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# **EU and Western Balkans: Delayed prospects for membership**

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# Structure of presentation

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- ❑ EU and WB - state of play
- ❑ Strengths and weaknesses - key challenges for WB countries
- ❑ Impacts of Croatia's EU membership on WB countries
- ❑ What next?

# Candidates and potential candidates in 6th enlargement

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## **Aceeding country**

- Croatia

## **Negotiating countries**

- Turkey
- Iceland

## **Candidates**

- Macedonia
- Montenegro
- Serbia

## **Potential candidates**

- Albania
- Bosnia & Herzegovina
- Kosovo

# Some characteristics of current EU – WB enlargement

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- ❑ WB not comparable to “*big bang*” 5th enlargement
- ❑ Delayed accession, “unfinished business”, limited guarantee that membership will materialize
- ❑ Accession not linear process
- ❑ Stricter conditionality
- ❑ Quality of preparations - new enlargement methodology
- ❑ New issues - energy, climate change high on agenda
- ❑ Decreasing support for accession, lack of confidence
- ❑ From “regatta” principle to isolated accession

# Rising standards of enlargement: *stricter conditionality*

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## **Copenhagen plus criteria**

Obligations from SAA + European/Pre-accession  
Partnership

+ EU absorption capacity

## **SAP conditionality**

Full cooperation with ICTY

Good neighbourly relations

Resolving border disputes

## **Negotiation Frameworks**

Benchmarks, suspension clause

# EU relations & WB countries – state of play

COUNTRY	SAA signed	Application for membership	Candidate status	Negotiations opened	Negotiations closed	Accession date
<b>Croatia</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2011 (Accession Treaty signed)</b>	<b>July 1, 2013</b>
<b>Montenegro</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>Likely in June 2012</b>	-	-
<b>Macedonia</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	-	-	-
<b>Serbia</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2012</b>	-	-	-
<b>Albania</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>Likely in July 2012</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Bosnia and Herzegovina</b>	<b>2008</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Kosovo</b>	<b>2012 Feasibility study</b>	-	-	-	-	-

# Countries within 6th EU enlargement: basic economic data

Country	GDP per capita (PPS) as share of EU-27 (2010)	Economic growth in 2012***	General government balance**	General government debt**	Competitiveness ranking (out of 142)****
Croatia	61%	- 0, 6%	-5,5%	45,8%	76
Montenegro	41 %	0, 4%	-4,0%	45,3%	60
Macedonia	36 %	1.3%	-2,5%	29,0%	79
Serbia	35 %	0.1%	-4,7%	37,0%	95
Albania	28 %	1.2%	-3,5%	58,8%	78
Bosnia and Herzegovina	31 %	0.4%	-1,3%	25,8%	100
Kosovo	n/a	n/a	-1,8%	n/a	n/a
Turkey	49 %	2.5%	- 1,4%	39,7%	59
Iceland	111 %	1,5%**	-4,4%	92,4%	30

**Sources:**

\* GDP per capita in PPS, Index (EU-27 = 100), Eurostat data from 1<sup>st</sup> of December 2011

\*\* EU Candidate and Pre-Accession Countries Economies Quarterly, European Commission, ECOFIN Unit D-1, April 4, 2012

\*\*\* Regional Economic Prospects in EBRD Countries of Operations, EBRD, May 2012

\*\*\*\* Global Competitiveness Report 2011-2012, World Economic Forum, September 2011

