



Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence  
The Challenges of the Enlargement  
Policy: EU versus China's diplomacy  
in Western Balkans 2020-23



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The contents of this newsletter are the responsibility of the authors and do not reflect the views of the European Commission.

## ABOUT THE PROJECT

The Faculty of Economics is implementing a Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence project, which has been awarded for the first time to a Montenegrin University by the European Commission. The project, called "The Challenges of the Enlargement Policy – EU vs. China's Diplomacy in the Western Balkans 2020-23" will run for the next three years. It will position the University of Montenegro and the Faculty of Economics as institutions capable of excellence in teaching and research in the fields of international relations, EU integration and other related issues, at both the European and the global level.

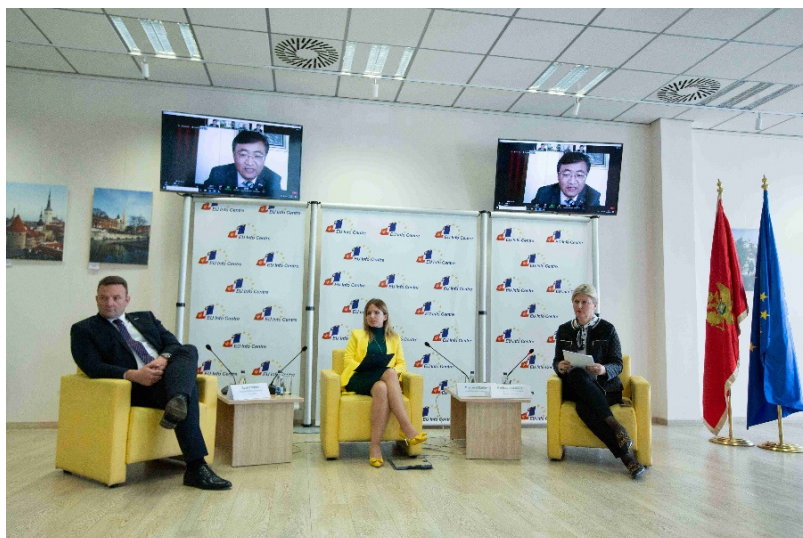
### Seminar 1: EU, CHINA AND THE WESTERN BALKANS: CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS FOR FURTHER INTEGRATION


On May 27, the Faculty of Economics of the University of Montenegro, with support from the EU InfoCentre, organized a seminar "EU, China and the Western Balkans: Challenges and Prospects for Further Integration", which aimed to explore the geopolitical and geoeconomic roles of powerful players in the Western Balkans and their impact on Montenegro's European integration.

At the seminar, which was organized at the EU Info Center, with a live broadcast on the Zoom platform, Ambassador of the European Union to Montenegro Oana Kristina Popa addressed the participants by video message, and her Chinese counterpart in Montenegro, Liu Jin joined through the Zoom platform. An advisor to the Chief Negotiator with the EU, Dragana Markovic was also present, while the event was moderated by Danijela Jacimovic, Professor at the Faculty of Economics.

During the hour and a half of the seminar, mainly through the Zoom platform, Frank Schimmelfennig, a Professor at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich, Kong Tianping, a Professor at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, and Michael Kaeding, a Professor at the University of Duisburg-Essen, joined the discussion, as well as the President of the Atlantic Alliance of Montenegro, Savo Kentera.

Ambassador Popa assessed that the enlargement of the EU is by its nature a geopolitical issue, which implies investment in peace, stability and prosperity in Europe, as well as the strengthening of the Union itself, Popa said in a video message. For example, investment projects must comply with EU standards in terms of public procurement, competitiveness, the environment, and energy or transport regulations. She added that it was up to Montenegro and the region to manage their relationship with China to their advantage, while working diligently towards their main goal of EU membership. "This is a challenging task for policy makers, but a task that definitely benefits the Montenegrin economy and its citizens," Popa concluded.





