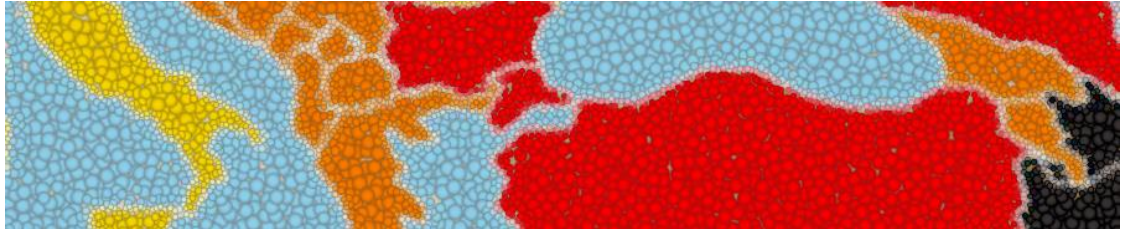


SEMINAR: The EU and the Balkan region – the state of play

12-13 March 2020 Zagreb



With Croatia's accession to the EU in December 2011, the EU signalled to the other states of the Western Balkans that accession to the EU would be possible if they reformed accordingly and converged with basic European values. But instead of convergence, the EU and the Western Balkans are growing apart. This means that the Balkan region remains a major political construction site -- economically, culturally, ethnically and historically highly complex, with very different expectations of the EU.

In addition, the region faces problems of illiberalism, democratic backsliding and corruption practices. Some countries in the region seem far from being able to meet the requirements of EU accession in the near future. Other challenges which are relevant in the region include: Sustainability and economic growth; Connectivity; Security and geopolitical challenges; the EU Enlargement policy; Regional demographics and brain drain

On the occasion of Croatia's EU Presidency, during the first semester of 2020, United Europe and the Europaeum invite 25 - 30 Young Professionals as well as students from the Europaeum Network from all over Europe to Zagreb to discuss the following issues:

- What are Croatia's goals in its EU Presidency?
- What about corruption, democracy and media freedom in the Balkan countries?
- What influence does China have in the Balkans with its Belt & Road initiative? What does this mean?
- How does the role of Russia in the region affect stability?
- What are the causes of the divergence between Western and Eastern Europe?
- Are solutions conceivable to overcome the division and promote the integration of the whole of the Balkan region into the EU?

The seminar language will be **English**. As a **prework**, applicants are required to **write a short text** (1 – 2 DIN A4 pages/6.500 characters max) about “Is the EU/EU membership a solution for the Balkans? How could both benefit from this?”

[More information about how to apply:](https://europaeum.org/opportunities/apply-for-a-europaeum-event/)

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Students currently enrolled on master's or PhD courses at a Europaeum member university can apply. Successful candidates will be provided with accommodation free of charge and will be reimbursed reasonable travel expenses within Europe.

The deadline for submission of applications is 24 January 2020. All submission should be sent to euoinfo@europaeum.ox.ac.uk

