

COOPERATION OF SOUTH-EAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS¹

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Abstract

Emergency situations do not recognize national borders and often acquire regional and global character. South-East European countries are permanently exposed to various emergency situations, such as earthquakes, floods, snow storms, droughts, forest fires etc. In certain cases, these countries are incapable to cope with catastrophic consequences of these emergencies with their own capacities, but are forced to seek help from their neighbours or international organizations. Possible means of help and cooperation demand internationally institutionalized, coordinated and adequate answer of available forces and means by all subjects of protection and rescue before, during and after the occurrences of emergency situations.

In this respect, international-legal foundation of cooperation and offering help to the South-East European countries in cases of emergencies and operations of humanitarian nature are firstly observed. After that, important international organizations and associations which, helped by legal platform, realize different aspects of regional cooperation of South-East European countries at eliminating consequences of emergency situations, as well as numerous regional initiatives and strategies for reduction and estimation risks from emergencies were analysed.

¹ This paper was realized as a part of the project "Studying climate change and its influence on the environment: impacts, adaptation and mitigation" (43007) financed by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Serbia within the framework of integrated and interdisciplinary research for the period 2011 - 2014.

Key words: emergency situations, South-East Europe, international help and cooperation, documents and organizations

Introduction

There is an indisputable fact that natural (elemental) and technological catastrophes do not recognize borders set up by a man. Thus, for example, a tsunami in the Indian Ocean 2004, earthquakes in Pakistan in 2005, in China in 2008, and in Haiti in 2010, hurricanes in the Caribbean and the USA in 2005 and 2008, an earthquake and tsunami in Japan in 2011, nuclear catastrophe in Chernobyl 1986 and others, did not produce harmful consequences for the citizens of these countries only, but were also much wider, the consequences were felt by the neighbouring countries and regions. The said catastrophes ignited different emergency situations (ES) which by its volume, intensity and strength had different consequences for people and the environment.

On the other hand, many countries are unable to cope with their own capacities with the effects of ES, and are forced to seek help from the neighbouring countries. Thus, some ES may affect geographical area of several countries or regions, and therefore require a coordinated international response and cooperation, that is, a structure of global defence, which is otherwise still in the process of development.

Also, a certain number of ES encompass the territory of only one country which is incapable of eliminating the consequences by itself, and is forced to seek help from its neighbours and/or international community. Given the uncertainty and frequency of ES, regional countries must establish international cooperation for which adequate legal platform, human and material resources, as well as technical-technological support for the ES management process are necessary.²

South-East Europe is a part of Europe in the eastern part of the Balkan Peninsula and on the coast of the Black Sea. South-East European countries are: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Montenegro, Croatia, Greece, Macedonia, Moldavia, Romania, Serbia and Turkey.

The defined region is increasingly threatened by a variety of ES (floods, extremely high and low temperatures, snowfall, fires, earthquakes, landslides, storms, etc... For example, the region of South-East Europe was hit by a devastating earthquake, “Marmara” in Turkey during 1999, a disastrous flood of the Tisa river in 2005 (the geographic area of Romania

² Mlađan, D., Marić, P., Baras I., (2012). Serbian Relations With Neighboring Countries and Countries of the Region in the Field of Emergency Situations. International scientific conference improvement of relations between Serbia and Southeast European states, Belgrade: p. 221.

and Serbia),³ frequent forest fires in the geographic area of Croatia, Serbia and Greece in 2007 and 2012, etc.

The scale of the said ES went beyond the internal capabilities of the threatened countries in respect of protection, rescuing and eliminating consequences, and there was an obvious need for pooling resources of several countries to solve these problems. In this way, ES assume an international character and their consequences condition specific organization of operational cooperation and an appropriate international legal basis.⁴

Given the above, this paper first perceives international legal basis of cooperation and assistance to the countries of South-East Europe in the case of ES and performance of operations of a humanitarian nature. After that, it examines important international organizations and associations which, with the help of legal platform, execute different aspects of regional cooperation of South-East European countries in eliminating the consequences of ES.

