European Perspective of Human Security and the Western Balkans

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Abstract
Due to the transnational nature of non-traditional security issues, the role of the security is no longer limited solely to the defense of the national territory, but to defend interests of a whole region even a continent. So, it is the interest of the EU to stabilize the Western Balkans region permanently in order to focus on the changing security challenges. In this context, human security conception can be seen as a redefinition of the role of EU in the Western Balkans. Because security issues that needed to be addressed should not only be in reference to the state, but also to individuals and societal groups. Indeed, the concept of human security broadens the actors and structures identified as being causes of insecurity.

Keywords: *Security, Human Security, European Union, Western Balkans, Non-Traditional Security Issues*

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Introduction

With respect to the Balkans, the EU has always been challenged in its attempts to pursue a coherent and long-term strategy to stabilize this volatile region. The EU failed in 1991 to avoid the dissolution of Yugoslavia and would later fail to prevent the emergence of ethnic conflicts in Kosovo and Macedonia. While the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) intervention in Kosovo has probably seemed to eliminated the risk of further conflicts and wars, it is claimed that "large-scale aggression against any EU member state is now improbable. Instead, Europe faces new threats which are more diverse, less visible and less predictable" (European Council, 2003: 3). The geographic closeness of the region made the EU more decisive in maintaining peace and stability in the Balkans. This became more important especially after the last two enlargements of 2004 and 2007 when the EU frontiers were moved closer to the countries of the Western Balkans.

The issues of human security are getting importance for the countries in the Western Balkans as well as for the whole of Europe. Ivan Krastev claims that "levels do vary from one country to another but it is clear that most countries share common risks and common concerns in all major fields of security - political, societal, economic and environmental" (Krastev, 1999: 15). In the post-conflict period, does the Western Balkans region provide an opportunity or a challenge for EU's foreign policy? In addressing this question, this article will undertake an analysis of EU engagement in the Balkans during 2000s, with a particular focus on the principles of human security conception. The aim of the article is not to describe the large debate around the concept of human security itself, but to analyze the EU's security approach towards the Western Balkans states in the context of its security strategy documents. This article will try to display if, how, and, to what extent the implementation of the human security concept is useful in the Western Balkans.

A Necessary Conception: Human Security

The concept of 'security' within International Relations discipline has undergone conceptual and practical evolution in the post-Cold War era, since not all of the developments fitted in the theoretical and conceptual frameworks of traditional security conception which neglects non-military threats to peace and stability (Ağır, 2015: 366). In this respect, critical security scholars examine, inter alia, human security and societal security- that is, they analyze how threats to individuals and groups (including to their identity) within states should also be seen through the lens of security and insecurity (McSweeney, 1999; Bilgin, 2003; Buzan, Weaver, de Wilde, 1998). As a new phenomenon in the Security Studies subfield, a series of interrelated developments created a cognitive space that was necessary for developing such a concept; decreased threat of nuclear war, predominance of non-traditional security threats, democratization, strengthening of human rights in global politics, globalization, poverty and increase number of intra-state conflicts (Prezelj, 2008). Human security is commonly understood as prioritising the security of people, especially their welfare and safety, rather than that of states (Ağır, 2015: 366). Most analytical and conceptual considerations of human security take the 1994 United Nations *Human Development Report* as more or less the alpha of human security thinking (UNDP, 1994). Actually, taking the individuals as the core of a security conception necessitates a threat list beyond the traditional security

conception such as terrorism, poverty, unemployment, organized crime, corruption and economic security.

Conceptually, human security is defined as freedom for individuals from basic insecurities caused by gross human rights violations and includes both *freedom from fear*, through the protection of individuals and communities from direct violence, and *freedom from want*, through the promotion of unhindered access to the economy, health and education (UNDP, 1994). Henceforth, human security is concerned with both conflict-related and development-related threats or vulnerabilities. By using a definition that primarily focuses on violent threats, the narrow definition of the concept clearly separates human security from the established field of international development. The narrow definition, therefore, restricts the parameters of human security to violent threats against the individual. This can come from a vast array of threats, including the landmines, ethnic discord, state failure, trafficking in small arms and light weapons (SALW), etc (Liotta, Owen, 2006: 91). During conflicts and in their aftermath the protection of the people against violence and therefore their physical security is in the foreground.

