

Young Generation Policy Brief

# Enforcement of the Rule of Law in Serbia

## A Policy Proposal

By Léo Christophe, Sonia Kougioni, Marija Momiroška

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# Enforcement of the Rule of Law in Serbia: A Policy Proposal

BY LÉO CHRISTOPHE, SONIA KOUGIONI, MARIJA MOMIROSKA

## Executive Summary

This policy paper addresses the persistent gap between Serbia's formal commitments to the rule of law and its political practices, which undermine domestic democratic development and the credibility of the EU enlargement process. Drawing on the Copenhagen Criteria and liberal democratic theory, we evaluate three policy options: a transactional funding mechanism, a legally binding EU-Serbia rule of law agreement, and the suspension of accession negotiations. The policy brief recommends a dual-track approach that combines positive conditionality with civil society empowerment. This strategy presents a feasible, sustainable, and politically balanced solution to strengthen the rule of law and reinforce the EU's transformative role in the Western Balkans.

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## BRIDGING THE GAP: STRENGTHENING RULE OF LAW FOR SERBIA'S EU INTEGRATION

The rule of law is a fundamental value of the European Union (EU), enshrined in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU). It ensures that all individuals and institutions are held accountable under fair, transparent, and independently enforced laws.<sup>1</sup> Adherence to the rule of law is not optional for candidate countries; it is a core component of the Copenhagen Criteria. It requires stable institutions that guarantee democracy, human rights, and respect for the rule of law.

However, despite the presence of legislative frameworks, the rule of law in Serbia is undermined by political interference in the judiciary, widespread corruption, and systemic human rights violations.<sup>2</sup>

Government actions, such as undue pressure on the judiciary and insufficient measures against high-level corruption, contradict the country's stated commitment to EU democratic principles.

Despite these challenges, the EU has continued to support Serbia's accession process. Although the EU has invested in reforms and applied conditionality, its enforcement has often been lenient and inconsistent.<sup>3</sup>

The lack of meaningful sanctions has diminished the credibility of the accession process and has failed to create sufficient incentives for compliance.

When the EU outlines clear accession criteria but does not enforce them, it undermines not only its own legitimacy but also the effectiveness of the enlargement process.<sup>4</sup>

This credibility gap between Serbia's formal commitments and its political practices weakens the rule of law domestically and diminishes the EU's transformative leverage in the Western Balkans.<sup>5</sup>

To address this, a new transactional mechanism with stricter conditionality and targeted goals for civil society empowerment could ensure a sustainable application of the rule of law in Serbia.

## FROM SERBIA'S JOURNEY TOWARDS EU TO AN INSTITUTIONAL AND SOCIETAL CRISIS

The EU considers rule of law to be the cornerstone of any democratic society, ensuring accountability, fairness, and the protection of individual rights.<sup>6</sup> Promoting these standards is central to the EU's enlargement policy, including Serbia, which has held official candidate status since 2012.<sup>7</sup> Serbia's path toward EU integration aligns with the broader concept of Europeanisation, aiming to harmonize the country's legal and political systems with EU norms and values.<sup>8</sup>

To support these efforts, the EU has implemented several measures to strengthen the rule of law in Serbia. A key milestone was the establishment of the Stabilisation and

<sup>1</sup> European Union. (2012). Consolidated version of the Treaty on European Union (Treaty on European Union, Article 2). Official Journal of the European Union, C 326/13. Retrieved from: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:12012M002> (accessed 12 March 2025).

<sup>2</sup> European Commission. (2024). 2024 Rule of Law Report – Country Chapter on the Rule of Law Situation in Serbia. (SWD 2024 831 final), pp. 8–10, 15–17. Retrieved from: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/IT/ALL/?uri=CELEX:52024SC0831> (accessed 12 March 2025).

<sup>3</sup> Blauburger, M., & van Hüllen, V. (2021). Conditionality of EU funds: An instrument to enforce EU fundamental values? *Journal of European Integration*, 43(1), pp. 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07036337.2019.1708337>

<sup>4</sup> Börzel, T. A., & Schimmelfennig, F. (2017). Coming together or drifting apart? The EU's political integration capacity in Eastern

Europe. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 24(2), pp. 278–296. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2016.1265574>

<sup>5</sup> Steunenberg, B., & Dimitrova, A. (2007). Compliance in the EU enlargement process: The limits of conditionality. *European Integration Online Papers*, 11(5), pp. 1–18. <http://eiop.or.at/eiop/texte/2007-005a.htm>

<sup>6</sup> European Union. (2012). Treaty on European Union, Article 2.

