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Master of Science in Economics

The Enlargement of the European Union – the Questions of Serbia's Integration

Theses of Doctoral Dissertation

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Győr

2016

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Introduction and the Aims of the Dissertation

Since the European Union's predecessor was born, a huge amount of theoretical and practical works, monographs, newspaper articles deal on a high level with the EU's enlargement, in broader aspects with the social, economic, political and historical aspects of European integration processes. Ideas and works were born even before the fifties of the last century, which analysed the possibilities of creative cooperation between nations, focusing specifically on the European continent.

Today, the operation and possible expansion of the European integration can be seen as a current issue. The European political changes from the last 3-4 years directly influence the contact surfaces and domains of the EU's external relations and external policy. The early – and significantly prolonged – stages of the discussions about the Serbian accession take place in those times when policy decisions are made that affect Greece's integration membership. They happen at the same time, when Ukraine being in difficult political and war situation reassess its relations with the EU and Russia, and also, when the rest nations of the region – according to the EU terminology, let alone the Western Balkans – are the way forward for the masses of refugees in the migration issue as transit countries, towards the advanced European Union. During this period, major changes are taking place inside the dominant power structure of the second half of the twentieth century, too. These conditions set to foresee, that the possible EU accession of Serbia, beyond happening through a complexity of negotiations and the legislative processes will be affected by external influences.

These conditions defined and reshaped the aims of the thesis, along with its internal structure, as well. The guiding principle for the theoretical-conceptual overview of integration should be introduced in this situation in other ways than it should have been done retrospectively, in the previous, balanced "expansion decades." The defining pillars of the enlargement framework applied by the European Union - a phrase I use for grasping the specific tools of negotiation of the expansion and development of EU's external relations policies – have not changed in recent years. The accession criteria set out in the legislation, the legislation to be received, the political values considered as essential show stability. All of these, with the maintaining of the pre-accession assistance will be complemented by a sort of a predictable of financial background.

In my dissertation I examine Serbia's accession to the EU and from perspectives, which are partly complementary to, and handle differently the situation of a country; requesting the accession in the EU. The evaluation of the accession negotiations and the integration from a

partly new perspective is justified since with the expansion in 2004, 2007 and 2013, the community faced the strengthening and new types of challenges. In this situation, the idea of the EU's further enlargement should be rejected; the re-examination of the framework for expansion, a deeper analysis of its criteria, as well as rethinking the concept of maturity for integration should be seen as a dominant task. The study aims to contribute to the performance of these tasks. The presentation of the Serbian accession process will not be separated from the current political and geopolitical aspects. This strongly calls for attention to the fact that the in the present state EU has reached the limits of civilizational borders. From then on, on theoretical and practical levels it must be taken into account, that the accession of new members may be accompanied by the accession of members representing different political and economic scenes with other values, daily routines, business practices and culture. This simple statement of fact – which could be supported by statistics and sociological, literary, philosophical works – has not yet struck roots in the integration of theoretical works and expansion in practice either.

Thus, the objective of the dissertation is to present an approach of the integration theories and practice which evaluates the major moments of the Serbian integration, by taking into account its complexity and the socio-economic system as a whole.

1. Hypotheses of the Dissertation

Five hypotheses are linked to the chapters of the dissertation, during the formulation of these three aspects have been highlighted. On the one hand I kept in mind to formulate hypotheses related to the Serbian accession process is related to prior assumptions, which are linked to current events, too. On the other hand, it was very important to meet the requirements of testability and measurability. The third important aspect was to formulate the number and the way of hypotheses that they would linked together into a dissertation with a single and transparent central thread by giving roughly a same scope for the explanation of justifying each preliminary assumptions. That is why virtually all hypotheses may be linked to each chapter. The dissertation's hypotheses are:

1. Classic integration theories do not address the deep social determinants of countries affected by European integration or the social structures affected by the integration.
2. The vertical and horizontal expansion of the EU's institutional and legal system led to the establishment of a new type of enlargement framework for the external relations.

3. Serbia's EU accession schedule plan – similar to Croatia – justifies that the uniform treatment of the Western Balkans is in contrast with the heterogeneity of the region.
4. Based on the external economic position of Serbia, the Serbian economy is connected mostly to the EU's economy.
5. Serbia cannot be considered ripe for integration – based on its territorial and regional economic differences, and on the status of its settlement network.