Human security raises critical questions that point out the referent objects, threats and means of achieving security (Paris, 2001: 87-102). Even if there is no agreement on the definition of human security concept, decision-makers increasingly recognize the importance of human security as a policy framework. It is clear that human security is increasingly employed in post-conflict situations. Because, the pattern of security threats and vulnerabilities in a post-conflict situation can hardly be grasped with a traditional approach to security. Therefore, multi-dimensionality of human security conception appears well suited to address the security problems existing in post-conflict societies. Because human security attempts to open up and expand the security by developing its human dimension (Ağır, 2015: 367).

The European Union's Human Security Conception
The human security concept has inspired -and at times driven- the official 'doctrines' of some relevant players on the global scene, including such countries as Canada and Japan. Finally, it has made inroads into the EU policy arena, first by influencing some parts of the European Security Strategy of December 2003 (Kotsopoulos, 2006). The ESS sets out what constitutes a threat to national and global security by listing five key threats: "terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, regional conflicts, state failure and organized crime by making several references to human security conception" (European Council, 2003).

As the ESS points out, 'none of the new threats is purely military; nor can any be tackled by purely military means' (European Council, 2003: 3-5). Accordingly, it reflects the changing security environment by recognizing the shift from a merely military conception of security to the inclusion of non-traditional security threats. Then, the Human Security Study Group's report "A Human Security Doctrine for Europe" was received by High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) Javier Solana on 15 September 2004 and is known as *the Barcelona Report* (The Barcelona Report, 2004). The doctrine recommended the integration of human security into the EU's foreign and security policies by proposing that in the 21st century human security would be the most appropriate security strategy for the EU (The Barcelona Report, 2004).

At the heart of a European human security conception is the set of principles, developed by the Barcelona Report, which "both give substance to the human security

conception as applied by the EU and serve as an operational methodology to guide and evaluate the EU's international operations" (The Madrid Report, 2007: 8-9). These principles are the primacy of human rights, clear political authority, multilateralism, bottom-up approach, regional focus, the use of legal instruments, and the appropriate use of force (The Barcelona Report, 2004: 14-20). By using these principles as a framework, it is argued that the EU would add to what it already does in the area of a normative foreign policy by developing a shared strategic narrative (Martin, 2007: 17). For Ian Manners, "the normative basis of the EU is based on five core norms and values such as peace, liberty, democracy, rule of law and human rights. So, the EU is viewed as both a creator and propagator of above-mentioned norms and values" (Manners, 2002: 235-258).

The discourses and practices associated with human security conception involve a normative commitment to the reframing of security debates. In this respect, human security has served as a strategy to foster the emergence of the EU as a regional normative power aiming to promote regional cooperation, human rights, democracy and rule of law. For instance, Javier Solana defined EU's foreign policy in these terms: "Our common foreign policy cannot just be interest-based. Protecting and promoting values, which are part of our history and very dear to the hearts of our citizens, must continue to be a priority" (Solana, 2002). Thus, in ontological terms, a human security narrative reflects the self-identity of Europeans and reinforce the foundational ideas behind European external relations (Martin, 2007: 15).