<sup>7</sup> European Commission. (n.d.) Enlargement and Eastern Neighbourhood– Serbia. Retrieved from: [https://enlargement.ec.europa.eu/enlargement-policy/serbia\\_en](https://enlargement.ec.europa.eu/enlargement-policy/serbia_en) (accessed 12 March 2025).

<sup>8</sup> Džankić, J., Keil, S. (2019). The Europeanisation of Contested States: Comparing Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia and Montenegro. In: Džankić, J., Keil, S., Kmezić, M. (eds) *The Europeanisation of the Western Balkans. New Perspectives on South-East Europe*. Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 181–206. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-91412-1\\_9](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-91412-1_9)

Association Agreement<sup>9</sup> in September 2013, which contributed to political and economic cooperation. In 2019, the civil society network National Convent on the European Union initiated a structured debate on Serbia's accession, bringing together state representatives, independent bodies, and civil society organizations.<sup>10</sup>

More recently, in 2023, the EU Commission approved the Growth Plan, prioritizing reforms in the socio-economic sectors, particularly in the rule of law.<sup>11</sup>

However, despite formal commitments to these principles, a significant gap persists between the country's legal obligations and its political practices. The EU's scoreboard reveals poor performance in the rule of law, underscoring systemic issues within the Serbian justice system.<sup>12</sup>

Efforts to combat corruption have produced limited results. Although Serbia has adopted new anti-corruption strategies, the political will to confront high-level corruption remains weak, particularly among the ruling elites, who often fail to comply with existing regulations. Fundamental rights are also inadequately protected, with ongoing violations against journalists, discrimination against vulnerable groups, and restrictions on freedom of expression further emphasizing the fragile state of governance.<sup>13</sup>

Public frustration over governance failures has risen recently.<sup>14</sup> Since November 2024, citizens in Serbia have increasingly stood up to the regime. Protests have intensified in recent months, culminating in chaotic scenes in parliament, where smoke bombs and flares were thrown during a vote on

university funding. The unrest, triggered by public outrage over a deadly infrastructure collapse that claimed 15 lives, poses a serious challenge to President Aleksandar Vučić's authority. These deficiencies are not only a domestic issue for Serbia but also a challenge to the EU's credibility, resulting in a delay in Serbia's progress toward EU integration.

### EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR THE STATE OF THE RULE OF LAW

Clear and legitimate criteria are essential for effectively evaluating policy options aimed at strengthening the rule of law and judiciary in Serbia. This analysis draws on two complementary frameworks: the Copenhagen Criteria and 'liberal theory of democracy'.<sup>15</sup> The Copenhagen Criteria are particularly relevant as they represent the EU's official standards for accession and ignoring them would undermine the EU's credibility. 'Liberal democratic principles add a normative dimension, helping assess whether proposed reforms genuinely enhance democratic participation and institutional independence.

First, strengthening judicial independence is paramount. According to 'liberal democratic criteria, an independent judiciary is crucial for ensuring the rule of law and protecting democratic values. The policy should promote impartiality and prevent political interference, encouraging a judicial system that can make decisions free from external pressure. This would enhance Serbia's compliance with the Acquis Communautaire, ensuring that judicial reforms align with EU laws and standards.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>9</sup> European Commission. (n.d.) Stabilisation and Association Agreement with Serbia. Retrieved from: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu> (accessed 12 March 2025).

<sup>10</sup> European Movement in Serbia. (n.d.) National Convent on the European Union. Retrieved from: <https://www.emins.org/en/nacionalni-konvent-o-evropskoj-uniji-nkeu/> (accessed 12 March 2025).

<sup>11</sup> European Commission. (2023). Communication New Growth Plan for the Western Balkans. Retrieved from: [https://enlargement.ec.europa.eu/2023-communication-new-growth-plan-western-balkans\\_en](https://enlargement.ec.europa.eu/2023-communication-new-growth-plan-western-balkans_en) (accessed 12 March 2025).

<sup>12</sup> European Commission. (2024), European Innovation Scoreboard 2024 – Country Profile Serbia. Retrieved from: <https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/statistics/performance->

[indicators/european-innovation-scoreboard\\_en](indicators/european-innovation-scoreboard_en) (accessed 12 March 2025).

<sup>13</sup> European Commission. (2024). 2024 Rule of Law Report – Serbia, SWD(2024) 831 final.