Processed topic, the criteria of the discussion and the methodology, the logical deduction and the synthesis of the literature requires the use of verbal explanation; however, to the extent possible, I strive to include quantitative evidence as well. The first hypothesis is the following: *The classic integration theories do not address the deep social determinants of countries affected by European integration or the social structures affected by the integration.* In the first chapter of my thesis, I will explain what trends are in the so-called integration theories. The three most important trends are the neoclassical model-based aspects, based on economic categories, the group of theories of political rationale and the rationale for advocacy trends.

The classic trends were born in the first half and in the middle of the twentieth century (Bóka 2008). Their key characteristic is that they interpret the individual European nation-states almost exclusively as economic entities. From this perspective, they consider the integration as an objective of the increase of total economic output. The essence of theories is that when the overall GDP of states, the trades between increases, and a significant portion of these will occur as benefits realized by the society, then a stronger integration is desirable, and should be promoted (Palánkai 2004).

The other major driver of integrations is achievement of the objectives of effective security policies. This finding may be due to the fact that the treatment of deemed politically sensitive, conflicts of interests, threatened by crisis situations can be more effective if the opposing parties are in the same economic and military bloc. It's not a coincidence, that I mentioned the era when these theories of integration were created; after the Second World War, these issues reported real threat to the continent (Bóka 2001).

The theories of political science rationale seek answers to those questions, that which general political formations that constitute sufficient guarantees for protection against political risks.

The later born theories have been applied more sophisticated aspects. Key issue of these theories is: how to establish political institutions and systems that can support the development and economic integration of the peripheral and lagging regions (Pámer 2012).

The interest enforcement integration theories were born subsequently, decades of EU-experience was available in the establishment years. Members of the theory-group investigate all subsequent theories considering mechanisms of exercise of power which served the creation of legislation (Kégler 2006).

It is clear from the literature review that theoretical schools often tend to view the integration path on a linear trend line. However it is not examined, how to form integration without contradictions by countries with: different languages, cultures and political-economic institutional system. These questions could be answered only by the help of constructivism, institutionalism and new institutional economics. These theories involve much more qualitative, social (embeddedness) indicators to the integration process assessment.

The theoretical basis of the dissertation is also backed up with the results and conclusions of the new institutionalism, which analyses the foundations of the persistence economic growth. These countries – which are outstanding in the growth rates – may export the institutional and social knowledges of their model – according to the theory's views. These theoretical considerations can explain not only length of the accessions, but also the disputes of the members of the EU.

The second hypothesis reads as follows: *The vertical and horizontal expansion of the EU's institutional and legal system led to the establishment of a new type of enlargement framework for the external relations.*

The European Union imposes a specific timetable for the accession countries. In this timetable market reforms, policy changes and legal reforms are mostly required (Sinka 2013). However, over time some institutions of the EU got more power, and in determinative issues, the Community level becomes more and more a real decision-maker.

In the introduction of the enlargement and external relations framework of the European Union, the following sources served as informative supports: the official documents of the European Commission, the official websites of the European Union, the enlargement documentations and reports and the several agendas. By the help of these sources, the special areas and steps can be high standard outlined (Balázs 2002).

According to the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, the Stabilisation and Association Process came into force. This is the EU-s political program with a goal, to stabilize the nations of the Western Balkans and to establish a normalized bilateral connection system. The realisation of political stabilisation, the empowerment of market economy system, the support of regional cooperation and the accession to the EU are also key areas of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

The introduction of this process, the analysis of the part steps can contribute to the deeper cognition of the research area: where is the correct place of the enlargement policy in the system of common policies after the pivotal changes in the legal system of the EU. We also have to take into account, that the new, actual accession countries have to face a much more complex conditional framework, compared to the old ones. With this knowledge behind us, we come to the paradox: even more different states from the Western European development path come to the front line of the accession negotiations. This means in the practice that a more expansive legislation material have to be taken over, by less and less compatible countries. Walking this path, we might point out the institutional background of those often quoted political science concepts as the *enlargement and accession fatigue* (Várkonyi 2013). The dissertations third hypothesis states: *Serbia's EU accession schedule plan – similar to Croatia – justifies that the uniform treatment of the Western Balkans is in contrast with the heterogeneity of the region.*

The EU tries to integrate the so called West-Balkan region since 2000. The institutionalisation of the relationship between the EU and the region dates back to the same time. This term includes the ex-Yugoslav states (Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina) and Albania. Croatia was a member of the same West-Balkan region until its accession in 2013. These countries cannot be managed as uniform group because of their differences in regards to ethnicity, language, religion, culture, also because of their differences in the economic institutions. These facts have been integrated into high ranking EU documents, although it is visible that when dealing with these individual countries, the EU is enforcing relatively the same criteria systems.