The human security conception recognises that 'freedom from fear' and 'freedom from want' are both essential to people's sense of well-being. In this respect, the question arises as to which approach towards human security is being adopted by the EU either implicitly or explicitly. Madrid Report states that "A European Way of Security" should focus on the protection of individuals and communities as well as the interrelationship between 'freedom from fear' and 'freedom from want'(The Madrid Report, 2007: 8). In 2006 the Commissioner for External Relations Benita Ferrero-Waldner explained: 'The philosophy underlying the EU's approach to security is that security can best be attained through development, and development through security. Neither is possible without an adequate level of the other. That's why we focus on the holistic concept of human security'(Ferrero-Waldner, 2006). However, it seems more useful to focus on 'freedom from fear' aspect of human security rather than 'freedom from want' since human development is already the target of much of EU's development agenda. For example, the development component of human security has been further enshrined in the 2005 European Union Consensus on Development, wherein human security is mentioned as a goal of the EU's development policy (Gottwald, 2012: 14). In general sense, this paper argues that the strategies that focus exclusively on development in technical terms and neglect human security notably fail to prevent further violence.

Therefore, the focus shall be given to the 'freedom from fear' in order to benchmark EU's contribution to the field of human security concept. Accordingly, it can be assumed that the document of ESS presents a decidedly narrow definition for human security. Indeed, by emphasizing "law-enforcement... with the occasional use of force," the focus on human security remains strictly limited (Liotta, Owen, 2006: 85-102). However, when the debate comes to the 'freedom from fear' aspect of human security, it can be said that the EU is rather weak due to its incapability in its foreign policy to respond to the emergency situations (Ağır, 2015: 370). In this respect, the Barcelona Report suggested the formation of a Human Security Response Force which would include military units as well as civilian experts that would be suited to carry out human security

operations (The Barcelona Report, 2004). The force should be roughly the size of a division, 15,000 personnel. And it is envisaged that at least one-third of the 15,000 personnel would be police and civilian specialists (human rights monitors, development and humanitarian specialists, etc.) who would support crisis management operations. The EU's recently established joint civil-military planning unit is a first step in this direction (The Barcelona Report, 2004: 20-22).

According to the Barcelona Report, there are three reasons why the EU should adopt a human security concept. The first reason is based on morality. According to this reason, European states' interventions for humanitarian reasons, whether in Kosovo or East Timor, have been based on strong public support, even public pressure, from European citizens (The Barcelona Report, 2004: 5). A second reason is related to the legality. The Barcelona Report states that "If human security is considered as the protection of human rights, then it is generally accepted that other states and international actors such as the EU, have not only a right, but also a legal obligation to concern themselves with human security worldwide" (The Barcelona Report, 2004: 5). In this respect, according to Article 4 of the EU Constitution, the EU recognises that it has obligations concerning the human security of people outside its borders.

The third reason for adopting a human security approach is 'enlightened self-interest'. According to the Barcelona Report, "the whole point of a human security approach is that Europeans cannot be secure while others in the world live in severe insecurity" (The Barcelona Report, 2004: 9-10). The effects of insecurity and instability in the Balkans, for example, are more strongly felt in Europe in terms of crime, refugee flows and human trafficking than the effects of conflicts further away (The Barcelona Report, 2004: 12). Therefore, it is claimed that "the EU is fully aware of the benefits associated with the promotion of human rights and democracy in terms of stability and security, in particular, in the European continent" (Juncos, 2005: 100).

As a result, the human security approach provides an interesting blueprint for the EU to address the challenges set out in the ESS, as it is better suited to translate the Union's founding principles into a policy practice (The Madrid Report, 2007: 3). The EU has implicitly incorporated 'human security' into its thinking - although not as a doctrine proper or a fully-fledged policy (Kotsopoulos, 2006). The implementation of the ESS in the Balkans provides an important test case on whether the comprehensive security approach can be applied as prescribed in the ESS. But, the conclusions a policy paper prepared by the Finnish Presidency in May 2006 rest on the fact that the spill-over of soft security issues into the hard security agenda of the Western Balkans has not been properly managed and it requires a revision of the approach (Finnish Presidency, 2006). Therefore, the 2008 Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy was written to update the 2003 ESS. In this report, for the first time the Council of the EU, which authored the document, also explicitly referred to human security as central to the EU's particular strategic goals (Martin, Owen, 2010: 216).