International Legal Basis of Cooperation and Assistance to Countries of South-East Europe

In order to promote cooperation in cases of ES between states at the international level, over 200 multilateral and bilateral agreements (treaties, conventions, declarations) have been adopted, which are directly or indirectly devoted to the issues of protection of population and property from ES.⁵ The analysis of the legislation which can be related to cooperation of South-East European countries leads to 18 documents. Some of them are: *Resolution 42/169* of the UN General Assembly from 1987 by which the International Decade for reducing the risk of ES was proclaimed; *Resolution 44/236* of the UN General Assembly from 1989, which anticipated the implementation of important measures to rescue people and weaken the influence of ES, *The Second United Nations Conference on the Human Environment and Development* held in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro; *The First World Conference on reducing risk of accidents* (Kobe, Japan, 1995); Resolution of the UN General Assembly which adopted *International*

³ Milojković, B., Mlađan, D., (2010). Adaptivno upravljanje zaštitom i spasavanjem od poplava i bujica-prilagođavanje poplavnom riziku, *Bezbednost*, 52(1): p. 174.

⁴ Mlađan, D., Marić, P., Baras, I., (2011). Uloga i mesto Sektora za vanredne situacije Ministarstva unutrašnjih poslova u međunarodnim organizacijama i udruženjima“, In *Prociding „Srbija i međunarodne organizacije“*, Institut za međunarodnu politiku i privredu, Beograd, p. 412.

⁵ McEntire, D. A., (2001). The Internationalization of Emergency Management: Challenges and Opportunities Facing an Expanding Profession. *International Association of Emergency Managers Bulletin*. Vol. 18, No. 10, p. 3.

strategies for reducing the effects of ES (ISDR) in 1999; *World Summit on Sustainable Development* (Johannesburg, 2002), etc.

During 2009, the European Commission in 2009 adopted the “*Announcement on a Community approach on the prevention of natural and man made disasters*,” setting the general framework for the prevention of ES and proposing measures to reduce the impact of ES.⁶ This announcement proclaimed commitment to the development of EU and national policies, supporting the ES management cycle through adaptation, ES risk reduction, prevention, response and eliminating consequences of ES.

The Conclusion of the Council of Europe on the social framework of ES prevention, adopted in 2009, anticipates a special commission that will work with Member States to develop EU4 guidelines, i.e. define mapping, risk methods and assessment, and risk analysis methodology to ensure support to ES decision management.

Also, EU legislation regulates many risks and aspects of crisis management.⁷ In addition to the directives on floods, industrial accidents and critical infrastructures, the EU has issued a number of laws in the field of “industrial hazards” (e.g.: *List of EC 1406/2002 and 2038/2006*, which obliges the European Agency for Safety at Sea to respond to pollution caused by ships; *Environmental Impact Assessment Directive 85/337/EEC*; *Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive 2001/42/EC*, *Directive SEVESP III* (2012). Concrete standards of prevention within the Eurocodes were also defined. In the document of the Commission of the Western Balkans: enhancing the European perspective from 2008, it was proposed that the candidate countries for EU membership, as well as potential candidates, would appropriately engage in the activities of the EU in this area.

Finally, within the implementation of regional initiatives, we find a smaller number of binding “agreements” from the standpoint of international law, which are also related to a very specific and narrow areas of cooperation, such as the agreements of the countries of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation CMES on cooperation in the imminent help and in elimination of consequences of natural ES, as well as man-made ES in the Black Sea region.

⁶ Sasdovska, M. M., (2012). Creating politics and prevention from ecorisks and dealing with consequences from ecological accidents and catastrophes, International scientific conference “Security and Euroatlantic perspectives of the Balkans, Ohrid, Tom II, p. 124.

⁷ Mlađan, D., Marić, P., Baras, I., Cvetković V., (2012). Aktivnosti Sektora za vanredne situacije na usklađivanju politike Republike Srbije sa bezbednosnom politikom EU u oblasti civilne zaštite, In Prociding „Usklađivanje spoljne politike Republike Srbije sa Zajedničkom spoljnom i bezbednosnom politikom Evropske unije“, Institut za međunarodnu politiku i privredu, Beograd, p. 479.

