

EU enlargement in the Western Balkans – regional perspectives

Connecting V4 and other regional expert networks

online workshop organised by Research centre of the SFPA
with support of the *International Visegrad Fund*

Date: Wednesday 24 February 2021

Place: Online – ZOOM

Language: English

For guests, the registration is required. You can register [via this link](#).

(<https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJYtcuqrqzsiE9PfdIgr49Lm9eZAxNceHg1>)

The United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union has been reshaping the dynamics of decision-making within the EU. Partnerships among the remaining 27 Member States are to be rethought and new alliances established. The coalition potential of individual EU members will change, and it will directly affect qualified majority voting as well as blocking minority in the Council of the EU.

This activity is a part of the *Connecting V4 and other regional expert networks* project focused on building regional connections across the EU. The previous activities within this project have shown that the V4 countries have a great potential in the field of regional cooperation. In this workshop, we will explore the possibilities of such cooperation with the countries of the Western Balkans.

The online workshop will be divided into two 75-minute panels.

10:00 – 10:15 **Keynote remarks**

Eduard Kukan, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic, and former Member of European Parliament

10:15 – 11:30 **I. panel: Current state of the EU enlargement process**

- What is the current state of the EU enlargement process?
- What are priority reforms for the Western Balkans to sustain the credible enlargement perspective?
- What is the regional dimension of the enlargement process?

Speakers:

Vladimír Bilčík, Member of European Parliament

Senada Šelo Šabić, Senior Research Associate, Institute for Development and International Relations, Croatia

Marta Szpala, Senior Fellow, Centre for Eastern Studies, Poland

Chair of the discussion: *Juraj Hajko*, Research Fellow at Slovak Foreign Policy Association

11:30 – 14:00 **Break**

14:00 – 15:15 **II. panel: Regional cooperation in the Western Balkans – the EU perspective**

- What is the current mutual perception of the Western Balkan countries and the V4?
- To what extent has there been an interregional cooperation between the Western Balkan countries and the V4?
- What are the preferences and expectations of the V4 countries and the Western Balkan countries regarding the mutual regional cooperation?
- What are the shared priorities and potential benefits of such cooperation?

Edit Bátorfi, Executive Director of the International Visegrad Fund

Ana Novak, Project Manager, Centre for European Perspective, Slovenia

Jana Juzová, Research Fellow, Europeum Institute for European Affairs, Czech Republic

Chair of the discussion: *Tomáš Strážay*, Director of the Research Centre of the Slovak Foreign Policy Association