The Chinese Ambassador, Luo Jin, said that the Western Balkans, China and the EU are open to enhancing cooperation and that this cooperation opens up many opportunities so that everyone benefits from it. He added that relations between Montenegro and China are based on the quality of mutual trust. He added that there is a benefit to both sides from the relationship, and that the political cooperation between Montenegro and China was greatly developed when China chose to support Montenegro's early accession to the EU. China has no geopolitical or other pretensions in Montenegro or the Western Balkans as a whole, nor does it want to compete with the European Union for influence in the region. China is open to cooperation with the EU in the direction of providing assistance to the countries of the Western Balkans, the Chinese ambassador concluded.

The Advisor to the Chief Negotiator, Dragana Markovic, said that Montenegro is following its European path, while cultivating good cooperation with global political and economic actors. What is much more important for Montenegro in the geopolitical balance of power is the fact that it is in the interest of our region to join the Union and that it is not only our interest but also the interest of the Union, said Markovic.

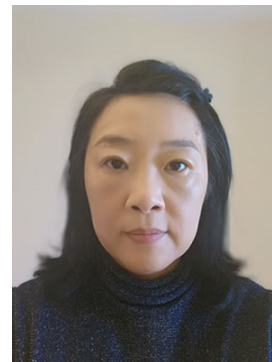
A recording of the whole event can be found at this [LINK](#). A short video of the event can be found at this [LINK](#).

## ONLINE GUEST LECTURES

### May 2021 - Online guest lectures

**Professor Jing Men** the Director of the EU-China Research Centre at the Department of EU International Relations and Diplomacy Studies of the College of Europe gave a lecture *The nature of EU-China relations and EU-China economic and trade relations* to Undergraduate and Masters students at the Faculty of Economics of the University of Montenegro, as well as the Faculty of Humanist Studies of the University of Donja Gorica.

Her research and teaching focuses on EU-China relations and Chinese foreign policy.



### May 2021 - Online guest lectures

**Professor Kong Tianping** works for the Institute of European Studies, which affiliates to the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. He teaches at the School of International Relations at the University of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. He is the member of the Academic Council of the 16+1 Think-tank Network, and a member of the International Academic Council of the China-CEE Institute in Budapest. Prof. Tianping gave the lectures: *Economic Transition in Central and Eastern Europe: Lessons and Reflection* and *Global Changes and Relations between China and the Western Balkans*.

His research fields cover CEE studies, transition economies, comparative analysis of economies in transition and international politics.



## UPCOMING GUEST LECTURES

### November 2021 - Guest lectures



**Professor Sabina Lange** – Senior Lecturer at the European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA, Maastricht), and a Senior Fellow of Maastricht University and also an Associate Professor in International Relations at the University of Ljubljana. Dr Lange will give the following lectures: The new EU institutional reality – political and institutional landscape for future integration and Decision-making in the EU – the new dynamics in relations between Member States and EU institutions.

She specializes in decision-making within the EU and in interinstitutional relations, in particular in external action policies and with regard to delegated and implementing acts.

## UPCOMING EVENT: Lecture 1

### THE NEW EU INSTITUTIONAL REALITY – THE POLITICAL AND INSTITUTIONAL LANDSCAPE FOR FUTURE INTEGRATION

**Speakers:** Sabina Lange, Danijela Jaćimović, Nikoleta Đukanović, representatives of the EU Delegation in Montenegro and the European integration office.

The event will be organized by the Faculty of Humanist Studies of the University of Donja Gorica, moderated by Tanja Miščević.

**Venue:** University of Donja Gorica, November 4, at 11 am.

With the Conference on the Future of Europe launched on 9 May 2021, the debate on the future institutional set up of the Union has intensified. The event will highlight various open issues concerning the future relationship between the EU and its members and the directions the discussion is taking in relation to them. In particular, it will focus on the role of the countries of the Western Balkans in this discussion and in the future of the Union.

Please write to [suncica@ucg.ac.me](mailto:suncica@ucg.ac.me) if you are interested in joining us for Lecture 1.

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