THE BALKANS AS A PART OF THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION:
POLITICAL-HISTORICAL CONTEXTUALISATION OF THE RECENT SHIFT IN REGIONAL GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

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The article argues that despite its historical relevance, after 1989 the (Western) Balkans has since the end of the Cold War been politically instrumentally excluded from the Mediterranean regional policies not only by the hegemonic influence of the European Union (EU) but also by the (Western) Balkans states themselves. After identifying a very recent turnaround of this trend now including Balkan Mediterranean states in Mediterranean regional politics, the article offers reasoning for the emergence of this change by exposing mutual reinforcement of three processes; namely critique of the unsuccessful EU-lead Mediterranean regional framework, upcoming completion of the state-formation in the Balkans and the effects of continuous non-governmental regional initiatives in the Mediterranean. The finding that Balkan NGOs have been participating in the Mediterranean regional affairs ever since the end of the Cold War whereby the (Western) Balkan Mediterranean states have done so only since the 2008 inclusion within the Union for the Mediterranean shows an important possibility to compensate this imbalance, but only if the "shift to the Mediterranean" is not an instrumental foreign policy strategy as was the 1990s "away from the Balkans".

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INTRODUCTION

This article studies the development of the role of the Balkans as a part of the Mediterranean region by looking at its actors' historical and current regional activities within the Mediterranean affairs. The research is relevant in the context of the ongoing process of state-building in the Balkans[2] and region-building in the Mediterranean.[3] Throughout the history, the Balkans Peninsula as a part of the Mediterranean area had an important constitutive role for regional political and also social and cultural relations not only in times of the Roman and the Byzantium Empires but especially in times of Ottoman hegemony in the Mediterranean. Strategic geopolitical and economic pretentions of states from outside of the Mediterranean severely influenced state-building process in the Balkans during the 19th and 20th Century, however, this only further contributed to a perception of Balkans' importance within the Mediterranean, be it in the interwar period or during the Cold War.

Nevertheless, after 1989 and the collapse of the Former Yugoslavia (Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia – SFRY), numerous initiatives for Mediterranean regional co-operation excluded the newly emerged Balkans states. The European Union (EU) which formed the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) excluded the Western Balkans states due to political and recent historical reasons, and the Balkans role in the Mediterranean on the inter-governmental level has ever since been institutionally marginalised by the EU. As noted below, important exceptions in this regard are Greece and also Turkey. Moreover, Western Balkans states themselves were not genuinely interested in forging Mediterranean regional co-operation ties. Quite surprisingly, in December 2007 it was firstly Albania who became evolved within the EMP and then in July 2008 all coastal Mediterranean Balkans states joined the EMP in the form of newly formed Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean (UfM).

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[2] Taking into account a material (geographical) nderstanding of regions, the Balkans is understood as a peninsula in the Mediterranean Sea; out of eleven Balkans states seven are Mediterranean (Slovenia, Croatia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, Greece and Turkey – its European part) and four do not have a Mediterranean coast (Serbia, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Romania). However, taking into account political time-space relevant factors, Serbia and Macedonia are both frequently placed within the Mediterranean region due to their social-historical relevance for the relations among peoples in the area. Equally, Romania and Bulgaria as Balkan states have in different hitorical eras had important roles within the Mediterranen affairs, which the article duly notes.

[3] The article does not question the existence or the contextual layers of meanings of the term 'region' nor is its intention to study or produce a definition of the Mediterranean as a region; the area is perceived as a region in the making (see e.g. Hettne and Söderbaum 2000) and will be taken into research interest as a geographic territory with (historically) recognisable and relevant regional activity and therefore meaning with some sense of distinctiveness according to other areas/regions.

The reasons to provide understanding of this fast shift of the role of the Western Balkans in the Mediterranean are firstly presented within the historical context of the Mediterranean region-building. Secondly, the role of Balkan states in the Mediterranean in the post-Cold-War era is studied within the scope of the analysis of foreign policy goals and strategies of the Balkan Mediterranean states towards their Mediterranean co-operation. Special attention is put to three processes, identified as baring historical influence on the relevant states' foreign policy-making, namely state-building in the Balkans, role of hegemonic external actors, and the role of the Balkans-Mediterranean societal (non-governmental) relations.

THE BALKANS' ROLE IN THE HISTORY OF THE MEDITERRANEAN AFFAIRS

The Balkans is historically connected to the Mediterranean through the crucial role of the Classical Greece and Macedonia in the formation of the European culture (including philosophy, sciences, politics etc.) in the Ancient times. Despite the fact exposed by Amin[4] that the political unity created at the time of Roman Empire was not reclaimed by any of the succeeding hegemonies in the Mediterranean (nor Arabs, Italian cities or the Ottoman Empire), and the high levels of interstate conflict between Arab peoples and their European neighbours during the 600–1517 period, Calleya[5] claims that the intensity of commercial relations, cultural, scientific, and artistic cooperation in the Mediterranean were extensive at the height of the Italian city states' power during the 11th century. Those relationships helped to transform the Mediterranean from a boundary zone between Christian North and Muslim South to an increasingly transnational area[6] (Arkoun, 2005: 101), whereby the Balkans was known as a tolerant multinational space of various religions and cultures. Both two areas, the Mediterranean and the Balkans within it were termed by historians as a 'transnational social space' or a 'meso-region'.[7]

More visible international relations between peoples in the Balkans began unfolding after the division of the Catholic and Orthodox Church in 1054, the fall

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[4] Samir Amin, "Conditions for Autonomy in the Mediterranean Region," in *The Mediterranean, Between Autonomy and Dependency*, ed. Faysal Yachir (London, New Jersey, Tokyo: Zed Books, United Nations University, 1989).

[5] Stephen C. Calleya, *Navigating regional dynamics in the Post-Cold war world. Patterns of Relations in the Mediterranean Area* (Aldershot, Brookfield USA, Singapore, Sydney: Darmouth, 1997), 65.

[6] Stephen C. Calleya, *Navigating regional dynamics in the Post-Cold war world. Patterns of Relations in the Mediterranean Area* (Aldershot, Brookfield USA, Singapore, Sydney: Darmouth, 1997), 64–68.

[7] See Stefan Troebst, "Introduction: What's in a Historical Region? A Teutonic Perspective," *European Review of History – Revue Européenne d' Histoire,* 10 (2003), 173–188.

of the Constantinople in 1453, and the beginning of expansion of the Ottoman Empire.[8] The central role of the Balkans at the time of Ottoman invasions in Europe was to represent a series of 'fences' (*série de 'rideaux'*), long defensive lines against Islam which were at disposal to the Catholic Mediterranean to "feel better in the shade" Braudel[9]. This role was mainly pursued by the 'continental' local nations (Bulgarians, Serbs, Macedonian, Romanians and others), whereby the coastal areas of the peninsula had a different status, being 'under patronage' of big European powers, which took these areas as their 'legitimate historian belonging' or their 'inalienable sphere of influence', be it Republic of Venice, Britain, Italy, or Austro-Hungary. In this regard, the inland parts of the peninsula were connected to the term 'East', however the coastal parts were regarded as the 'civilised West'.[10] Before the end of the 18th Century the Balkans became an important transport and travel route from Western Europe to Asia Minor, and only after this period the continent forsake its long-time autarky, which provoked external perception of this Eastern area (Balkans) as quite different than the West (Mediterranean).

At the time, the Mediterranean region became increasingly influenced by the system of European big states' balance of power, whereby this external presence affected especially the Balkans. As the Turkish Empire was collapsing along the 19th Century and constraints in continental expansion shifted European great power attention to the Mediterranean, rivals in the area became the Habsburg (since 1867 Austro-Hungarian) with German support on one side and the Russian Empires, joined by Britain and France on the other, struggling to fill the vacuum of power.[11] The Balkan 'Powder Keg' was therefore an area of the Mediterranean region which was at the time a stumbling block in power play mainly due to its Mediterranean geostrategic features. It is from these times that 'Balkanisation' as a term was born, denoting, a division of big political units, incapable of independent life.[12] Intensive misuse of the term associated to the above mentioned cultural and socio-economic difference of the Balkans in comparison to Western Europe soon resulted in a practice, whereby 'Balkanisation' acquired a synonymous connotation to 'the return to tribal, backwardness,

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[8] David E. Noris, *Balkanski mit, pitanja identiteta i modernosti* (Beograd: Geopoetika, 2002), 17.