New Security Threats in the Western Balkans and Their Implications for the EU

An early effort to employ the human security perspective in the Balkans was a special report commissioned by United Nations Development Programme on *Human Security in South-East Europe* (Krastev, 1999: 15). Its main focus was on human security in weak states, which was to be overcome mainly by strengthening all aspects of human security. However, there have been fewer voices from the region itself in terms of human

security. Almost all strategic documents of the countries in the region does not mention about the concept of human security (Hadzic, Timotic, Petrovic, 2010). But the new risks and threats such as unemployment, poverty, ethnic-nationalism, uncontrolled migration and coerced displacement, and the organized crime have increasingly affected human security in the Balkans.

These threats emanating from the region are making impossible to put sharp dividing lines between internal and external security of the EU and result in serious repercussions for the whole European continent due to their spill-over effect (Hürsoy, 2010: 93). Therefore, a comprehensive approach is required, since non-traditional security issues undermine regional stability which in turn affects European interests directly and indirectly. In terms of the Balkans, Chris Patten, the European Commissioner for External Relations, believes that the region must be treated as part of Europe, not an adjunct. "Either Europe exports stability to the Balkans or the Balkans exports instability to the rest of Europe. So Europe must show the vision and leadership required, and that means matching fine rhetoric with hard action on the ground" (Patten, 2001). The ESS suggests that it will be of paramount importance for European security to empower Balkan countries to contain effectively non-traditional security issues such as organized crime, terrorism, proliferation of SALW in their own countries.

The transition from communist rule to democracy, wars on the Balkans region in 1990s, and the presence of weak states in the post-war context provided a favourable environment for networks of organized crime to bloom (Stojarova, 2007). Generally, the regional organized crime networks find their expression in the trafficking of illicit goods (such as arms and drugs), money laundering, the organisation of illegal immigration and trafficking in human beings. Exploiting insecurity, lack of proper organization and nonexistence of the rule of law, the organized crime groups have created links with high-ranked political officials and parts of the military establishments (Vukadinovic, 1999: 13) In most countries of the region corruption is systematic and well organized, and has taken root in state institutions. The Corruption Perception Index of Transparency International of 2008 shows Macedonia on rank 72, Serbia, Albania and Montenegro equally on rank 85 and BiH on rank 92 (Kosovo does not figüre in this index) (Transparency International, 2008). Indeed, the association between criminal groups and politicians in the various states of the region "threaten their socio-economic transformation, their democratization and the process of integration into Euro-Atlantic structures" (Stojarova, 2007). It is claimed that "while economic progress obviously has led to a certain 'normalization', the fact remains that organized crime is still often linked with (persons in) state institutions" (Benedek, 2010: 10).

According to one senior United Nations Mission in Kosovo official, "when we talk of organized crime in Kosovo, we are very much dealing with politicians, [and] ministers" (UN Office on Drugs and Crime, 2008: 10). "Under these conditions, the fight against organized crime faces many problems such as the reluctance of local organs to deal with the criminal structures and involvement by the elite in illegal activities" (Stojarova, 2007: 96). For example, it is alleged that "the former Serbian Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic's attempts to purge the security services from criminal elements led to his assassination in March 2003" (Anastasijevic, 2010: 155). The assassination of Djindjic proved that criminal structures allied with or supported by state security institutions can undermine the stability of a country (Ağır, 2014: 80). Moreover, activities of criminal organizations represent a very negative influence on the economic development particularly by investing great sums of illegally earned money into legal businesses.

Accordingly, "the post-conflict era of the Balkans has been exploited by organized crime groups to carry out a variety of activities, which produced dirty money to be laundered in the licit economy" (Ağır, 2014: 81).

Connected to organized crime networks, human-trafficking is another non-traditional security issue. Human trafficking is perceived as a serious organized crime requiring a human security approach. The destruction of social fabric caused by the war, coupled with massive migrations, and the economic collapse, worked together to create fertile ground for dealers in human beings. Balkans region is simultaneously the source, the transit route, and the destination for the trafficking of human beings. It is estimated that 120,000 victims of human trafficking or more are coming to the EU through and from the Balkans each year (UN Office on Drugs and Crime, 2008: 15). Therefore, the illegal trafficking towards Western Europe increases the risks to the security of the entire continent.

