

EUROPEAN UNION AND DEMOCRATIC CONDITIONALITY MECHANISM, THE IMPACTS ON WESTERN BALKAN COUNTRIES

*Elda ZOTAJ**

Abstract. *The collapse of political regimes in the former communist bloc countries was accompanied by challenges and efforts to overcome the major problems with which these countries have faced. In this new geopolitical situation the former communist countries have faced many problems simultaneously. It is worth mentioning that among the urgent problems that have had former communist countries were major economic difficulties and the orientation toward a new political course. Both of these elements cannot be realized without the help and support of international institutions, where the European Union has played a major role. Researches submit that is a clear causal relationship in the use of conditionality by the EU to provide political or institutional results to the countries that want to integrate. Democratic conditionality has to do with the acceptance of new members only after they have met all the requirements set by the EU. EU enlargement with new member states from former communist bloc countries testifies the EU positive role in the incentives for the transition of former communist countries to democracy and market economy. The situation changes in the journey that Western Balkan countries have made towards democracy. This paper will analyse the effects of democratic conditionality mechanism in the strengthening of democratic regimes in the Balkans. Did this mechanism of democracy conditionality been effective in the institutionalizing democracy in the Balkans countries, if not, what were the reasons that this mechanism has not functioned in this region. The answer to these questions will be the core of this paper.*

Keywords: *Conditionality mechanism, Democracy, Western Balkan, Transition.*

* Doctor, Lecturer, at “Aleksandër Moisiu” University of Durrës, Albania

¹ Intercultural communication and global integration Némethová, Ildikó online:

<http://kgk.sze.hu/images/dokumentumok/kautzkiadvany2013/kultura/nemethova.pdf>

² Religion and intercultural dialogue in the EU: a counter-radicalisation strategy or reinventing integration? Dr Sara Silvestri, pp.11 online: www.sps.ed.ac.uk/_data/.../SHEFFIELD_Silvestri_DRAFT.doc