<sup>14</sup> Smith, J. (2025, January 30). "We are done with corruption": How the students of Serbia rose up against the system. The Guardian. Retrieved from: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/jan/30/we-are-done-with-corruption-how-the-students-of-serbia-rose-up-against-the-system> (accessed 12 March 2025).

<sup>15</sup> Dahl, R. A. (1998). On Democracy. Yale University Press, pp. 91-92. <https://newuniversityinexileconsortium.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Robert-A.-Dahl-On-Democracy-1998-1.pdf>.

<sup>16</sup> European Commission. (n.d.). Chapter 23: Judiciary and Fundamental Rights. Retrieved from:

Freedom of expression and information also play a key role in Serbia's democratic development. As Dahl writes, "democracy maximizes freedom by embracing basic political rights and liberties, such as free expression, and allows individuals to live under laws of their own choosing".<sup>17</sup> The policy should therefore strengthen the media environment and promote the independence of civil society, ensuring that public debates on judicial reforms are transparent and inclusive. This is not only important for the internal democracy of the country but also for its long-term relations with the EU, as the EU values the protection of freedoms as part of its enlargement process, outlined in the Copenhagen Criteria, which emphasize respect for human rights and freedom of expression as essential conditions for EU membership.<sup>18</sup>

The sustainability and feasibility of any proposed reforms must be considered. Dahl's model suggests that democratic reforms should produce long-lasting effects, and the EU must ensure that Serbia can implement reforms that endure beyond the immediate political context. Policies should be designed to be politically and legally feasible, enabling Serbia to comply with EU regulations without encountering barriers or delays. This aligns with the Copenhagen Criteria, which require that candidate countries demonstrate their ability to fulfil the obligations of EU membership, ensuring sustainability.<sup>19</sup>

Political acceptability is another essential criterion. The proposed reforms must be acceptable within Serbia and EU member states. In Serbia, public support is crucial for ensuring that reforms are implemented effectively, while within the EU, member states must view the policy as legitimate, and the reforms must align with the EU's expectations for candidate countries, especially as outlined in the Copenhagen Criteria and EU accession chapters, particularly Chapter 23 (Judiciary and Fundamental Rights). Without this, the reforms could face significant challenges, undermining the long-term success of the judicial strengthening process. Furthermore, the impact on

EU-Serbia relations must be considered, as poorly designed reforms could strain diplomatic ties and push Serbia towards other geopolitical alliances such as Russia or China.<sup>20</sup>

Lastly, considering that civil society empowerment is crucial when evaluating the potential impact of the proposed policies is vital. Strengthening civil society and independent media fosters an environment where citizens are engaged and can hold the government accountable. This aligns with establishing a functioning democracy as described by Dahl's criteria, where citizens actively participate and play a role in shaping politics.<sup>21</sup>

In conclusion, balancing these criteria – judicial independence, freedom of expression, sustainability, political acceptability, EU-Serbia relations, and civil society empowerment – is essential for designing a policy that is not only effective in strengthening Serbia's rule of law but also feasible and accepted both in Serbia and in the EU. This approach will ensure the success and longevity of judicial reforms while fostering closer integration between Serbia and the EU in the long term.

## POLICY OPTIONS

### Option 1: Developing transactionality and civil society empowerment for sustainable rule of law

Serbia's adherence to the rule of law, a necessity for its EU accession, has been a key focus of the EU Commission reports<sup>22</sup> for years, as it is a core value of our Union, enshrined in the second article of the TEU.<sup>23</sup>

Following the recommendation of the EU Commission, installing stronger enforcement mechanisms and entering a transactional relationship would encourage Serbia to meet its engagements by making it appealing to commit and harmful to refuse.<sup>24</sup> Nevertheless, deriving a vassalisation of Serbia by

[https://enlargement.ec.europa.eu/enlargement-policy/conditions-membership/chapters-acquis\\_en](https://enlargement.ec.europa.eu/enlargement-policy/conditions-membership/chapters-acquis_en) (accessed 12 March 2025).

<sup>17</sup> Dahl, R. A. (1998).

<sup>18</sup> European Council. (1993) Conclusions of the Presidency: Copenhagen European Council, 21–22 June 1993. Bulletin of the European Communities, No. 6. Retrieved from: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/enlargement/ec/pdf/cop\\_en.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/enlargement/ec/pdf/cop_en.pdf) (accessed 12 March 2025).

