

Programme

European Office, Brussels

KAS Europe Talks

EU-Serbia Relations between Accession and Alienation

Wednesday, 18 May 2022

10:00 – 11:00 Uhr CET

Online-Event (via Zoom)

The European Office of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung is very pleased to invite you to the next session of our event format "**KAS Europe Talks**". In this format, the European Office regularly organizes a discussion with the Director of another KAS Office, focusing on recent developments in the respective countries or regions as well as on the status quo of relations with the European Union. This event takes a closer look at **Serbia** and its relations with the EU after more than eight years of accession negotiations.

Official accession talks between Serbia and the European Union (EU) began in 2014. Although Serbia's accession to the EU (together with Montenegro) is the most advanced, negotiations have been stalled for several years. The EU's reticent behavior is mainly explained by disappointing experiences from past enlargement rounds and the increasingly authoritarian style of government of the re-elected president Aleksandar Vučić. Other explanations are the ongoing corruption and the country's ethnic conflict in and with Kosovo. At the same time, other geopolitical forces are gaining influence in the Western Balkans. At the last EU-Western Balkans Summit in October 2021, Latvian Prime Minister Krisjanis Karins put it in a nutshell: „Either Europe extends the hand and pulls these [Western Balkan] countries toward us, or someone else will extend a hand and pull these countries in a different direction“. China is already trying to expand its influence in the region through infrastructure and energy projects under the *Belt and Road Initiative*, but also with supplies of masks and Covid-19 vaccines. In addition, Russia is a traditionally close ally of Serbia and the Western Balkans are heavily dependent on Russian gas. The war of aggression in Ukraine has put the country in a quandary between EU accession ambitions and pro-Russian sentiments.

What do the future relations between the EU and Serbia look like? What impact does the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine have on the sentiment in the country and support for Russia? Are the close ties with Russia an obstacle to the country's further integration to European structures? What is the agenda of other geopolitical actors in the country and what dimension have these already reached?

The event "**KAS Europe Talks: EU-Serbia Relations between Accession and Alienation**" will take place on **Wednesday, 18 May 2022 from 10:00 - 11:00 CET** via Zoom. We look forward to discussing the above-mentioned questions with our colleague **Norbert Beckmann-Dierkes**, Director of the KAS Offices for Serbia and Montenegro. After the discussion between Mr. Beckmann-Dierkes and **Dr. Hardy Ostry**, Director of the European Office of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, the participants will have the opportunity to ask questions. The event will be held in **German** and will also be simultaneously translated into **English**.

We look forward to your participation!

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10:00	Welcome Remarks Dr. Hardy Ostry Director European Office of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung
10:05	Discussion on the relations between Serbia and the European Union Dr. Hardy Ostry Director of the European Office of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Norbert Beckmann-Dierkes Director of the KAS Office for Serbia and Montenegro
10:45	Questions and Answers
11:00	End of the Event

Informationen on registration and participation:

Please register by providing your name, email address, organisation and position. You will then receive a confirmation of your registration and further information on how to participate in the online event.

During the online event:

During the event, you will not be connected via video and will be muted by the host. After the speakers' short statements, you are welcome to join the conversation: you can ask the speakers a written question (click on the Q&A icon in the toolbar).