[9] Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* (London, New York, Sydney and Toronto: BCA, 1992), 592.

[10] Ranko Petković, "Balkan i Mediteran," *Naše teme,* 22, 1 (1978), 2611–2612.

[11] See Stephen C. Calleya, *Navigating regional dynamics in the Post-Cold war world. Patterns of Relations in the Mediterranean Area* (Aldershot, Brookfield USA, Singapore, Sydney: Darmouth, 1997).

[12] Maria Todorova, *Imaginarij Balkana* (Ljubljana: Inštitut za civilizacijo in kulturo, 2001), 25.

primitive, barbaric'[13] and therefore the use of the term brought mainly negative (self)perception on the Balkan area.[14]

The big powers' aspirations at the time became increasingly intertwined by the national aspirations of the small Balkans states[15]. Calleya[16] exposes local nations' nationalist movements as additional exacerbation of the above referred intrusive system in the Mediterranean, which was caused by the European nation-states scramble for colonies. From variety of nationalities at the time living in the area, South Slavs and especially Serbs strived intensely to have its entire people living in one – their own nation-state. Their strategy was incorporated within the big states' interests in the region and depended essentially on the position of the Slavs in the Austrian Empire.[17] In this sense the Illyrian movement between 1835 and 1848, and the idea of a South Slavic state, i.e. Yugoslavia represent rudimental types of Balkans regional co-operation already in the 19th Century. The mentioned movement was inspired by an occupying French lead administrative-political unit named the Illyrian provinces, with its seat in Ljubljana (Slovenia), and its own unified language, in existence between 1803 and 1813. The idea of a South Slavic state also derived from a desire to avert foreign influence and the crumbling of the Slavic ethnic territories but remained unrealised.[18] Only Greece and Serbia managed to get independence in 1830 and 1878 respectively, and Montenegro was formally recognised as independent from the Ottomans also in 1878.

One can speak of a Mediterranean region at that time, however as constructed from the outside by mainly European big powers, which made the area a 'sphere of influence', a geopolitical battlefield[19] and introduced to the Mediterranean an intrusive inter-governmental pattern of regional relations.[20] This conflicting nature of relations in the area which spurred in the 16th and 17th Century with

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[13] Ibid.

[14] Goldsworthy (2002: 33–34) explains that this kind of negative perception of the area also developed a long term symbolisation of geography and historical misrepresentations regarding the region, which resulted in seeing the Balkans only as a metaphor for conflict, incivility and violence. For a detailed survey on the metaphor of the Balkans, see Bjelić and Savić (2002).

[15] Stane Južnič, "Bosna šaptom padne," *Teorija in praksa,* 29, 7/8 (1992), 770.

[16] Stephen C. Calleya, *Navigating regional dynamics in the Post-Cold war world. Patterns of Relations in the Mediterranean Area* (Aldershot, Brookfield USA, Singapore, Sydney: Darmouth, 1997), 71.

[17] Stane Južnič, "Bosna šaptom padne," *Teorija in praksa,* 29, 7/8 (1992), 765.

[18] Ibid., 766.

[19] Matić (1988: 136) exposes the importance of the Suez Canal opening in 1869 which intensified geostrategic significance of the Balkans' proximity to the Mediterranean. Roucek (1953: 74) and Roberts (1999: 182) describe the Adriatic as "leading strait into the heart of Central Europe to the threshold of southern Germany."

[20] Stephen C. Calleya, *Navigating regional dynamics in the Post-Cold war world. Patterns of Relations in the Mediterranean Area* (Aldershot, Brookfield USA, Singapore, Sydney: Darmouth, 1997), 71, 85.

the rise of European nation states and western European international society replaced the formerly existing relatively co-operative intergovernmental and especially transnational Mediterranean relations from previous historical periods.[21] Crimean war in 1856 and the Russian-Turkish war (1977–78) took place exclusively due to the European big powers equal geopolitical aspirations in the Mediterranean (mainly for the straits of Bosporus and Dardanelles, but also for the Adriatic).[22] It is well known that it was the geostrategic political interests of the big powers which firstly caused the two Balkans wars (in 1912 and 1913) and after that initiated the First World War.

The height of the Balkans' role in the Mediterranean
At the time of the Versailles Europe, the Balkan international relations became even more framed within the Mediterranean region-building due to the fact that fight for the big powers' influence in the Balkans was a constituent part of the fight for power in the Mediterranean and *vice versa*; the Mediterranean positions suited to assert influence in the Balkans.[23] However, the global international political framework of the League of Nations now promoted more multilateral strategies of foreign policy implementation. This especially applies to Turkey, which (similarly to Austro-Hungary) after 1918 became small/middle power over night. The role of new Turkey was essential in the Balkans from the nation-building perspective, as the only non-small state was striving for a new image of potential partner rather than (as in previous centuries) a threat in the peninsula.[24] Nevertheless, in the Mediterranean region, Turkey was not so successful; it did not have enough leverage to play a mediating role, steering between the big powers' intensifying rivalry interests. For example, the French proposal of consolidating the Balkans Entente (formed in 1934) by a Mediterranean Pact was enthusiastically picked up by the Turks; but the idea was never endorsed due to insufficient support of the big powers (Britain, France and Italy).

The latter were reluctant to use multilateral instruments out of two alternative foreign policy strategies. Firstly, they could afford settling relations bilaterally –

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[21] For more on the construction of the Mediterranean regional society see Bojinović Fenko (2009: 256–292).

[22] J. M. Roberts, *Twentieth Century, the History of the World; 1901 to the Present* (Allen Lane: The Penguin Press, 1999), 182. Joseph S. Roucek, "The Geopolitics of the Mediterranean, II," *American Journal of Economics & Sociology,* 13, 1 (1953), 74.

[23] To illustrate this logic's occurrence during the Second World War, Germany attacked Balkan Yugoslavia and Greece for reasons of spreading its influence to the Mediterranean (Petković, 1978: 2613). With similar visions Stalin dictated a number of future Balkan entities, launching ideas of Yugoslavia entering federative formations with Bulgaria, Romania and later with Albania, all under the domination of the Soviet Union (Matić, 1988: 129).

[24] Turkey persistently emphasised equality of states and succeeded to persuade the others she was "creating a coalition of like-minded states rather that reviving Ottoman domination". See Barlas (2005: 444).

tęte ŕ tęte[25] with small states from the region. Big states were signing alliance agreements with the smaller (e.g. France with Yugoslavia in 1927), which made other great powers concerned over diminishing of their own influence. Especially Italy pursued this foreign policy tactics.[26] Secondly, they tried to initiate big power pacts which they later on breached, as did Italy by continuing its military and diplomatic hostile activities based on the perception of unmet needs of the 'Mediterranean power *par excellence*'.[27]

Again the local states saw foreign interference as a sign and need for action. As state-building was concluded and the local nations' place on the map was generally insured, their strategy was co-operation in order to balance foreign pressures.[28] The idea of pan-Slavism was finally realised firstly in a state of Slovenians, Croats and Serbs in 1918, which after a short existence sustained as a Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians known also as the First Yugoslavia.[29] Between 1930 and 1933 the Balkan states on the initiatives of Turkey and Greece called for regional Balkan conferences to jointly overcome the economic and political effects of the world economic crisis of 1929.[30] In 1930s, these states mutually signed alliance and friendship agreements (Turkey with Greece, Romania and Yugoslavia).[31] Their Mediterranean co-operation was also initiated as a reaction to the emergence of revisionist powers; after Italian bombardment of Corfu (Greece) and seizure of Fiume from First Yugoslavia,[32] Turkey began to seek ways of forming a Balkan Entente eventually signed between Turkey, Yugoslavia, Romania and Greece in 1934.[33] When Turkey managed to get a revised position of the Straits status, nationalising them in 1936, this decision got strong support of the Balkan Entente.[34] However, this alliance was a failure in respect to providing military security for its members or customs union.[35] Balkan and Mediterranean regional initiatives in the interwar period are shown in Table 1.