Since organized crime transcends national borders by moving to the EU, it brings with it the threat of violence and conflict, and poses a relevant security threat to the EU. Apart from its links with organized crime, terrorism has deep roots in the Balkans and could easily find fertile soil in national and ethnic conflicts, as well as in the consequences of recently ended wars. Minority groups, if unsatisfied with their status, or strengthened nationalist movements may become pray of the organizers of terrorist activities (Vukadinovic, 1999: 12). From the viewpoint of Western researchers and policy analysts the threat of terrorism in the Balkans region stems mainly from the aftermath of Bosnian wars and the fact that as a result of these wars radical Islam has entered the Bosnian and other Balkan areas through different routes (Ağır, 2014: 83). In particular after 9/11, concerns have been raised as regards the possible infiltration of Balkan countries by international terrorist groups such as Al Qaeda (International Crisis Group, 2001). Whilst on 17 October 2001 the Embassies of the USA and the United Kingdom in Sarajevo were closed down under threat of terrorist attacks, in 2004 the International Strategic Studies Association came forward with allegations that the London and Madrid bombings had links to Bosnia (International Strategic Studies Association, 2004).

The distinction between organized crime and terrorism is made by reference to their ends; criminals seek profits while terrorists have political motives and specifically seek to weaken the state. The existence of trans-state nationalist, ethnic, and religious movements and their transborder identity networks provide settings conductive to cooperation between terrorist organizations and criminals. Accordingly, terrorism and organized crime are very strongly related to each other in the Balkans; one cannot function without another. The link between the Albanian mafia and the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) during the Kosovo conflict seems to be a good example. Tamara Makarenko cites a study that describes the funding of KLA activities through mafia drug money and the protection that the Albanian mafia enjoyed by the KLA in turn to carry out its smuggling of heroin into Western Europe (Makarenko, 2004: 57). In general terms, the collaboration between organized crime and terrorism undermine confidence in state structures and threaten the security of individuals and communities.

The wars in former Yugoslavia left massive quantities of weapons and other military hardware outside of effective government control. In addition, great numbers of firearms were imported into the region during the Yugoslav conflicts. The partial collapse of the Albanian state in 1997 also fuelled the smuggling of weapons in the region. In this respect, SALW contribute to the continued proliferation of terrorist and criminal elements, by acting as the enablers of violence. However, the situation has certainly much

improved since the time of active conflicts. Firearms trafficking is not even mentioned in the Council of Europe's situation reports on organized crime in the region (UN Office on Drugs and Crime, 2008: 84). But Iztok Prezelj emphasises that any major political and security destabilization could immediately revert the positive trend in the field of SALW (Prezelj, 2010: 207-226). Accordingly, in the environment of high unemployment, wild privatization, fast democratization, corruption, unsolved war-related issues, painful memories, freely moving war criminals and internally displaced people and refugees, the availability of SALW may create some alternative windows of opportunity for solving problems by violence (Prezelj, 2010: 210). The key victims of proliferation of SALW are actually individuals in the region. Therefore, the human security should be explicitly emphasised when dealing with the SALW problem.

Instruments of the EU for Achieving Human Security

When looking at the field of crisis management in the light of the human security concept, it is not only about intervening where a ceasefire is concerned, but also integrates civilian and non-corecive methods such as security sector reform, sustainable development, state-building, and mediation and negotiation efforts by parties external to conflicts (Liotta, Owen, 2006: 91). Thus, apart from the changing referent object, human security promotes different means to achieve security. As opposed to the hard power of the military, security should be provided by soft power, long-term cooperation and preventive measures (Ağır, 2014: 370). The EU has used some instruments to enhance security and democratic consolidation in the Balkans: 1) Stability Pact as a framework for multilateral regional cooperation, 2) Stabilization and Association Process (SAP) as the Union's potential strategy for Southeastern enlargement, and 3) CFSP/ESDP instruments for conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation (Zarin, 2007: 514). In addition to these three instruments, the EU's Community Assistance for Reconstruction, Development and Stabilisation (CARDS) programme played crucial roles in transforming of security structures in the region.