The different identities in a respective country provide a fundament for the path in negotiations. It should be stated, as it happened in Croatia, these negotiations are full of arguments and standstills, thus when changing the negotiating methods and the bargaining levels; changing the allowances and requirements, on the short run results can be achieved by closing the interest systems of the negotiating sides (Lőrinczné 2009).

Serbia is the most important country in the West-Balkans given its political and geo-strategic position. As the starting point of the integration, 2000 can be taken when Vojislav Kostunica became president of the Yugoslav Federal Republic (FRY) and the government of Slobodan Milosevic fell. In the same year at the Zagreb conference, Serbia also took part. The following year, a consultative working group was created between the EU and the FRY that had the job of preparing the country for its EU integration.

If the declared criteria are examined, namely what is expected from Serbia; the country-specific criteria can be seen that it has to fulfil. It can be seen, that except for the settling of the relationship between Kosovo and Serbia and the war crimes in regards to the Yugoslav Wars are the only country specific criteria, all others are in line with the criteria towards the other West-Balkan countries (privatisation questions, personal freedom, social inequalities, foreign political orientation...).

The fourth hypothesis of the dissertation is: *Based on the external economic position of Serbia, the Serbian economy is connected mostly to the EU's economy.* When researching the maturity of the integration, the commerce with the respective integration is a key factor, the ratio of intraregional commerce. This hypothesis is not important only because of its classical approach. The global and European crises of the past years, political power changes cause an increase in geopolitical and geostrategic analyses.

Beyond the fundament of integration theory, the appearance and effects of Russian and Chinese investments, the long term effects of political deals and agreements are of big importance. It should be noted, that unless it has a clear trend in economic statistics, it should be only taken seriously if the investment is made into a strategically important industry (Pintér 2013).

It can be stated that the most important influencing factor in a countries foreign economic competitiveness – not internal economy and not economic policy – is with which countries and economic blocks is it having long-term relationships (Orosz 2015). The most important macroeconomic external indicators and the list of most important external trade partners of Serbia can be gathered from the Central Statistics Agency of Serbia and the National Bank of Serbia. With these data it is relatively simple to show its external market orientation and its integration maturity.

The fifth hypothesis is: *Serbia cannot be considered ripe for integration – based on its territorial and regional economic differences, and on the status of its settlement network.* This statement can be measured and proven in more ways. A country is mature for integration if it can handle the difficulties of integration in a balanced way. To achieve this balance it is necessary that its political, economic, educational sphere be able to adapt, also it should be able on a territorial basis to connect to the continental integration processes.

The classical integration indicators measure how well the country can connect to the common external trade. In this case the inner-integration import and export ratio is crucial, thus what value can the country produce for the whole economic integration (Palánkai 2004).

More sensitive indicators are those which measure and predict the competitiveness and the future path of a country within a few years in the integration. Here, those countries are taken as references that joined in the past.

According to the new institutional economic theory the trend of the country's political institution system can be measured according to international institutions specialised for the measurement of this factor.

Certain spheres of politics remain autonomous; these are outside of the limitation of the economic policy independence. At different fields there is an economic policy harmonisation present or new common policies are created. These are the highest forms of institutionalisation and regulation.

Two factors have direct effect on each other according to integration history; these are the EU enlargement policies and the regional policies (Rechnitzer – Smahó 2011). If later and later enlargements are viewed, bigger and bigger territorial differences can be visible within the EU that goes together with a change in regional policies. Serbia's trustworthy publicised data indicate that it has different regions with different profiles, which differences are enlarged by the heterogeneous nature of its city-network.

The fundamental regional development documents of the EU place importance beside sub-national and international level to the regional level and to the analysis of urban-structure. According to decision makers, polycentric urban-structures are desired (Farágó 2006, Szabó – Pintér 2015).

In this regard the sixth chapter of the dissertation, at the same time the analysis of the fifth hypothesis will show the Serbian regional transformation and the Serbian urban structure.