<sup>19</sup> European Council. (1993).

<sup>20</sup> European Union. (n.d.). Accession negotiations. EU Delegation to Serbia. Retrieved March 30, 2025, from <https://europa.rs/accesion-negotiations/?lang=en> (accessed 12 March 2025).

<sup>21</sup> Dahl, R. A. (1998).

<sup>22</sup> European Commission, 2024 Rule of Law Report – Country Chapter on the Rule of Law Situation in Serbia, pp. 19–20, 23.

<sup>23</sup> European Union. (2012). Treaty on European Union, Article 2.

<sup>24</sup> Deutsch, K.W. (2017). Political Community and the North Atlantic Area: International Organization in the Light of Historical

imposing rules alone is not recommendable, as this would be counterproductive and strain EU-Serbia relations.<sup>25</sup>

The first option would imply a strict conditionality of EU funds linked to progress in upholding the rule of law. Instead of a total and immediate suspension, we suggest a system for gradually suspending pre-accession funds in cases of negative assessments of this progress, as reported by the EU Commission or independent experts. The suspended funds could be redirected toward programmes that support civil society, independent media, and judicial institutions, such as citizen consultations that engage Serbians in accession or funding for journalistic platforms that ensure free information. We should also enhance training programmes for judges, lawyers, journalists, and civil servants to promote institutional transparency and independence. This strategy ensures compliance and allows Serbia to strengthen its civil society and media, thereby enhancing its democratic processes and governance.

Secondly, it should be accompanied by sanctions for cases of non-compliance, including the temporary exclusion of Serbia from programmes such as Erasmus+ or Horizon Europe, or freezing the assets of officials directly involved.

This set of measures does not require any new expenditure. It aims to encourage Serbian politicians to implement the agreements they signed by demonstrating that the EU can be stringent in cases of non-compliance but generous in cases of good compliance. Furthermore, this approach will help maintain stability in Serbia by easing tensions with the opposition and restoring trust in institutions and government. It also focuses on strengthening the capacities of civil society, NGOs, and journalists to act within the country in instances of non-compliance, ensuring the sustainability of Serbia's journey toward establishing the rule of law. A cost-benefit analysis for Serbia's elites should motivate them to comply with the rule of law.

The political acceptability of these mechanisms, especially sanctions, may be contentious, even when concentrating on specific EU-related targets. Also, an unanimous agreement in

the European Council is crucial for ensuring the applicability of these recommendations. However, this first recommendation of two mechanisms is promptly feasible, sustainable, and acceptable, with a neutral or positive impact on EU-Serbia relations.<sup>26</sup>

The urgency of this situation cannot be overstated, and immediate action is necessary to ensure that the progress made since 2012 is not undermined, including the 2021 judicial reform, which is currently not respected.

### Option 2: A legally binding EU-Serbia agreement on the rule of law

While enforcement mechanisms and conditional funding are critical for short-term compliance, they must be integrated into a broader legal and political framework to ensure long-term democratic transformation. A formally ratified, legally binding rule of law agreement between the EU and Serbia would be based on positive conditionality and mutual commitments. Positive conditionality has become a key tool in the EU's enlargement policy and governance, promoting adherence to EU norms and facilitating institutional transformation.<sup>27</sup> Unlike previous soft-law instruments, the proposed "New Deal" would primarily address Serbia's most urgent governance challenges, such as judicial independence, anti-corruption frameworks, and media freedom, which are core democratic standards that Serbia must fulfil as a condition for EU accession.<sup>28</sup>

More particularly, the agreement would include:

- Legally defined benchmarks within a specific timeframe (e.g. 24–36 months) for implementation
- A council of independent experts, consisting of EU-appointed and Serbian legal professionals, retired judges, and representatives from civil society, that would be tasked with providing biannual public evaluations of Serbia's compliance and issuing binding reforms and sanctions, such as the

Experience. In M. Eilstrup-Sangiovanni (Ed.). *Debates on European Integration: A Reader*, pp. 68–86. London: Bloomsbury Academic. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-0-230-20933-6\\_4](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-0-230-20933-6_4)

<sup>25</sup> Uvalić, M. (2017). The EU and Serbia: The impact of the rule of law on EU-Serbia relations. *The Journal of Common Market Studies*, 55(1), pp. 93–109. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.12503>

<sup>26</sup> European Council. (1993).

