

Abstract

The thesis aims to unravel the relationship between the EU's enlargement strategies and democratization in the Western Balkan countries by looking on the impact of the strategies on changing democracy levels in two empirical cases: the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia. Over more than a decade, the effect of the conditionality tool on democratization has been curbed by an insufficient emphasis placed on pro-democratic reforms and by the role of security concerns which were often prioritized over aims directly linked to democracy promotion. Grounded in the conflicting objectives theory, the thesis demonstrates that the recently employed strategy appropriately sequencing goals while prioritizing democratic transition over security concerns is more effective in inflicting domestic democratic change. Subsequently, the following necessary and sufficient conditions for a successful sequencing strategy were defined: strong emphasis on democracy-related goals combined with clearly outlined temporal perspective, and corresponding action of international actors.