2. Methodology and evidentiary procedures

One of the most important factors in scientific works are the questions that they rise and the answers – evidentiary procedures – they provide. The main question of the dissertation is the accession of Serbia to the EU, its European integration on a wider basis, and the social and economic changes that will occur, also the timeframe of these changes. Because of the subject at hand, the statistical methods will not be the most significant ones.

There are arguments in the domestic Hungarian and international professional literature as well, about the methods of scientific research. As the Williamson social analysis levels that is introduces in the dissertation, as like other relevant science theory works show that in the research of a countries, a communities, a societies economic systems, those researches that

are based on verbal discussions, thought experiments, logical deduction are coming to relevant conclusions (Göcze 2011).

It should be mentioned that a lot of scholars consider these present accession negotiations as encounters of different value systems, different worlds. In this aspect, an analysis of history, sociology, philosophy and society can make this dissertation of higher quality (Somogyi 2011).

Because of the wide subjects and spectrum that the dissertation discusses, it is a truly multidisciplinary work. History, politology, economic policy, economic history, law, cultural-civilisation, geopolitics, regional structure, all have been discussed in the work. The research bases on the experiences of history, it in an important organising principle giving the dissertation a time-space aspect. The same principles should be highlighted from the work of Lőrinczné Bencze Edit in 2009 about the accession of Croatia to the European Union.

The geopolitical criteria system should be stressed when discussing and describing the West Balkans and the EU's expansion possibilities.

It should be mentioned, that integration has spatial and regional projections. Regional science theory and the regional scientific research centres and regional-economic workshops operated by Serbia and the European Union also highly effect the line of logic of the dissertation. These also provide a line of qualitative and quantitative tools.

The maturity for integration of a country can be described by complex indicators. These can be calculated from statistical methods that are based on economic trends founded in integration theory.

The legal background of the extension needed a line of primer data to be analysed including: EU legal papers, resolutions, decrees, country-assessment evaluations. In the empirical part of the dissertation, these laws and other documents are referenced on directly.

3. Results of the research and verification of the hypotheses

In this section, the hypotheses described in the beginning of the dissertation will be corrected and evaluated. These will be taken into consideration one by one, it will be highlighted which hypothesis will be described in detail in which section of the dissertation, according to which parts is it possible to draw final conclusions and make recommendations and corrections.

The first hypothesis sounds as follows: *The classic integration theories do not address the deep social determinants of countries affected by European integration or the social structures affected by the integration.* The evaluation criteria of the hypothesis in this case are

entirely based on the literature review with a synthesizing method. In the two theoretical sections of the dissertation integration theory will be described. This will be supplemented by the theory of institutional economics. A narrowly interpreted group of the classical integration theory is based on the neoclassical models, which are basically grouped theories analysing economic association forms.

These theories are dealing with exclusively quantifiable expense-profit methods. This is also explicitly true for the so called liberal schools. The work-sharing and regulation theories also consider the quality of the flow of factors of production. It is also considered, how the regulation mechanism that is based on a common fundament and the information flow help each other in the efficient operation of the integration processes.

Those integration theories that are based on political sciences, consider organisational arrangements of power articulation. These are the ones that make the efficient functioning of the European integration possible in a federal structure. In contrast the inter-governmentalist theory can be brought up. It is based on the belief, without deeper theoretical and sociological research that because of the timeless nature of natural governments, these are the final embodiments of the executive power on the continent.

The biggest advantage of the interest enforcement (advocacy) schools is that they are the ones that picture and describe the functioning of the European Union in the most realistic fashion. This realistic approach is achieved by limiting the circle of participants researched. It should be stated that the bargaining processes of the national governmental elites and the decision making mechanisms of the EU institutions cannot be generalized for the human/entity communities.

A human society can choose the most appropriate regulating factors according to its cultural heritage and tradition. At the same time it is possible to show what differences are present on an EU level in-between its constituent entities in regards to their social-economic systems. This aspect can only be analysed by the ideas of Williamson and North, because the time factor that can be named as integration time factor; only appears to the fullest in their theory.

The constructivist tendency strengthened in the last two decades among the integration theories based on political sciences. This tendency is the only one considering integration from an identity and values perspective. The constructivist research papers among papers dealing with integration theory have grown in numbers since the Eastern expansion of the EU. This is the point when the newly integrating countries and the proportion of countries highly differing from the traditional (old) development path reached a "critical mass". If considering the West Balkans it can be stated that these countries were industrialised later, the market

economic institutions were taken over discontinuously and in a prolonged fashion. At the same time these countries have a different civilisation and cultural background, also a wartime prehistory that the EU wishes to manage. To deal with this challenge of institutional differences it would be necessary to address the issue of deep social differences with extreme caution. This condition is not fulfilled by classical integration theory, thus the first hypothesis is accepted.