<sup>27</sup> Becker, P. (2025). Conditionality as an instrument of European governance – Cases, characteristics and types. *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 63(2), pp. 402–419.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.13580>

<sup>28</sup> European Commission. (2024). 2024 Rule of Law Report – Serbia, pp. 19–20.

suspension of EU funds or the postponement of accession milestones in cases of non-compliance

- Public visibility and domestic legitimacy, with the agreement requiring ratification by the Serbian parliament and all evaluations and progress reports published through national media outlets, enhancing public accountability and civil society engagement
- Parliamentary anti-corruption bodies with prosecutorial powers and investigative functions that would strengthen institutional resistance to political interference and elite capture.

What distinguishes this policy is not its technical details, but rather its legal significance and political symbolism, because a formal agreement would be publicly ratified and carry political weight, thereby increasing the Serbian government's costs of non-compliance.

This proposal aligns strongly with the Copenhagen Criteria, enhancing Serbia's compliance with EU legal standards and reinforcing democratic governance. It addresses critical shortcomings in judicial independence, anti-corruption enforcement, and media freedom – core elements of the EU acquis.<sup>29</sup> From Robert Dahl's democratic perspective, the proposal strengthens judicial independence and freedom of expression through enforceable safeguards.<sup>30</sup> Including a council of independent experts and engaging civil society promotes transparent and inclusive monitoring.

### Option 3: Suspension of EU negotiation talks

Another potential policy proposal would be for the European Union to suspend Serbia's EU accession negotiations as a way to pressure the government into initiating judicial reforms. By halting the negotiation chapters, the EU would directly target Serbia's most important foreign policy priority, potentially forcing the government to act. Similar suspensions have occurred in the cases of Turkey and Croatia when democratic standards were not met.<sup>31</sup> For Serbia, this kind of pressure could send a clear message that progress toward EU membership is conditional on real and verifiable reforms in the judiciary.

However, the impact of such a policy must be carefully weighed against broader democratic and strategic considerations. While this suspension might create short-term motivation to implement reforms, particularly regarding judicial independence, there is a risk that these reforms would be superficial, driven more by a desire to resume talks than by a genuine commitment to structural change. Without a sustained, internally motivated reform process, the judicial system may remain vulnerable to political influence or revert to previous practices once negotiations are back on track.

This approach also does little to directly enhance freedom of expression or strengthen the role of civil society. A suspension may be framed domestically as interference from abroad, which could fuel nationalist rhetoric and reduce public trust in pro-European reforms.

The sustainability of this policy is similarly uncertain. Although it is institutionally feasible, the mechanism requires consensus among all member states. Some countries with close ties to Serbia may resist such a move, making implementation politically tricky. Even if successful, there is no guarantee that the reforms achieved under pressure will be lasting or meaningful in the long term.

Politically, the measure is also sensitive. While many Serbian citizens support EU integration and may welcome reform efforts, others might view a suspension as a betrayal or a sign of disrespect. This could weaken domestic support for EU membership and strengthen Serbia's inclination to seek deeper ties with non-EU powers such as Russia or China. In this sense, the long-term implications for EU-Serbia relations could be counterproductive.

In conclusion, suspending accession negotiations might generate short-term leverage over the Serbian government, but it falls short in several key areas. It risks producing shallow reforms and could complicate both domestic legitimacy and regional geopolitics. To be effective, such a measure must be embedded in a broader, supportive strategy that combines conditionality with investment in local democratic institutions and actors. Only then can the EU ensure that its push for reform aligns with both its own credibility and Serbia's democratic development.

<sup>29</sup> European Council. (1993).

<sup>30</sup> Dahl, R. A. (1998).

<sup>31</sup> AGBU Europe. (2019, March 13). European Parliament votes to suspend Turkey's EU accession negotiations. AGBU Europe.

Retrieved from: <https://agbueurope.org/european-parliament-votes-to-suspend-turkeys-eu-accession-negotiations/> (accessed 12 March 2025).

### **POLICY RECOMMENDATION: HELPING SERBIA TO REDISCOVER ITS EUROPEAN PATH**

Having considered all the above, our policy proposal is to develop a transactionality coupled with focused civil society empowerment and appeasement actions to ensure the sustainable application of the rule of law. We believe this proposal has a strong chance of acceptance by Serbia, as it is based on positive conditionality and a gradual suspension of EU funds in case of non-compliance. It offers benefits for the Serbian government, such as strengthening trust in institutions and addressing the protests.