International Organisations and Associations of Importance for Regional Cooperations of South-East European Countries

Since certain ES transcend national boundaries and capacities to eliminate consequences, the requests for international assistance in order to provide an adequate response to these situations are more and more frequent. In this sense, there is an increasing role of international organizations. In this respect, we shall briefly discuss the role of the UN, EU and NATO in the field of examining the possibilities of improving cooperation between the South-East Europe countries in ES.

One of the most important international organizations is the United Nations. When we discuss the role of the UN in the ES management, given the broadly set goals, it is much wider and cannot be reduced to peacekeeping missions only. Namely, the UN is involved in all aspects of life through its organizations, from poverty reduction to improving telecommunications and drinking water quality, from raising funds for developing countries in order to achieve the rights of refugees and stabilize the financial markets, to a struggle against all possible obstacles in achieving a better world.

Among the organizations and agencies of the UN whose activities are of importance for cooperation in cases of ES, the following should be mentioned:

OCHA - Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. The main role of the Office is ES management and channelling international aid as part of the UN strategy for the promotion of peace and respect of human rights. Areas of cooperation relating to humanitarian action, launching and coordinating international efforts to mitigating ES, as well as gathering and providing information on the same. It runs and maintains the Central Register of capacity for ES management. With *Resolution 46/182* of 19 December 1991, the principles of strengthening cooperation in humanitarian assistance in ES were established. During ES, on behalf of the UN Secretary General, a special representative may be appointed, who has overall authority and responsibility for political negotiations, engagement of the Forces and overall mission of the UN in the affected areas. In addition to the headquarters of the UN, OCHA has a main office in Geneva and in 30 regional and field offices. It receives only a small portion of funds from the United Nations for its work.

Then, the UN organization for distribution of international aid – the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) is a part of an international team for emergency response in the case of ES. The aim of this body is to help countries struck by ES, as well as to coordinate the delivery of international aid. It operates in a very short period of 12 - 48

hours anywhere in the world. It was established in 1993, and currently has nearly 250 ES state managers from 76 participating countries, together with OCHA and 16 international and regional organizations including the United Nations agencies. Their team can be organized at a very short notice upon an early warning of ES, either upon the request of the state government or the UN coordinator to the disaster-affected country. The team provides additional capacity in establishing mechanisms of coordination, information management and counselling. All members of the UNDAC, including civilian and military experts, are also trained to establish Operational coordination centres on site, the aim of which is to assist the government of the ES affected country.

At the initiative of UN member states, whose rescue teams were included in eliminating consequences of the earthquake that struck **Armenia** in 1988, on the basis of *Resolution 46/182*, the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) was established, which currently has over 60 member countries. With *Resolution 57/150* on the strengthening of international cooperation and efficiency of urban assistance in protection and rescue, UN member states were invited to continue strengthening the organization and to encourage and develop international cooperation in protection and rescue in the event of an earthquake, to define standards, procedures, and information sharing.

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) was established in 1946 with the mission of solving the problems of threatened children in the world. According to the Convention on the Rights of the Child ratified by 194 countries up to now (the United States had only signed it), UNICEF has broad powers to carry out its missions. Even before the events of ES in a particular country, it is not uncommon for UNICEF to become present in that country with stable budgetary funds.⁸ In ES, UNICEF works in collaboration with local and international partners, including governments, the UN agencies and civil society. These partnerships are extremely important for providing adequate humanitarian assistance to target groups. Quick responsiveness of the organization is important because children and young mothers are often marginalized groups when it comes to receiving help. Projects for humanitarian aid provide urgent intervention in the form of immunization, water and food supply, aid in fields of education and health. Women also receive this assistance, because UNICEF believes that they are vital to the care of children.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) are actively involved in peacekeeping and humanitarian

⁸ Peacock, W., (1997). Cross-national and Comparative Disaster Research. *International Journal of Mass Emergencies and Disasters*, p. 117.

operations around the world. Its national branches exist in 169 countries, and the number of full-time employees reached 284,000, which was five times more than the number of permanent employees of the UN. The IFRC is concerned not only with the provision of medical services, supply of medicines and medical equipment, but also with other forms of humanitarian assistance, such as, for example, food aid, including the people who were endangered by ES. In 2001 the IFRC launched a project *The international law on humanitarian aid* out of which originated the study *Laws and legal problems in the international response in the case of ES*, while in 2007 *The guidelines to facilitate and regulate the delivery of humanitarian aid in ES and assistance in the initial recovery of the country* were also adopted.