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[25] Dilek Barlas, "Turkish Diplomacy in the Balkans and the Mediterranean. Opportunities and Limits for the Middle-power Activism in the 1930s," *Journal of Contemporary History,* 40, 3 (2005), 462.

[26] Ibid., 457.

[27] See Francesco Coppola, "Italy in the Mediterranean," *Foreign Affairs,* 1, 4 (1993), 105–114.

[28] A similar strategy is noted by Tripp (1995) in the context of 1945 Arab League formation.

[29] Stane Južnič, "Bosna šaptom padne," *Teorija in praksa,* 29, 7/8 (1992), 766.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Michael N. Bishku, "Turkish-Bulgarian Relations: From Conflict and Distrust to Cooperation over Minority Issues and International Politics," *Mediterranean Quarterly,* 14, 2 (2003), 81.

[32] See Luigi Federzoni, "Hegemony in the Mediterranean," *Foreign Affairs,* 14, 3 (1936), 387–397.

[33] Dilek Barlas, "Turkish Diplomacy in the Balkans and the Mediterranean. Opportunities and Limits for the Middle-power Activism in the 1930s," *Journal of Contemporary History,* 40, 3 (2005), 448.

[34] Ibid., 461.

[35] Michael N. Bishku, "Turkish-Bulgarian Relations: From Conflict and Distrust to Cooperation over Minority Issues and International Politics," *Mediterranean Quarterly,* 14, 2 (2003), 82.

Table 1: Initiatives for institutional co-operation in the Mediterranean in the interwar period

TIME	PROMOTER (ACTORS)	IDEA / FOREIGN POLICY GOAL	FOREIGN POLICY INITIATIVES
1908	Russia	Slavic brotherhood, balance of power with Austro-Hungary	Balkans League
1930–33	Turkey, Greece	to jointly overcome the economic and political effects of the world economic crisis of 1929	regional Balkans conferences for debates on the Balkans Union
1930s	Balkans states	big powers' interference in the area is unbeneficial, endangering	alliance and friendship agreements
1934	Turkey, incl. Yugoslavia, Romania and Greece	co-operation to overcome Italy's territorial pretensions	Balkans Entente
1930s	Italy, including Great Britain and France	big states' balance of power	big powers' pact on Mediterranean – not realised
1934–37	FRA, TUR; including GRE, YUG, ITA, SPA / or FRA, TUR, Soviet Union, possibly GB	promotion of values of multilateralism, non-aggression, peace, stability	Mediterranean Pact – not realised
1934	FRA; incl. YUG, GRE, TUR, BUL, possibly ITA	mutual assistance	Mediterranean Entente – not realised

Source: Author's own elaboration.

The Cold War period – relative stability of the Balkans within the Mediterranean
After 1945 the Mediterranean and also the Balkans as a part of it was susceptible to the general processes in the international community: emergence of a number of socialist states, an increasingly speedy process of decolonisation and changes within the capitalist system itself.[36] The Balkans could be claimed an area in the very centre of these processes; its sates were members of both military alliances (NATO and Warsaw Pact) and also of the Non-aligned movement (NAM), they had both capitalist and socialist economic systems[37] and were bordering the remaining European colonial empire. In this context, the two blocks' confrontation and many unresolved local disputes threatened again to make the Balkans a zone of tensions.[38] Žic[39] names the area at the time 'a

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[36] Mladen Matić, "Balkan na putevima saradnje," *Opredeljenja,* 19, 4 (1988), 127.

[37] Ibid., 135.

[38] Ibid., 140.

[39] Zoran Žic, "Mediterranean Countries Between Conflict and Co-operation: a Search for Identity and Regional Security," *Međunarodni problemi,* 40, 3 (1988), 367.

mini version of the world', similarly, Legrand[40] denotes the same comprehensive political reality in the whole Mediterranean as 'micro-plančte'.

The Cold War period increased wider Mediterranean region's importance which in geostrategic terms shifted from territorial-economic, to ideological, military, and more narrowly geostrategic oil-based. In the Balkans both poles were striving to contain the other through small and medium power alignments. The Balkans was of a special geostrategic importance to the Warsaw Pact as it enabled the passage to the Mediterranean through Albania (until 1962 when it terminated the membership). The Yugoslavian-Soviet break of relations in 1948 affected the Balkans regional identity in a good deal as Yugoslavia consequently decided to form a Balkan pact with Greece and Turkey – at the time already NATO members – on the basis of two agreements from 1953 and 1954. The agreements concerned friendship, co-operation and unity, political co-operation and mutual help. The aim of the pact was to protect territorial integrity and political independence of the member states and to promote other forms of co-operation.[41] The Balkan socialist states further on co-operated in ideological-political sense, and the Balkan states' economies still in the late 1980s were strongly connected to the Mediterranean area through the agricultural, maritime food and tourism sector, but also the mining and industrial (natural resources) sectors and by marine, air, railway and road transit.[42]

Additionally, it was (Socialist Federative Republic of) Yugoslavia's leading role in the NAM, which made the state an area of stability in the Balkans[43] and was also important for the general Balkans' role in the Mediterranean as the majority of states in the area opted for this foreign policy strategy. NAM was an example of political unity – a Mediterranean feeling shared by southern European as well as Third World countries in the area motivated by the perception of a cultural and political oppression enforced by the imperialist quarters (West, USA, NATO).[44] NAM intensely debated on the Mediterranean affairs within the scope of its political meetings with the aim to turn the Mediterranean into 'a zone of peace and security';[45] even a periodic ministerial conference of the NAM countries of the Mediterranean was in practice until 1990. In the final document of the last conference it is especially seen the NAM Mediterranean states' promotion of the role of the European Economic Community (EEC) in relation to their

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[40] Gérard Legrand, "Pour un relevé de l'Espace politique Méditerranéen," *Nouvelle Revue Socialiste*, 4/5 (1983), 56.

[41] Mladen Matić, "Balkan na putevima saradnje," *Opredeljenja,* 19, 4 (1988), 130–131.

[42] Ibid., 134.

[43] Čedomir Vučković, "MeđuBalkansko približavanje i Sredozemlje," *Naše teme,* 28, 12 (1984), 2624.

[44] See Richard L. Jackson, *The Non-aligned, the UN, and the superpowers* (New York: Praeger, 1983).

[45] Zoran Žic, "Mediterranean Countries Between Conflict and Co-operation: a Search for Identity and Regional Security," *Međunarodni problemi,* 40, 3 (1988), 364.

development needs. The states propose to "start with the European Partners an open and sustained dialogue based on mutual interest and reciprocal benefit with the aim of developing more audacious forms of co-operation".[46]

This was a newly directed proposal because up to then the EEC within the Global Mediterranean Policy treated the Mediterranean states bilaterally (individually and unequally), according to states' 'strategic importance' for the EEC, which resulted in 'an associative patchwork rather than a coherent framework'.[47] Agreements of co-operation were signed with Greece (in 1961, acquired membership in 1981); Turkey (in 1963, became an official membership candidate state in 1999); and with Yugoslavia in 1980.[48] The EEC's bilateral practice did not positively contribute to region-building in the Mediterranean, as it institutionalised differences between the states of the area. What was achieved, was a convergence of the EC member states' and EC institutions' perceptions about the Mediterranean 'region' as a foreign policy priority.[49] The EEC since 1990 became increasingly important for the perception of the Balkan states' role in the Mediterranean.