In contrast, strict and immediate sanctions in cases of non-compliance could significantly escalate tensions between the EU and Serbia, especially without gradual approaches or positive incentives. On the other hand, reinforcing civil society would provide an indirect response, making our approach more sustainable in the long run. From a cost-benefit perspective, the Serbian government and elites should thus logically accept our proposal.

Finally, this proposal is easier and faster to implement than the alternatives, as it requires no additional funds. The only prerequisite is the collective political will of EU countries to resolve the situation in Serbia and ultimately enable it to take the final step on its European path.

We also need to consider the context in which this paper was written: the beginning of 2025, when a younger generation organised major demonstrations in favour of the rule of law. In this context, more than ever, our proposal could send a signal to the demonstrators and put pressure on the Serbian government, which is already under pressure, increasing the chances of compliance.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

After more than 10 years of ignoring the rule of law in Serbia, historical pro-European demonstrations by the younger and future generation are moving the lines. When candidate countries show little progress yet continue advancing in the accession process, it sends a misleading message not just to them but to the rest of Europe. It suggests that the EU's core values, such as democracy and the rule of law, are flexible. This can undermine trust in the enlargement process and diminish the EU's influence in the region. Establishing new transactional mechanisms with the Serbian government, which involve a

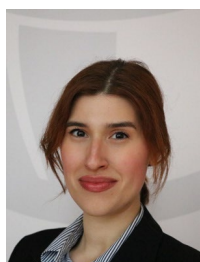
progressive suspension of EU funds, and utilizing those funds to strengthen civil society in case of non-compliance with the existing agreement on the rule of law in the country, are both appropriate and proportionate measures. Their only requirement? No new expenses, just an agreement among the 27. This presents an opportunity for Serbia to reconnect with its European path and for the EU to demonstrate its commitment to its values, not merely in words but through actions. Failing to act could mean missing this opportunity and eroding public trust, both in Serbia and within the EU.

## The Author(s)



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Léo Christophe is pursuing a Franco-German double Master's degree in European Studies at the European University Viadrina and Sciences Po Strasbourg. He previously earned a Franco-German Double Bachelor of Political Sciences at the Leuphana University of Lüneburg and the IEP of Fontainebleau. He is fluent in English and German and a native French speaker. He has interned with the French Senate and National Assembly for members of Parliament and is currently working as a parliamentary assistant in the State Parliament of Brandenburg. Additionally, he has served as a student representative at various universities he attended for many years, is the vice president of the student parliament at European University Viadrina and is a young ambassador for the Franco-German Youth Office (OFAJ/DFJW), where he is responsible for trilateral programmes. His main interests include Franco-German friendship and European integration, particularly in the South Caucasus (B.A. thesis on EU-Armenia interdependencies, which received the highest grade), as well as public services.



### SONIA KOUGIONI

Sonia Kougioni holds a bachelor's degree in political science from Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and is currently pursuing a master's degree in European Studies at the European University Viadrina in a bilingual programme (German/English). Professionally, she worked for over two years as an EU Project Assistant at the Hellenic Hoteliers Federation, where she contributed to EU programmes such as INTERREG and the European Partnership Agreement. She is fluent in English, German, and Serbian, and is a native speaker of Greek. Her academic and linguistic strengths were enhanced by a six-month internship at Transparency International Germany in Berlin, where she supported press monitoring and executive operations related to anti-corruption efforts. Her main areas of academic interest include the rule of law, corruption, the Balkans, and right-wing extremism and radical ideologies.



#### MARIJA MOMIROVSKA

Marija Momirovska, born in Skopje, holds a bachelor's degree in Law and Politics from the European University Viadrina and is currently pursuing a master's degree in European Studies, focusing on Politics. She has worked for almost a year as a student assistant at the European Studies Coordination Bureau, where she contributes to the creation of the newsletter, conducts interviews with professors, and engages with students on various topics related to the programme. In addition to preparing lessons and conducting research, she actively contributes to the development of communication and academic resources within the department. Marija also completed an internship at the Center for Research and Policy Making, where she worked on a research project focusing on gender equality in Serbia. Her main academic interests include migration, the Western Balkans, the Macedonian question, and EU enlargement politics.

## About the Project

ValEUs brings together 20 universities from five continents, combining their strong expertise in EU studies across a wide range of academic disciplines. The Jean Monnet Network will foster joint research capacities, develop innovative teaching collaboration, and engage in societal policy debate to establish impactful policy recommendations. ValEUs is funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Commission (2024-2026).

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