The World Health Organization (WHO) acts as a coordinating body of international public health. This organization works with national governments to develop medical capabilities and health care, and assists in the prevention of epidemics, supports research and eradication of diseases and provides expertise on these problems when requested. In the case of ES, WHO react in many ways related to the health of the victims, the most important being monitoring of diseases that occur in unsanitary conditions after ES.

In addition to military matters, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is engaged in providing international assistance in ES and provides strong support for the protection of civilians. Accordingly, NATO established the Committee of Civil Defence in 1951, which was renamed the Committee of Civil Protection in 1995.⁹ In the beginning of 1953, due to devastating floods caused by raising the level of the North Sea, NATO formed the North Atlantic Council (NAC), which extended the jurisdiction, changed procedures and in 1997 developed into the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC).¹⁰ The establishment of the Partnership for Peace programme (PfP), NATO assistance in ES was made possible for PfP members who are preparing for admission to the organization. Within NATO, there is Civil Emergency Planning (CEP), in order to take advantage of existing coordinate opportunities for joint activities at shipping humanitarian aid to the threatened population.

In 1988 NATO formed the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC). The Centre coordinates responding processes in 44 member states with the aim of rapid and effective implementation of the UN assistance. The Coordination Centre is a part of the International Staff, Operations Division at NATO Headquarters in

⁹ Coppola, D., (2007). Introduction to international disaster management. Oxford: Elsevier, p. 154.

¹⁰ Taylor, P., (1993). International Organization in the Modern World. The Regional and the Global Process. London, Oxford Press: p. 123.

Brussels, and has an officer responsible for coordinating with UN OCHA. In 2000, NATO formed and the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Unit (EADRU). It is a non-standing unit, with personnel and equipment which the Member States have designated as potentially available in the event of a response to a request for assistance from the ES affected countries. In the case of peacetime ES on the territory of the PfP Member States, upon receipt of a request by the affected country, EADRCC is ready to respond 24 hours a day throughout the year.

Bearing in mind that certain countries of the European Union are NATO members, they are the only ones that can expect the provided assistance in elimination of the consequences of ES, as opposed to countries that are not NATO members.

Mechanisms of Operative Cooperation and Coordination in European Union and South-East European Countries

In the European Union (EU), there is still not strong enough institutionalized cooperation to respond to all ES requests. However, the EU largely operates on the institutionalization of regional cooperation, and, as a result of its efforts, the Directorate General for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection of the European Commission was established. Its role is to facilitate cooperation and coordination in civil protection forces interventions to assist in ES. Membership is obtained by signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the European Commission. On this occasion, countries pay an annual financial contribution, the amount of which depends on the amount of the gross domestic product per capita, surface area and the number of inhabitants. The mechanism of cooperation includes: the identification of emergency capacity available to the Member States for assistance in the case of ES; implementation of a training program for intervention teams and team experts for assessment and / or coordination; establishment and sending teams for assessment and/or coordination if needed; establishment and management of the joint system for liaison and information in the case of ES; development of an early warning system for ES, etc.

The mechanism of participation of the candidate countries includes: participation in the Committee of Civil Protection, participation in preparation and execution of programmes and projects of common interest, funding transportation, training, exercises, exchange of experts; linking the national Civil Protection with the Centre for Monitoring and Information and with other participating countries; cooperation with the EU and the 31 participating countries in civil protection assistance interventions during ES.

The mechanism of potential candidate countries involvement includes: potential candidates together with the candidate countries in that mechanism have the first priority when it comes to international cooperation that would lead to the faster connection with the European civil protection mechanism, and complete integration in the future.