The most promising regional initiative were Balkan regional conferences with the aim of improving Balkan relations, the first taking place in 1976 in Athens, attended by hosting Greece and Turkey, Romania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia[50] where mainly non-controversial issues of agriculture, environment, energy, public health, tourism, telecommunications and transportation were discussed, but mainly with no progress due to Bulgarian preference of dealing with these subjects bilaterally. Additionally, also the idea of a Balkan "nuclear free zone" was discussed but similarly unsuccessfully, as it had already previously been rejected by NATO-committed Turkey.[51] The next Balkan regional conference took place in Belgrade in February of 1988, with the above mentioned and Albanian participation.[52] It was assessed as the breakthrough in the Balkans re-

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[46] *Declaration on the Prospects of Global Dialogue on Security and Co-operation in the Mediterranean*, adopted at the Third Ministerial Conference of the Mediterranean Non-Aligned Countries, held at Algiers, on 25 and 26 June 1990, paragraph d. Available at: http://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N90/175/29/img/ N9017529.pdf?OpenElement (14 December 2008).

[47] Ricardo Gomez, "The EU's Mediterranean policy," In *A Common Foreign and Security Policy for Europe? Competing visions of the CFSP*, ed. John Peterson and Helene Sjursen (London, New York: Routledge, 1998), 135.

[48] Zoran Žic, "Mediterranean Countries Between Conflict and Co-operation: a Search for Identity and Regional Security," *Međunarodni problemi,* 40, 3 (1988), 365–366.

[49] Ricardo Gomez, "The EU's Mediterranean policy," In *A Common Foreign and Security Policy for Europe? Competing visions of the CFSP*, ed. John Peterson and Helene Sjursen (London, New York: Routledge, 1998), 140.

[50] Michael N. Bishku, "Turkish-Bulgarian Relations: From Conflict and Distrust to Cooperation over Minority Issues and International Politics," *Mediterranean Quarterly,* 14, 2 (2003), 87.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Ibid., 90.

gional politics[53] as again a possibility of establishing the Balkans as 'a zone of peace and co-operation' and a 'nuclear–free zone' was discussed[54] but also represented a step forward in co-operation in economy, trade, tourism, transport and communications, sport, culture and ecology; although these were 'practical and functional fields of co-operation, not subjects to political contentions'.[55] Matić[56] claims that the improvement of the level of Balkan regional multilateral co-operation was reached due to Yugoslav engagement and its non-aligned political orientation in the global international relations. A promising incentive was mainly the agreement that the Belgrade conference was to implement continuity – practice of regular meetings and exchange of opinions in order to promote confidence-building among Balkans states. Nevertheless, despite visible progress in the mentioned functional issues, politically more sensitive regional affairs remained unresolved/unaddressed, e. g. the Balkans nuclear-free zone, the issue of ethnic minorities, or the proposal for the summit meeting of the Balkans states.[57]

Table 2: Regional co-operation of Balkans Mediterranean states during the Cold War

PROMOTER (ACTORS)	IDEA / FOREIGN POLICY GOAL	REGIONAL INITIATIVES
Yugoslavia, Albania	independent stance against the two Cold War military blocks	- break-up from political/military alliance
Yugoslavia, Greece	détente in the Cold War	- resolution of disputes between local states - organisation of Balkan Ministerial Conference (Athens, 1976)
Yugoslavia	Balkan co-operation within the Non- aligned Movement	- Mediterranean as 'a zone of peace and security' - multilateral co-operation of (Balkan) Mediterranean states with the EEC

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[53] Zoran Žic, "Mediterranean Countries Between Conflict and Co-operation: a Search for Identity and Regional Security," *Međunarodni problemi,* 40, 3 (1988), 367. Mladen Matić, "Balkan na putevima saradnje," *Opredeljenja,* 19, 4 (1988), 138.

[54] Čedomir Vučković, "MeđuBalkansko približavanje i Sredozemlje," *Naše teme,* 28, 12 (1984), 2619.

[55] Zoran Žic, "Mediterranean Countries Between Conflict and Co-operation: a Search for Identity and Regional Security," *Međunarodni problemi,* 40, 3 (1988), 367.

[56] Mladen Matić, "Balkan na putevima saradnje," *Opredeljenja,* 19, 4 (1988), 134.

[57] Ibid.

Promoter (actors)	Idea / foreign policy goal	Regional Initiatives
Yugoslavia	- regional co-operation in functional areas: economy, ecology, trade, tourism, transport, communications, sport, culture - continuity to establish regular meetings, promotion of confidence-building	- Balkan Ministerial Conference (Belgrade, 1988) - example for the whole Mediterranean

Source: Author's own elaboration.

One can observe that regional efforts of Balkan (Mediterranean related) co-operation were present in two 'waves'. Firstly, within the context of *détente* in the Mediterranean, achieved by resolution of some of the local states' disputes (e. g. the Trieste question), the calming down of the Greek civil war and the resolution of Comintern-Yugoslav dispute. Secondly, as an example to follow for the whole Mediterranean; functional areas of co-operation proposed by the Belgrade Balkans regional conference were supposed to be guidelines for the whole Mediterranean regional co-operation.[58] The forms of regional co-operation of Balkans Mediterranean states during the Cold War are shown in Table 2.

Recent role of the Balkans in the Mediterranean regional co-operation

After 1989 changes in the world system and the emergence of new states in the Balkans, the latter slowly started individual processes of transition towards democratic political systems and market-regulated economies. The previously prospective first signs of Balkan co-operation (within the wider context of the Mediterranean) were brought to a standstill by the emerging conflicts in the area. Ironically, Yugoslavia – a state which during the Cold War represented the initiating role for regional stability and respect for international (legal) obligations towards the other states in the area, fell into its own trap of (multi)nationalism and was unable to solve its dissolution peacefully. Slovenian Ten-Day war for independence in 1991 was the least of the ethnic disputes in the former Yugoslavia which followed in the last decade of the 20th Century. There were two wars for independence, namely Croatian (1991–95) and Bosnian (1992–95), followed by ethnic conflicts in a part of the former state of Serbia and Montenegro – at the time called Yugoslav Republic (or Third Yugoslavia) –, i.e. Kosovo (1996–99) and also in the bordering Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

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[58] Zoran Žic, "Mediterranean Countries Between Conflict and Co-operation: a Search for Identity and Regional Security," *Međunarodni problemi,* 40, 3 (1988), 368.

(FRYM) in 2001. Further unrest followed in Kosovo in 2004, which as for now ended up with its proclamation of independence in February 2008 with international administration before any further developments of its *de iure* sovereignty are made possible.

Influence of the EU

The EU's influence after 1990 bares a direct and an indirect role for the Balkans and the Mediterranean. As of first, it represents an influential actor through implementing its foreign policy, and secondly, it determines a context for the Balkan states' foreign policy behaviour towards not only the EU but the Balkans and the Mediterranean themselves. The EU started to deal with Balkan and Mediterranean states through separate foreign policies and therefore contributed to exclusive rather than mutually reinforcing contexts for foreign policy behaviour of Balkan Mediterranean states. The Balkans were addressed with the enlargement policy; the Western Balkans firstly within the post-conflict management instruments and later on also with firm prospects of EU membership. On the other hand, the Mediterranean after the end of bipolarity is treated by the EU as a neighbouring space without any prospects for the EU membership, safe for its European states (Malta, Cyprus and Turkey). Calleya[59] evaluates that the EU was forced to constantly focus its attention on sub-regional relations in the area (separating the 'management' of the Balkans from the rest of the Mediterranean) due to the shifts in patterns of relations taking place in the Mediterranean since 2000. Two alternative and exclusive EU policies enormously contributed to the establishment of a three-level context: formulation of Balkan states' foreign policy as an indirect expression of the state-building process; framework of relations among the states of the area themselves; and perception/new role of the Balkans as a part of the Mediterranean region in the making.