The second hypothesis is described as: *The vertical and horizontal expansion of the EU's institutional and legal system led to the establishment of a new type of enlargement framework for the external relations.* The EU expansion policies and its fundamental steps will be described in the fifth part of the dissertation. The name of this section is expansion and foreign relationship framework because it grew out of the common trade policies, and it acts as an umbrella of the complex relationships and political methods of the EU integration with non-EU countries and country groups. According to the literature review, the strongest relationship is when a country receives potential EU member status.

When dealing with the first hypothesis the main research direction is integration theory, during the second hypothesis pure practical actions are taken into consideration, including the political actions and framework.

Those countries wishing to join after 2007 has shrank to the West Balkans as it has been stated before. This includes Croatia in 2013 that after the EU accession negotiation had to fulfil the accession framework as described in the dissertation. Because of the past wars, Zagreb had to fulfil some special criteria. Decisions and rulings of the Hague Tribunal (ICTY) had to be acknowledged, a new political and law system had to be established that went against the public value system. The criteria used in Croatia have institutionalised during this process, these processes have to be fulfilled today by Serbia and other West-Balkan countries. Beyond the conditions and criteria, the STM ratification mechanisms are bringing to life a complex pre-condition system (framework) including: negotiation chapters, advancement strategic reports of the Commission, non-refundable source transfer system according to the countries merits, a wide spectrum of institutions for technical assistance. This system is considered as transparent, stabile and controllable. This is assisted by the CEFTA regional trade agreement that is an entrance to the integrated and unified internal market that is compulsory later on for all members.

The basis of the framework described as the summary of the hypothesis is the sum of the most important institutions and mechanisms governed by EU laws and political decisions. The

chapters describing the framework prove that it is new and complex, thus the second hypothesis is also accepted.

The third hypothesis of the dissertation is formulated as follows: *Serbia's EU accession schedule plan – similar to Croatia – justifies that the uniform treatment of the Western Balkans is in contrast with the heterogeneity of the region.* The hypothesis points out the apparent real and theoretical, conceptual confrontation, aiming to stabilize the Western Balkans integration path, the EU has continued to attract more balanced treatment of the parties involved. However, all this has led to the current situation: the institutional framework for negotiations with the countries proved to be inflexible.

In the empirical part of the dissertation I endeavoured to treat Serbia's data together with the countries of the region, to support the comparability and monitorability. The indicators of Croatia are for this reason – the country is member of the EU – not involved. The involved indicators – geographical data, economic development indicators, descriptive indicators of economic policy practices, cultural endowment approximation indicators – show, that this group of countries is a quite heterogeneous group.

These countries were initially uniform-handled by the European Union without any real distinctions. It is true that some countries were on time distant from the date's ability to move forward in the integration the stages, however, the uniform treatment of countries in the Enlargement Strategy points out that the EU focuses not exactly on those distinguishing characteristics in sensitive areas for example, in the internal social and economic structure. The stages of progress in the case of Serbia were results of development in political model shifts, stabilisation of regional peace, and building of the bases of the market economy system in a Western European perspective. These categories do not directly affect the deep layers of the society.

These synthetizing statements make it clear, to accept the third hypothesis as correct, but with much more uncertainty compared to the previous ones.

The fourth hypothesis was created as the latest from the five. This is the result of the processes in conjunction with the actual political events of the external actions from the European Union. It can be stated, *based on the external economic position of Serbia, that the Serbian economy is connected mostly to the EU's economy.*

Despite the fact that this statement is easily confirmable by the help of statistical series, it was not easy to justify it reliably. According to the Serbian foreign trade statistics of the past decade I have performed, that Germany, Italy and Russia have an outstanding role in the external trade of our southern neighbour country. As shown in the annual trade value of goods

that pass, and the balance of trade (the relative balance of exports and imports) dominance of the EU market is a matter of course. However, China has a grate export surplus in this period and in the Serbian import the Asian country has a stable fourth place. Russia plays almost a monopolistic role in the energy import and also has strategic ownership in the gas sector. In addition, in the Serbian intraregional export more non-EU countries – Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, and Montenegro – have dominant shares, which fact by itself does not increase the trade exposure in the direction of EU. However, it should be pointed out that the EU has declared to be viewed as a positive outcome in the Balkans region to become more intra-trade intensive; therefore, all these data will not weaken the hypothesis connotation. The process is supported also by a strengthened CEFTA.