Within the Mechanism, there is the Monitoring and Information Centre (MIC) which represents its operational core. It is headed by General Director. The centre is available 24 hours a day to all participating members. Each country within or outside the EU affected by ES may request assistance through the MIC. As soon as the MIC receives a request for assistance, the Centre shall forward it immediately to civil protection, to assess available resources and inform the MIC whether they are able to assist or not. The MIC then compares the offers with needs and informs the requesting country, and has a coordinating role by matching offers of assistance given by the participating countries to the one affected by ES.

In Europe, there is the Common Emergency Communication and Information System (CECIS), which represents a reliable warning system on the Internet and the application for notification designed with the intent to facilitate communication among the member states in ES. The system provides an integrated platform to send and receive alerts, details on the assistance needed and overview of the development of current ES during its developing in an online diary. A training program, aimed at improving coordination of interventions of civil protection assistance by ensuring compatibility among the intervention teams from the participating states, has also been launched.

Mechanism of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), is the third possibility of the EU, which is realized through the General Secretariat of the Council for ESDP for operations of military or civilian control of ES (crises). Within the EU, there is a network of specialized European centres dealing with scientific research in the field of preventing and remedying consequences of ES.

In the region of South-East Europe, an agreeing association of countries has been formed in order to develop and improve risk assessment, coordination of regional plans to respond to the ES, and the development of standard operating procedures interoperable among the states, to act in ES, comprising civil-military staff members. The activator and the main initiator was the United States. In 2000 in Bucharest, the Four working groups for implementation of activities of the Council were formed: Information Management Working Group (IMWG), Information Technology Working Group (ITWG), Standards and Procedures Working Group (SPWG), and Planning and Exercise Working Group (PEWG).

In order to promote regional cooperation and within the framework of the Third Working Table of the Stability Pact for South-East Europe, the *DPPI initiative* was established, aiming to promote and enhance regional cooperation in the EU, as well as to get acquainted and approach to existing and generally accepted standards in the field of prevention, protection and recovery through organization of specific activities, conferences, meetings and seminars of government institutions.

With transformation of the Stability Pact for South-East Europe into the Regional Cooperation Council, and introducing the principle of regional ownership in 2007, the initiative, which became independent and continued to work for the members of the DPPI, obligation for independent financing the Initiative occurred, and thus the need to adopt an international law which would formulate the obligations of members and other actors of DPPI. Thus, in Zagreb, on 24 September 2007, the Memorandum of Understanding on the institutional framework for *the prevention initiative and willingness to ES* for the South-East Europe region, signed by eight countries that had previously participated in the work of the Initiative. Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, was determined as a seat. At this point, the parties of DPPI SEE are Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia and Turkey.

In addition to these initiatives, there is the Adriatic-Ionian Initiative, which has developed from the former Adriatic initiative, initiated by Italy in 1998 in order to speed up the development and cooperation of coastal countries. Since the interest of Greece to be included in that form of regional cooperation was accepted, the Adriatic initiative became the Adriatic-Ionian at a meeting of foreign ministers of the participating countries in Ancona in May 2000. In the case of large-scale forest fires, and with the aim of coordinated and rapid response of the Adriatic-Ionian Initiative states, for unifying experience and information on the availability of fire-fighting aircraft, as well as harmonization of procedures for filing requests for help and assistance, the Round Table to fight fires was created.

The Regional Conference on Governance in ES was held in Sarajevo in 2011, with an emphasis on strengthening regional cooperation and coordination in the area of reducing the risk of ES in South-East Europe. On that occasion conclusions that maintain the real situation in the field of regional cooperation were adopted, with a focus on activities that must be followed in order to institutionalize regional cooperation and raise it on a higher level, namely: the development of specialized regional centres based on the information from the questionnaires which would be delivered to all countries by the Balkans Institute for Risk Assessment and Risk Management (BIEM); providing further support to realization of the Sub-Regional Platform and the occasion to sign a document similar to

conclusions that define the activities and form of cooperation within realization the project of regional specialized centres; adopt reports prepared for the 8 IPA project beneficiary countries within the Regional Programme on reducing risks from natural and other ES in South-East Europe, including: 1) a report on the needs assessment in the area of risk reduction of natural and other ES, 2) a report on a detailed assessment of capacity in the area of risk reduction of natural and other ES 3) WMO Report on the needs assessment of hydro-meteorological institutes in the system of risk reduction of natural and other ES.