In November 1995 the EU launched the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) in co-operation with the Southern Mediterranean Partners, based on the Barcelona declaration.[60] Initially, EMP's agreements were to include only Maghreb countries, but were quickly extended to Mashreq states,[61] but Balkan Mediterranean states remained out of the EMP; due to historical and political reasons.[62] Slovenia and Croatia, as two of them, were striving very hard to gain the status of an EMP partner state; however, the latter was clearly indicated to be

[59] Stephen C. Calleya, "The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and Sub-Regionalism: A Case of Region-Building?," in *The Convergence of Civilisations. Constructing a Mediterranean Region*, ed. Emmanuel Adler et al (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 2006), 42.

[60] *Barcelona Declaration*, adopted at the Euro-Mediterranean Conference, 27-28 November 1995 in Barcelona.

[61] Ricardo Gomez, "The EU's Mediterranean policy," in *A Common Foreign and Security Policy for Europe? Competing visions of the CFSP*, ed. John Peterson and Helene Sjursen (London, New York: Routledge, 1998), 143.

[62] Michelle Pace, *The Politics of Regional Identity: Meddling with the Mediterranean* (London, New York: Routledge, 2006), 103.

'reserved for' the Southern Mediterranean states. In the end, Slovenia after heavy lobbying observed the Barcelona conference as a guest on behalf of the convener – the Spanish government.[63] Croatian government did not succeed to get an invitation and protested against this decision, but was unsuccessful and could not attend the conference in any capacity (Geršak, 2006). However, this did not mean that Slovenia managed to participate within the EMP as a partner state like Malta and Cyprus – at the time also prospective, but far from 'official' EU membership candidates. Slovenia adhered to the EU in 2004, and later (in 2007) so did Romania and Bulgaria which means that they participate in the EMP since then simply as EU member states.

The EU influence was and remains especially important for the Western Balkan states still in the process of (prospective) EU-accession. As referred to above, these states have until recently been fully occupied by their own internal affairs – either state formation/organisation, either ethnic disturbance. The EU engaged itself extensively in the post-conflict management of the region by launching the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe (SP SEE) in 1999. Most of all, the EU manages the Western Balkans within its enlargement policy with the Stabilisation and Association process, including programmes (e.g. CARDS) which promote cross-border cooperation, protection of minorities, inclusion of civil society and contribute to Balkan (micro)-regional cooperation. Like Turkey, Croatia (in October 2005) and The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (in December 2005) became candidate states for the EU membership, while other entities in the region, namely Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo under United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244, hold a 'potential candidacy' status.[64]

Balkan states' foreign policies toward the Balkans and the Mediterranean regions
Immediately after the dissolution of former Yugoslavia and the beginning of its wars, due to the mentioned long time existing negative (political) perception of the Balkans, the states emerging from SFRY in their eagerness to join Euro-Atlantic integrations did not want to be associated with the area. Nor did they build their (foreign policy) identities on the formerly strong Yugoslav Mediterranean component. Some newly independent states even adopted the so called 'flight from the Balkans' foreign policy strategy in order to represent their identities in the process of state-building as 'not Balkan', but more Western, Central European, therefore civilised and consequently 'worthy' of membership in the

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[63] It is to be noted, that Slovenia at the time did not have genuine intentions of Mediterranean cooperation, but only wanted to be associated with such international institutions to be perceived a democratic state by 'western-standard' (Geršak, 2006).

[64] See European Commission, *Enlargement: Countries on the road to EU membership*, 2009. Available at http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/the-policy/countries-on-the-road-to-membership/index_en.htm (21 December 2009).

EU and/or NATO. Here it is worth to notice an observation that 'paradoxically, state-building and integration beyond the state are closely linked while also being mutually conflicting' (Knudsen, 2002: 184). Author refers to this identity/integration problem by arguing that identity in the outset is usually determined by a matter of finding out who one thinks one is not (Knudsen, 2002: 189). The 'away from the Balkans' foreign policy strategy was displayed especially by Slovenia, who immediately after independence in January 1992, neglected all previous foreign policy orientations in Balkan co-operation[65] and rather co-operated with the Vishegrad Four Group[66] and Central European Initiative (CEI). The state did not want to participate in the South Eastern Cooperation Initiative (SECI) launched in 1996 nor in the above mentioned Stability Pact as the government feared the domestic opposition and international community would interpret that as a reestablishment of former Yugoslavia.[67] Slovenia decided to participate in SP SEE only after it negotiated to be included as a 'donor Central European state' and not as a recipient state (as other Balkans states did).[68] After Slovenia gained the status of a candidate country for the EU and NATO membership in 1999, the state quite quickly turned around the use of a negative perception of the Balkans geography and history and opted for 'South Eastern Europe as its foreign policy priority due to geographic, economic and historical links'.

This type of foreign policy strategy was not exclusively a Slovenian case, but rather a general stance of the Balkan non-EU member states, much influenced by the mentioned EU's foreign policies towards the area. A similar analogy can be made in the case of Croatia and 'flight from the Mediterranean' narrative. As argued by a senior diplomat from the region, during 2007 Croatia was being invited to consider participation in the EMP, but was very prudent, even reluctant to join the partnership until it had assured the opening of its EU accession negotiations in December 2007. This carefulness was directly connected with the state's interest to ensure its firm prospects for EU membership as a foreign policy priority over potential Mediterranean co-operation. Croatian foreign policy behaviour, however, can be explained in the context of February 2007 launched idea of *Union Méditerranéenne* (see further below) by a French Presidential candidate Sarkozy, who clearly proposed that the Med Union will not take into consideration EU's relations with candidate state Turkey in the form of membership, but as an alternative privileged partnership. Croatia and Turkey reasonably

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[65] Bojko Bučar, "Slovenia," in *Political and Economic Transformation in East Central Europe,* ed. Hanspeter Neuhold et al (Boulder, San Francisco, Oxford: Westview Press, 1995), 293.

[66] Vishegrad Group consists of four Central-East European states, namely the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Poland. Slovenia was not a member of the group, but co-operated with it.

[67] See Ana Bojinović, "Geographical Proximity and Historical Context as a Basis of Active Foreign Policy Strategy of Small European Sates – the Case of Austria and Slovenia Regarding the Western Balkans," *Politics in Central Europe,* 1, 1 (2005), 23.

[68] Ibid., 22–23.

rejected Sarkozy's idea of Mediterranean co-operation being an alternative to EU membership.

Mediterranean regional co-operation became a (new) priority for Balkan Mediterranean states and the EU during Slovenian Presidency of the EU in the first half of 2008.[69] Slovenia, for example, started to promote itself as the most Mediterranean among the Central European member states and as the most central European among the Mediterranean ones (Stabej, 2008). Its special EU presidency achievement is the launch of the Euro-Mediterranean University, functioning within a University Centre for Euro-Mediterranean Studies (Centre EMUNI), based in its coastal city of Piran, which is one of The Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean (BP:UfM) projects.[70] Since Slovenia supported the July 2008 launched idea of BP:UfM[71] as an upgrade of the EMP, it intensively engaged itself in the inclusion of Western Balkans Mediterranean states, namely Albania,[72] Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro into the process. At the same time, Slovenia undertook a strong stance that the Western Balkan states' inclusion in the EMP and BP:UfM should not be understood as an alternative to their potential EU membership (Stabej, 2008).

A similar strategy of profiting from a prominent position in international institutions to promote a Mediterranean foreign policy is also long genuine to Greece. Examples are: Greek 2006 Mediterranean Forum presidency and presidency of the UN Security Council.[73] The state's general priority is to co-operate within the framework of EU-Mediterranean relations and especially within the Mediterranean Forum (see below).[74] However one should note that Greece gives priority to investment and economic opportunities by increasingly focusing on its Balkans identity and foreign policy orientation which prevails over the Mediterranean one despite the immigration problems from the area.[75]

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[69] See Slovenian Presidency of the EU, *Slovenian Presidency Programme Si.nergy for Europe, January–June 2008,* 2008. Available at http://www.eu2008.si/includes/Downloads/misc/program/Programme_en.pdf (23 December 2009).