# EU strengths and weaknesses as perceived from WB region

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## Strengths

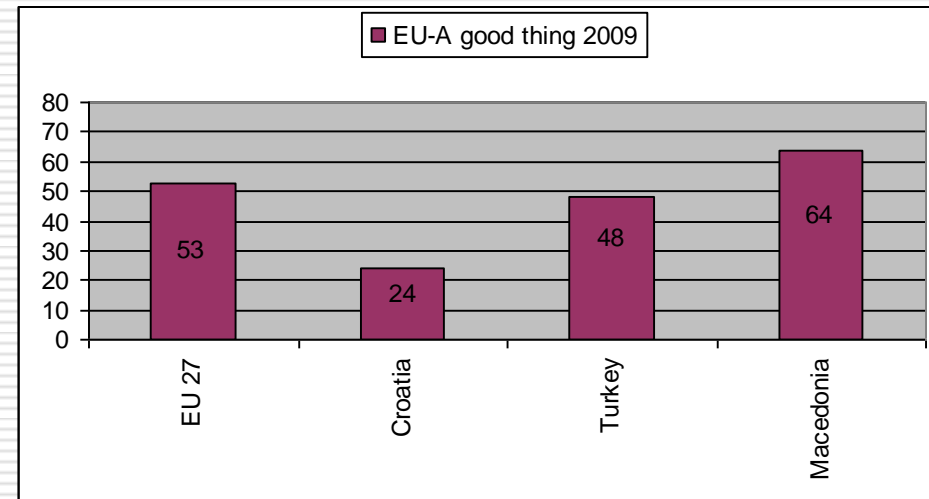
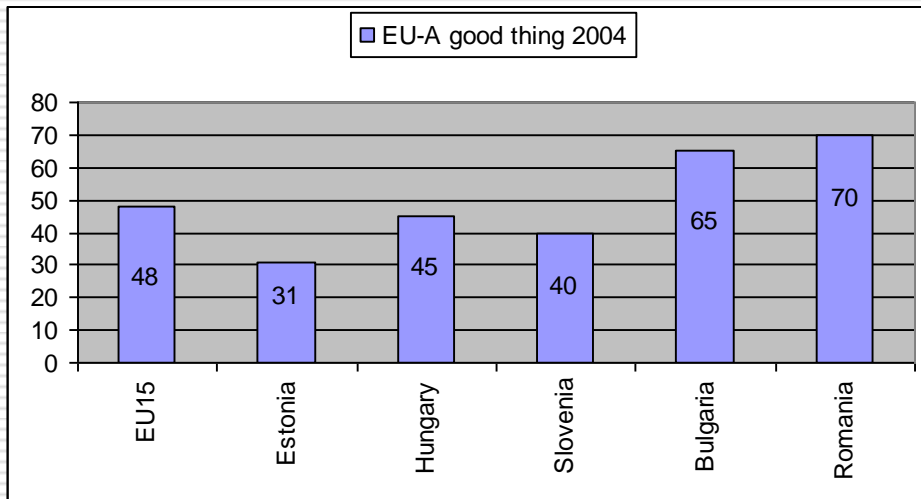
- ❑ Membership “carrot” still (relatively) attractive
- ❑ Transformation power for policies, institutions, political practices
- ❑ Conditionality as driver for reforms

## Weaknesses

- ❑ Impact of crisis reduced willingness for absorption
- ❑ Time horizon for further enlargement vague
- ❑ Slow progress, success less obvious
- ❑ Politization of accession process
- ❑ Efficiency of EU actorship in region?



# Attitude towards EU membership: Fifth and sixth enlargement (selected countries)



Source: Eurobarometer 61, spring 2004; [http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/eb/eb61/eb61\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb61/eb61_en.pdf)

Eurobarometer 71, spring 2009;

[http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/eb/eb71/eb713\\_annexes.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb71/eb713_annexes.pdf)

# Achievements in enlargement for WB countries

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- First post-conflict country completed negotiations (Croatia not rule, but exception)
- Progress towards peace and stability (still weak)
- Encouraged triple transition: democratization, marketization, state consolidation
- Establishment of visa-free travel regime for region (exception of Kosovo)
- Pan-Euro-Med Convention on preferential RuO
- Progres in regional cooperation ("*ownership*")
  - CEFTA, RCC, ReSPA, Energy Community, European Common Aviation Area, Transport Community, other

# Open issues in WB countries

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- Different sets of problems in the countries, but many cross border open issues
- “Delayed transition” - state building, ethnic tensions, post-crisis management
- Rule of law, judiciary, corruption, organised crime, weak administrative capacities
- Internal disputes on inter-ethnic or status issues (B&H, Kosovo)
- Bilateral disputes with MS affecting enlargement (Slovenia, Greece)

# Impacts of Croatia's accession for WB region

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## Positive

- ❑ Proves that EU enlargement model / conditionality works
- ❑ First regional EU member
- ❑ Link between Eastern, South-eastern Europe and Mediterranean
- ❑ Transfer of knowledge achieved in negotiations

## Negative

- ❑ Potential decrease of regional trade (CEFTA)
- ❑ Future accession to Schengen – border with the region
- ❑ Greater migration pressures

# WB enlargement prospects – what next?

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- **WB – Fulfillment of conditions and implementation of reforms**
  - ICTY, judiciary, public administration, corruption, organised crime, competition, institutional capacity, structural reforms
  - Solving bilateral issues before accession
  
- **EU: Search for new approaches adjusted to new circumstances (new dynamism or keeping the momentum?)**
  - Candidate status for all WB countries, with intermediary steps before start of negotiations
  - Separating bilateral from negotiation related issues
  - Sectoral integration, differentiated approach
  - Better communicating and demonstrating benefits of EU accession

# What else is needed?

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- ❑ Interaction of ideas, institutions and policies, reframing policy within a changing foreign policy space...
  
- ❑ Thank you!