At the said Conference, member countries of South-East Europe endorsed the Draft framework of the Regional Strategy for Risk Reduction from natural and other ES in South-East Europe developed within the Regional Programme, as well as the draft of Regional strategy for risk assessment of natural and other ES in South-East Europe as a good starting point for establishing a comprehensive framework for regional cooperation in the field of risk reduction, and defining the strategic objectives of all countries in the region in implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015. Also, all member countries of South-East Europe have supported activities which UNISDR and WMO shall jointly initiate, in collaboration with the IPA project of the EU, with a demand for constant informing and a direct and clear access to information and activities. On this occasion, the member countries expressed their willingness that, unless there is sufficiently adequate coordination and communication during the process of the said activities by the international community, each of the proposed country may present its reluctance to further implementation of the activities and projects.

Conclusion

South-East European countries are increasingly facing ES that surpass their national borders or national capabilities of providing an adequate response. Therefore, cooperation of South-East European countries in averting catastrophic consequences of ES is significantly supported by different international organizations such as the UN, EU and NATO.

Establishment of a solid international legal basis for providing coordinated assistance and cooperation in the countries affected by ES is contributed by a number of regional initiatives and strategies for risk reduction and risk assessment of ES signed by the majority of the countries of South East Europe.

The possibility of further improvement of cooperation among the countries of South East Europe in ES ranges from its greater institutionalization of international legal and the domestic legal

harmonization of the issues in question, then, consistent implementation of the signed regional initiatives and strategies, especially in strengthening their own capacities (strengthening community, trust and information among the executive power, equity holders, citizens and other entities in the system of protection and rescue) and strengthening joint regional capacity (preparation and exchange of experts, joint training of police, military and civil emergency and rescue services – e.g. “Danube Guard” exercise, unifying own and donated financial, material and technical resources, establishment of regional centres for training and humanitarian assistance – e.g. Russo-Serbian humanitarian centre in Nis, greater involvement of non-governmental organizations, etc.), up to improving systems for early warning, information, communication and decision support in ES, and establishing urban and market mechanisms such as stricter procedures for obtaining building permits and more expensive insurance for building at risky locations.

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POST-NATIONAL NETWORKING: SIGNIFICANCE OF EU FOR THE “HELVETIZATION” OF THE BALKANS

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Abstract

This paper explores the key features of the notion of post-nationalism, its modes and its theoretical implications to the subject of this research – the significance of the EU for the “helvetization” of the Balkans. This research is qualitative, implemented through the content analysis method. Data for this research were collected from various sources, mostly from official internet sites, the statements of politicians and journalists, and from views of the referent political scientists. In addition, we used the EBSCO database for collecting the scientific articles. The main intention of this paper is to explore the EU significance as a model and an agent for cooperation and integration of the Balkan region. In that favor, we conduct this research taking into account the following research question - How the EU contributes to the postnational networking of the Balkans, and thus, its “helvetization”? Consequently, as a research framework, this paper takes the EU model of postnational networking as analytical model. Within the paper, the EU is treated as a post-national model and agent, because it clearly represents the most advanced institutional indicators of a postnational networking in the contemporary world. As far as the post-national networking of the Balkans concerns, this paper takes into account the South East European Cooperation Process (SEECP) and the “Yugosphere”. In that context, this paper concludes the SEECP success in articulating of the key parameters of postnational networking, derived from loosely established regional cooperation in the following areas: regional security, democracy, economic growth, social and cultural development, and legal affairs and fight against crime. As regards the “Yugosphere”, the paper treats this form of post-national networking as a socio-economic phenomenon, based on linguistic, cultural, national and territorial proximity of the people and states of the Balkans, understood in strictly apolitical sense, with strong desire for integration of the Balkans into the EU. At the end, we conclude that the emulation of the EU model by the Balkan countries, strongly manifests through the creation of an indirect type of post-nationalism, embodied in the SEECP and the “Yugosphere”, and the EU position as an ultimate objective of the Balkan countries, enables the process of “helvetization”.