[70] See EMUNI, *Euro-Mediterranean University*, 2008. Available at http://www.emuni.si/si/strani/137/ Univerza-EMUNI.html (21 December 2009).

[71] *Déclaration commune du sommet de Paris pour la Méditerranée*, signed on 13 July 2008 in Paris.

[72] Albania (and Mauritania) was accepted into the EMP already at the November 2007 EMP ministerial conference (Council of the European Union, 2007: 4).

[73] See Bakoyannis, Dora. *Statement of (Greek) Foreign Minister Ms. D. Bakoyannis after the Ministerial Meeting of the Mediterranean Forum*, in Athens, 28 October 2006. Available at http://www.ypex.gov.gr/www.mfa.gr/Articles/en-US/30_10_06_MB900.htm (6 April 2007).

[74] See Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Greek Mediterranean Policy*, 2009. Available at http://www.mfa.gr/www.mfa.gr/en-US/Policy/Geographic+Regions/Mediterranean+Middle+East/Greek+Mediterranean+Policy/ (23 December 2009).

[75] Due to its open immigration policy, Greece is known as the California of the Balkans (Pace, 2006: 153). See also Peter Molyviatis, "Greek Foreign Policy for the Twenty-First Century," *Mediterranean Quarterly,* 16, 1 (2005).

One can observe that all the Balkan states which are not yet members of the EU have set themselves the EU membership as their primary foreign policy goal. The Foreign Ministries of e relevant states up to the end of 2009 do not have their primary activities focused on Balkan co-operation or the Mediterranean perspectives for co-operation. Only the Croatian foreign policy guidelines mention promotion of Croatia as a Mediterranean and Central European State.[76] Based on this, Croatian Foreign policy Yearbook for 2008 mentions the state's interest in co-operation within the Mediterranean Union[77] and also its more traditional Mediterranean focus on Adriatic sub-regional co-operation like Adriatic-Ionian Initiative.[78] Similarly, Bosnia and Herzegovina focuses on sub regional Mediterranean co-operation.[79]

In this regard, one of the launched forms of Balkan regional co-operation independent from the Mediterranean area is the Slovenian initiative of bridge-building or passing the experience of democratisation and EU-law harmonisation from the process of EU accession to the other (to be) candidate states from the Balkans, due to the comparative advantage in knowledge of languages, customs, legal system, culture, economy, history etc. Another example of Balkan co-operation is building good bilateral neighbourly relations, where also the two entities of the Bosnian state can act on their own in-line with Dayton agreement-limited foreign policy capacity; examples include incentives of co-operation 'special relations' (between Republika Srpska and Serbia), a similar agreement also including co-operation in tourism, energy and transport between Republika Srpska and Montenegro, and economic and political co-operation in Euro-Atlantic integration bids between Montenegro and Macedonia.[80] Albanian government similarly set itself to collaborate with other countries in the Western Balkans to increase the chances of more pre-accession funds by the EU as their common aim is EU integration; other Balkans states exposed are Turkey and Greece however not in the context of Mediterranean co-operation.[81] The state of Mon-

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[76] See Croatian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration. *Odrednice vanjske politike* [*Guidelines of foreign policy*], 2009. Available at http://www.mvpei.hr/MVP.asp?pcpid=4 (22 December 2009).

[77] Croatian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration, *Godišnjak/Yearbook*, 2008. Available at http://www.mvpei.hr/custompages/static/hrv/files/godisnjak08/pdf/godisnjak_008. pdf (21 December 2009), 24–25.

[78] Ibid., 58.

[79] See Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Opći pravci i prioriteti za provođenje vanjske politike Bosne i Hercegovine [General guidelines and priorities for the implementation of foreign policy of Bosnia and Herzegovina], accepted on 26 March 2003 in Sarajevo. Available at http://www. mfa.gov.ba/index_bos.htm (22 December 2009).

[80] See SETimes, *RS proposes special relations accord with Montenegro*, 4 July, 2008. Available at http://www.setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/xhtml/en_GB/newsbriefs/setimes/ newsbriefs/2008/07/04/nb-06 (23 December 2009).

[81] *Albanian government programme 2005–2009,* Presented in the Albanian Parliament in Tirana, 8 September 2005. Available at http://www.mfa.gov.al/ (23 December 2009), 41–42.

tenegro is the only one in the group of Western Balkan states which identifies itself with a Mediterranean geographical historical and civilisation component, and has therefore set itself as a foreign policy priority to co-operate within the Mediterranean and especially with Turkey and Egypt as the leading Eastern Mediterranean states.[82] The results of the decision to join the UfM and the functioning of the Balkan Mediterranean states within the UfM projects are of course yet to be seen and evaluated.

Balkan states' inter-governmental Mediterranean regional co-operation
The Balkan Mediterranean States also cooperate in inter-governmental regional arrangements, either within the United Nations (UN) umbrella agencies or within international governmental organizations (IGOs) with a Mediterranean mandate. Within the UN system there are three agencies dealing with the Mediterranean, namely UNEP, UNESCO and World Bank (WB) (in association with World Meteorological Organisation – WMO). The most comprehensive of all is the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP), established under UNEP Regional Seas programme 1976 in Athens, Greece. MAP is a regional cooperative effort involving 21 countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea, as well as the EU, some IGOs and over 90 NGOs. Balkan states participating in MAP are Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, Slovenia and Turkey.[83] MAP operates through five regional centres; one of them – Priority Actions Programme Regional Activity Centre, established in 1978 is seated in Split (Croatia). The Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development (MCSD) which has an advisory board with MAP is seated in Athens since 1995. UNESCO organizes regional initiatives within the Global Water Partnership (GWP). Since 2002 one of them is GWP-Med, an Athens-seated platform that brings together organisations from the Mediterranean and beyond that work on water issues in the region.[84] WB together with WMO sponsors Mediterranean Hydrological Cycle Observing System (MED-HYCOS), found in 1993, whose Balkans participating states are Albania, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, FYRM, Greece, Slovenia, Turkey, Yugoslavia.[85] WB also funds Mediterranean Environmental Technical Assistance Program (METAP), whose Balkans participating states since 1990 are Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Turkey; the programme also used to run in Slovenia.[86]

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[82] Montenegrin Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Spoljnopolitički prioriteti Crne gore [Foreign policy priorities of Montenegro]*, 2009. Available at http://www.mip.gov.me/index.php/pdf/ Ministarstvo/spoljno-politiki-prioriteti-crne-gore.pdf (23 December 2009), 6.

[83] See UNEP, *Regional Seas Programme; Mediterranean*, 2006. Available at http://www.unep.ch/ regionalseas/regions/med/medhome.htm (23 December 2009).

[84] See GWP-Med, *Global Water Partenrship*, 2009. Available at http://www.emwis.net/partners/ gwp/ gwp-med (23 December 2009).

[85] See MED-HYCOS, *MED-HYCOS Countries Representatives*, 2009. Available at http://medhycos. mpl.ird.fr/en/t1.whoi&gn=ser.inc&menu=projectimp.inc.html (23 December 2009).

[86] See METAP, *About METAP*, 2008. Available at http://www.metap.org/ (23 December 2009).

There exist two regional IGOs with a Mediterranean Mandate, namely a European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organisation (EMPPO), founded in 1951 and International Commission for the Scientific Exploration of the Mediterranean Sea (CIESM), established already in 1910. EMPPO is an IGO responsible for European co-operation in plant protection in the European and Mediterranean region under the International Plant Protection Convention. Participating states are Albania, Croatia, Greece, FYRM, Serbia, Slovenia and Turkey.[87] CIESM started as a venture between experts in 1908 and as the idea attracted the interest of governments, it was formed in 1919, no being 'one of the oldest and most enduring scientific intergovernmental organisations in the world'. Its Balkan Mediterranean members are Croatia, Greece, Serbia-Montenegro, Slovenia and Turkey.[88] The only fully functioning pan-Mediterranean institution, but not as a formal IGO, is Forum for Dialogue and Co-operation in the Mediterranean (Mediterranean Forum), proposed in 1991 and in existence since 1994. The Mediterranean Forum currently includes eleven Mediterranean states which co-operate in the fields of politics, economy, and social and cultural affairs, to which only Greece and Turkey are Balkans participants.[89] Memberships/participation of Balkan states in the mentioned Mediterranean regional institutions is presented in Chart 1.[90]

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[87] See EMPPO. *About the European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization*, 2008. Available at http://www.eppo.org/ABOUT_EPPO/about_eppo.htm (23 December 2009).

