementation of these commitments as well as new challenges, rendering EU accession prospects less predictable, notwithstanding the new enlargement strategy of February 2018.

Kosovo is no exception in this respect. Ten years after its independence, the youngest country in Europe faces a series of important challenges rendering its European perspectives still too distant, e.g. in the lengthy reforms process that accompanies its political and economic transformation; in the consolidation and normalisation of its neighbourly relations and dialogue with Belgrade in particular; in the lessening of its international dependence and the advancement of its international relations worldwide.

Following up on the publication of the **new EU enlargement strategy**, this roundtable will exchange views on current developments in EU-Western Balkans relations in general and EU-Kosovo relations in particular. Co-organised by the Austro-French Centre for Rapprochement in Europe (CFA/ÖFZ, Vienna), Centre international de formation européenne (CIFE, Nice/Berlin), GAP Institute for Advanced Studies (GAP, Pristina) and Group for Legal and Political Studies (GLPS, Pristina) with the support of the Open Regional Fund for SEE – Promotion of EU Integration (German Cooperation / GIZ), Balkans in Europe Policy Advisory

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Group (BiEPAG), Institut français des relations internationales (IFRI, Paris) and the European Commission (Erasmus+-Programme), it will discuss questions such as: What opportunities and what risks does the Berlin process carry in its current approach? How successful has it been in maintaining the impetus of a slowed-down accession process? What are the key areas for implementation, which the Berlin process should focus on, and how to best use the new modes of cooperation this intergovernmental initiative has introduced? How does the Berlin process in its current approach intersect with the EU's enlargement strategy and political agenda? What are the implications of the UK hosting the next Berlin Process summit in London in 2018? Which perspectives can the Western Balkans in general and Kosovo in particular now envisage with respect to their EU accession? What are the key hurdles they should expect on their way to EU accession, and how to thwart them?

Programme

9h00 *Welcome and opening*

- Florent MARCIACQ, Deputy Secretary General and Research Fellow, Austro-French Centre for Rapprochement in Europe (CFA/ÖFZ), Vienna
- Nora LATIFI-JASHARI, Executive director, GAP Institute, Prishtinë

9h15 *The Berlin Process: “real additional progress” for Kosovo?*

- Didier CHABERT, Ambassador of France to Kosovo
- Tom ADAMS, Deputy Head of the British Mission, Kosovo
- Gernot PFANDLER, Ambassador of Austria to Kosovo
- Piero Cristoforo SARDI, Ambassador of Italy to Kosovo

Moderator: Jeton MEHMETI, Research director, GAP Institute, Prishtinë

10h15 *Enlargement and bilateral disputes: how can the EU Enlargement Strategy contribute to progress?*

- Dario ČEPO, Assistant Professor, University of Zagreb
- Marika DJOLAI, Research & Policy Analyst, Balkans in Europe Policy Advisory Group
- Albana MERJA, Senior Researcher, Group for Legal and Political Studies, Prishtinë

Moderator: Tobias FLESSENKEMPER, Project Director, Centre international de formation européenne (CIFE), Nice

11h30 *Conclusion*

- Riccardo SERRI, Head of Political, Economic and European Integration of EU Office in Kosovo
- Agron HOTI, Advisor to the Minister of European Integration of Kosovo

11h45 *End of the programme*

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