Overall, I can conclude in the possession of the known data, that Serbia's economic system is much more heavily dependent on the single internal market of the Union, as of on the Chinese and Russian economy; even though this latter two countries play a great role in the global transformation of economic and political processes. The latter two, however, included precisely because of the considerable export surplus, as well as specific investment behaviour has a serious impact on the economy of Serbia. I accept the fourth hypothesis also in the knowledge of the numerous counter-factors.

Serbia cannot be considered ripe for integration – based on its territorial and regional economic differences, and on the status of its settlement network; according to the fifth hypothesis. Spatial aspects are directly not immanent perspectives of the integration literature, but indirectly we can say, that the spatial structure of a country is determinant in the long-term integrational trends. If there are such handrails, they are as follows: spatial and settlement structures are spatial impressions of the social structures; of course we have to consider the geographical and climatic conditions as well. In the enlargement process there is also a strong emphasis on regional policy reforms of the accession country, that's why the guidelines of the mainstream regional policies are to be followed for Serbia. In the last few years the established NUTS-2 regional data are available – in this fortunate position, there opened an opportunity to show the internal aspects of the integration trends. The disclosed data indicate that the Serbia spatial structure is characterized by serious internal differences and stretching, regional structures with dissociation directions. Beyond simple volume data, foreign trade data in at regional level point out, that the regions with a low level of economic development have also a low level of external competitiveness, and paradoxically they have thus a positive impact on the overall trade balance of Serbia. The city-hierarchy structures of the nations and of the Union are continuously examined by the EU-funded research institutions and national

ministries, research institutes. In the so-called polycentric spatial structure model an important feature a given regional entity is that it has not only a single development centre, but represents a more balanced picture of network. This territorial entity can be an industrial district, a trans-border region, and also a macro-regional entity. In the case of Serbia it is apparent, that this criterion fails also to meet. The dominant position of the capital, Beograd can be counterbalanced only by Novi Sad, only in a moderate degree. Other big cities in the comparison have a weakening position, not talking about the fact that their spatial positions are not balanced from a national perspective.

Based on the chapter dealing with the regional structure data and findings, which are once again confirmed in the above rows, the fifth hypothesis can be accepted.

Summary of new scientific results of the dissertation

In the dissertation, the new results were supported by the help of the above described hypotheses. Summary of the results of these hypotheses is stemmed originally from the above introduced content.

The theoretical approaches in connection with the integration are determined by a methodical and conceptual framework. The states wishing to join newly to the European Union – Serbia can be called the state nearest to the EU-membership – have to implement such reforms, which affect social deep-layers. Consequently, protracted integration-crises can be predicted, because of the slow adaptation processes. A culturally diverse region, like the Western Balkans can be integrated by the help of a much higher level of adaptation efforts.

The second hypothesis implies that the framework used for the enlargement of the EU level has become increasingly complex, as a part of the external action policy. In this condition, two important objectives emerged as part of the policy in question: the strengthening of commercial traits, as well as the “export” of the Western-type democratic institutions. The third hypothesis implies that accession schedules founded and backed by the integration and by external political theories; do not take into account, that alone the heterogeneity of the region is a source of danger in the integration process. I presented the detailed agenda of Serbia’s EU-accession – other countries of the region have got very similar agendas, of course.

The fourth hypothesis points out that in Serbia's foreign trade position that EU’s single market has a decisive role. Such characteristic political-economic actors such as Russia and China have nevertheless prominent place in the country's foreign trade partners in import-based

rankings as well as in political connection building. In the longer term can be observed up to significant changes in this orientation.

A conclusion that can be drawn from the fifth hypothesis can be formulated so: the spatial structure of Serbia – which can serve as a consequence of the historical path of the country – is completely different from the conceptions held to be ideal by the EU's programs and plans. All this suggests that the new regional development funds will not be utilized sufficiently by Serbia as a future member. This is problematic given the political success of new members is often measured by the help of this absorption and payment trends. Protracted social conflicts has occur between different parts of the country even regarding the assessment of the EU-membership value of Serbia – from an inside point of view.

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Book chapter

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