[88] See *CIESM, The Mediterranean Science Commission, About us,* 2005. Available at http://www.ciesm.org/about/index.htm (23 December 2009).

[89] Stephen C. Calleya, "The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and Sub-Regionalism: A Case of Region-Building?," in *The Convergence of Civilisations. Constructing a Mediterranean Region*, ed. Emmanuel Adler et al (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 2006), 113.

[90] The author exposes a methodological problem of the newly developed states which are still not properly labelled as members in Correlates of War database (Pevehouse *et al*, 2003) (e. g. Serbia-Montenegro and Yugoslavia are taken here as a membership of now two states, but marked with *).
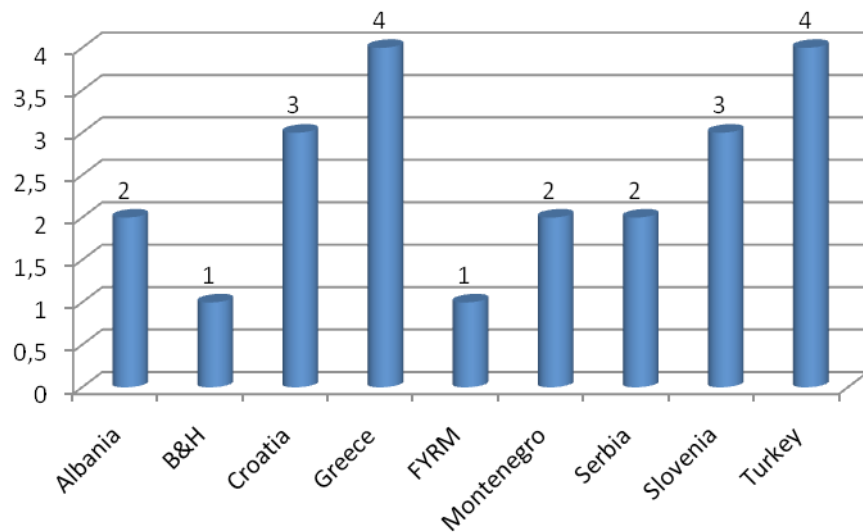
Chart 1: Quantitative participation of Balkan states in the Mediterranean mandated IGOs/programmes
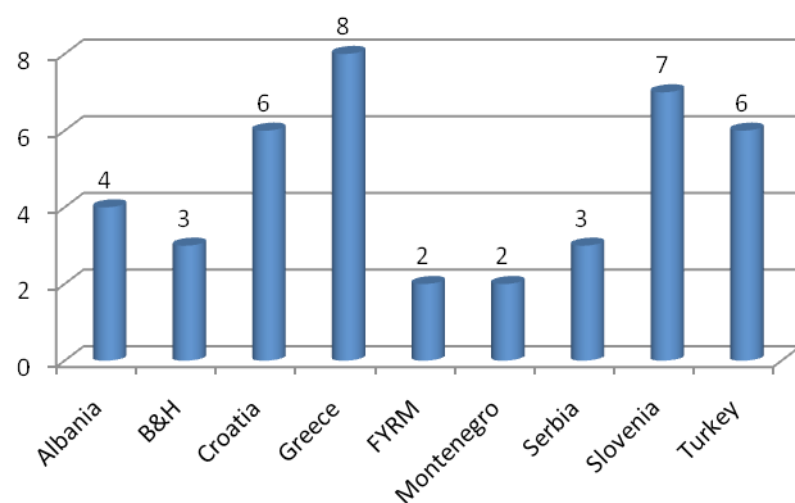
Source: Author's own calculation on the basis of database Pevehouse et al. (2003).

Chart 2 exposes participation of Balkan states in the Mediterranean regional governmental institutions (EMPPO, CIESM, Mediterranean Forum and UfM), meaning within Mediterranean co-operation, not under the UN system management. One can notice a big change regarding the Balkan states' participation in this context, as previously – counting the UN system – Greece, Slovenia, Croatia and Turkey exposed the biggest presence in the area, but all other states were also included with at least two participations. Taking into account only Mediterranean regional co-operation, governments of Bosnia and Herzegovina and FYRM are barely present, and Albania, Montenegro and Serbia have only 2 out of four memberships. Only Greece and Turkey come out as 'fully Mediterranean' states.

Chart 2: Quantitative participation of Balkan states in the Mediterranean governmental institutions

Source: Author's own calculation on the basis of database Pevehouse et al. (2003).

Balkan non-governmental Mediterranean co-operation

Complementary to inter-governmental co-operation, it is promising to see that there are many Balkan civil society co-operation initiatives initiating fresh regional co-operation (e.g. Balkans Civil Society Development Network, Green Balkans NGO, Balkansweb).[91] Those INGOs contribute to co-operation of Balkan states' civil societies, however, not with a Mediterranean Mandate. The latter are presented in Table 3 and summarised in Chart 3.

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[91] Conversation with Western Balkans states' civil society NGOs representatives in a Round Table organised by the Slovenian Government and Media Office, Ljubljana, May 10, 2006.

Table 3: Mediterranean mandated INGOs with Balkan states' civil society participation

Name of the INGO	Foundation and Seat	Goals of the INGO
Friends of the Earth programme FOE MedNet	1992; regional office 'Friends of the Earth Croatia' in Zagreb (Croatia), called Zelena Akcija (The Green Action)	-promotion of sustainable development in the region and increasing awareness of the need to protect the environment; -strengthening the environmental movement and promotion of NGO cooperation within the Med. region; -monitoring important political issues for the Med. environment particularly the EMP, the MAP and the MCSD - stimulating NGO participation in these political processes
MEDForum	1996, Barcelona (Spain) – participation of NGOs from Albania, Croatia, Greece, Turkey and Slovenia; aims to include Bosnian and Serbian NGOs	- a network of NGOs from the Mediterranean basin - promotion of the defence and protection of the environment within a framework of sustainable development
Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (MIO-ECSDE)	1990/6, Athens (Greece)	- acts as a technical and political platform for the intervention of NGOs in the Mediterranean scene. - in cooperation with governments, IGOs and other socio-economic partners, it plays an active role for the protection of the environment and the promotion of sustainable development of the Mediterranean region and its countries

Mediterranean Wetlands Initiative (MedWet)	1991, Kifissia (Greece)	- wetlands conservation and wise use, as a contribution to sustainable development, - programmes: Conservation and management of Cheimaditida-Zazari wetlands, WFD – Water Framework Directive in Greece, IMEW – Integrated Management of European Wetlands, Water Quality and Aquatic Biotopes, WMP – Water Management Planning, EVALUWET
Centre for Mediterranean Studies	1993, Podgorica (Montenegro)	- research centre deals with Political Science, International Relations, Ecology and Culture and publishes a Journal 'Adriatico: a review of the Centre for Mediterranean Studies'
Economic Research Centre on Mediterranean Countries	1997, Akdeniz University, Antalya (Turkey)	- to contribute to the development efforts of southern Mediterranean countries and their integration with the European Union by developing scientific co-operation and strengthening international relations among Mediterranean countries through scientific activities
Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP, 2009)	1988, Athens (Greece)	- Mediterranean oriented research institution, doing research in topics pertaining to European foreign and security policies in the wider Southeast European, Black Sea and Mediterranean regions - educational co-operation with Bilgi University (Turkey)

Euro-Mediterranean University, University Centre EMUNI (EMUNI, 2009)	2008, Portorož (Slovenia)	- aiming to become an international university with a special focus on cultural diversity. - establishing an environment, which will have a stimulating effect on connecting different nations and cultures in an academic sphere.
Institute for Mediterranean Humanities and Social Studies (2008)	2001, Koper (Slovenia)	- research of the geographically complex region of Primorska and Istra, its history and contemporary social processes and the area as an ethnic, i.e., national, and cultural meeting point between Central Europe and the Mediterranean and the East and West of Europe, with emphasis on Mediterranean studies. - includes as a research Centre for Southeastern Europe

Source: Author's own elaboration.

Chart 3: Balkan Mediterranean states civil society participation/hosting of Mediterranean INGO
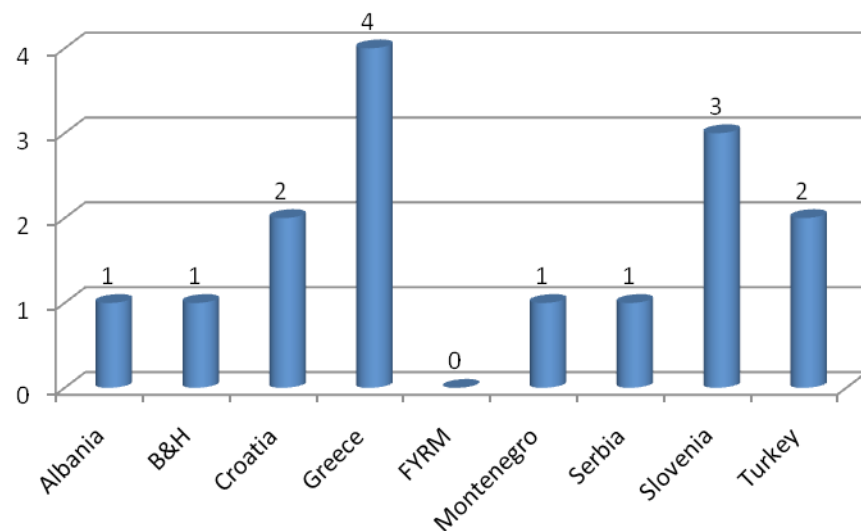
Source: Author's own calculation on the basis of data presented in Table 3.

From the above presented analysis one can conclude that quantitatively Balkan states are similarly present in the Mediterranean in terms of non-governmental and inter-governmental co-operation; only FYRM appears to have no NGO Mediterranean contact and four states participate in/hold seat of at least one NGO. One sees very old established institutions of governmental co-operation which are mainly of low political profile, promoting functional co-operation. The only recent governmental initiative is the UfM, much sponsored by the EU. On the other hand, functional co-operation (environmental protection, culture, science, education) seems to be taken over by the INGOs after the end of the Cold War. In this regard, the presence of Balkan Mediterranean states is relatively larger within the active INGO initiatives compared to their presence in the more "dormant" formal governmental institutions. This proves that contrary to a recent change (in 2008) in the EU and Balkan states preferences/perceptions of the role of the (Western) Balkans in the Mediterranean, the rise of INGOs in the Mediterranean after 1989 as established by Šabič and Bojinović[92] brought about inclusion of Balkan non-governmental actors into Mediterranean co-operation initiatives already at the end of the Cold War.

CONCLUSION

The present study has shown that the Balkans' role in the Mediterranean regional co-operation is historically framed within three phenomena, i.e. typical East Europe-type of nation-state formation from previous multi-ethnic empires/states, constant influence of external actors in the Balkan (sub)region also to gain power in the wider Mediterranean and perception of difference from the Western Europe despite strong societal-cultural links between the coastal Balkans with the Mediterranean. There exist some aspects, historically defining the Balkans as part of the Mediterranean regional relations, i.e. geography and military-strategic aspect. However, economically the Balkans was mainly autarkic and culturally, Balkan peoples until the 20th Century did not intensely co-operating within the Mediterranean – only the mentioned coastal parts were connected with the West through the Sea; more important for Europe-Balkan relations were continental links. In the Balkanisation conditions, Balkan nations initiated co-operation among themselves as a common defence from big (external) powers in order to remain preserved on the map of states. Cases identified are Illyrian movement, Yugoslav (South Slavic) co-operation (both in the 19th Century), Balkans conferences, Balkans Entente (both in the interwar period), Balkans Pact (1950s), the Balkan issue within the NAM and Balkan Ministerial Conferences (both during the Cold War).Promotion of Mediterranean co-

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[92] See Zlatko Šabič and Ana Bojinović, "Mapping a Regional Institutional Architecture: the Case of the Mediterranean," *Mediterranean Politics,* 12, 3 (2007), 317–336.

operation of Balkans states was also undertaken by individual states, especially Turkey in the interwar period and Greece and Yugoslavia within the NAM.

On the other hand, state-building process in the Balkans sometimes made external powers perceived as legitimate regional hegemons able to prevent Balkan states' own geostrategic territorial aspirations against their neighbours. This type of reasoning has only accentuated in the light of the general Mediterranean instability and need for economic development after the end of the Cold War and in Western Balkans conflicts resolution in the 1990s, where the EU has established itself as *the* external actor. Since all Balkan states aspire to become members of the EU it has been argued here that the EU therefore offers an indirect influence (a context) for foreign policy behaviour of its neighbouring area. Furthermore, a direct EU influence (actorness) was also shown in the fact that the EU did not include Balkan states in its conceptualisation of the Mediterranean (policy, i.e. the EMP) because it treated the area with a different (enlargement) foreign policy than the Mediterranean neighbourhood, preventing the Western Balkans governmental co-operation from the Mediterranean (e.g. the EMP).

Balkan states regionally and bilaterally co-operate(d) among themselves in the context of EU bid prospects, but (as seen in the analysis of inclusion in intergovernmental political institutions) with no genuine incentive for Mediterranean co-operation, except Greece and Turkey. They were dealing with their own nation/state-building processes which included on the one hand identity self-perception in relation to the nearby states and on the other, foreign policy conduct under the conditions set by the international agreements, deriving either from the Balkan wars in the 1990s either from the EU enlargement policy. Besides the EU members Greece and Slovenia – the first holding seats to Mediterranean functionally mandated UN agencies and the second recently expanding its small-state foreign policy strategy from the Western Balkans also to the Mediterranean –, only a couple of other states, i.e. Croatia and Montenegro refer to their Mediterranean identity component in their foreign policy priorities documents. Only recently the Western Balkan states joined the UfM and this article argued that the source of this change does not derive from Balkan states' planned foreign policy goals in the Mediterranean since the latter have previously been quite reserved if not entirely non-existent.

These findings lead to a plausible conclusion that rather than in foreign policy planning, the grounding for the recent change may lie in the more long-term historically conditioned processes exposed above, namely state-building, role of external actors and societal-cultural connection of the Balkan Peninsula to the Mediterranean. The three processes refer to the stabilisation of state-building in the area, EU's influence as a context (Balkans states' goal of EU membership) and an actor (EU's will to reinvigorate the stalled progress of the Barcelona process with the UfM) and continuous inclusion of Balkan non-governmental (civil

society) entities in Mediterranean regional co-operation. It is to be exposed, however, that despite the inclusion of Western Balkan states into the new Mediterranean regional framework, this actually does not directly widen the political space of the Mediterranean region since the UfM is based on concrete projects of environmental protection, sustainable development, water management, education etc. whereby – as the above analysis of inter-governmental co-operation shows – Balkan states already co-operate in the UN system specialised agencies and two Mediterranean functional IGOs. Since the inclusion of the Western Balkan states into the UfM may as well be a performance of an instrumental EU-carrot motivated "shift to the Mediterranean" foreign policy, the actual effects of this change in terms of alternating the political landscape of Mediterranean regional affairs are therefore yet to be seen and studied.

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