In the respect of the stabilization need of the region, the Stability Pact was signed in Cologne on 10 June 1999, in response to the EU's call to adopt a comprehensive platform for stability and development in the region. In essence, its aims are stated as follows; "bringing about mature democratic processes, based on free and fair elections, grounded in the rule of law and full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, the deepening and strengthening of civil society, preserving the multinational and multiethnic diversity of countries in the region and protecting minorities; and ensuring the safe and free return of all refugees and displaced persons in order to achieve stability in the whole region" (Hombach, 2000: 5-21; Latawski, Smith, 2003: 73).

In the founding document, the EU undertakes to draw the Balkans "closer to the perspective of full integration into its structures", including eventual full membership (see Hombach, 2000). It was at the Feira European Council of June 2000 that, for the first time, the prospect of EU membership has been extended to Western Balkans countries. In this respect, as a contribution to the Stability Pact and an interim step towards membership, in November 2000 the EU also launched the SAP at the Zagreb EU-Balkan Summit as a new instrument for Western Balkan countries. And then, during the EU-Western Balkans Summit which was held 21 June 2003 in Thessaloniki, it was stated that the future of the Balkans is within the EU (Thessaloniki Summit, 2003). Consequently, the EU has recognized the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) as a

candidate country and Albania, BiH, Kosovo, Montenegro, and Serbia as potential candidates. In order to be admitted, these countries have to comply with the EU political, economical as well as legal requirements (known as the Copenhagen Criteria) and adopt the *acquis communautaire*, which delineates the total accumulation of EU laws and standards.

The SAP aims to enhance institution building, economic reconstruction, and regional cooperation, preparing the countries for future EU membership. However, before launching of the SAP, on 29 April 1997, the EU General Affairs Council adopted the so-called "Regional Approach", establishing political and economic conditionality for the development of bilateral relations with the Western Balkan countries. In this context, it has been added some specific criteria: full co-operation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, respect for human and minority rights, inter-ethnic reconciliation, returns of refugees and internally displaced persons, and a visible commitment to regional cooperation (European Commision, 2003: 5). Thus, the EU added further preconditions to the already well-established Copenhagen Criteria by enlarging the scope of political conditions. Inspite of EU conditionality, the prospect of the EU membership is the major unifying factor in the Balkans, and it represents a powerful leverage for the much needed reforms. As a closure of the SAP, through a new generation of Stabilisation and Association Agreements (SAA), it is intended to increase economic, political and social cooperation between the EU and the five countries (Albania, BiH, Croatia, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and FYROM) which by the time have no contractual relationship with the EU. Consequently, in regard to the Western Balkans the EU applied short-term crisis management instruments that do not eliminate threats to human security at least up to the creation of SAP and the Stability Pact.

While the EU makes effort to include the concept of human security as an organizing framework for its security policy, the Balkans has been a test bed, first for the CFSP and then the ESDP. Through these initiatives the EU has sought to introduce a comprehensive approach to post-conflict settlement. BiH and FYROM serve as the primary area of the concentration of CFSP instruments and as the main source of experience for the improvement of European "trademark techniques" in pacification as well as normative transformation (Törö, 2006: 69). The EU's first military crisis management operation entitled as Operation Concordia was conducted in the FYROM in 2003. With the security situation stabilized, Concordia was replaced by an EU police mission, Proxima. This mission began on December 15, 2003, and lasted for two years. It worked primarily to support the rule of law through monitoring and advising the Macedonian police. On December 2, 2004, the NATO-led Stabilisation Force in BiH was replaced by an EU-led Operation EUFOR-Althea, which is the largest crisis management operation of the EU to date.

In addition to these operations in BiH and FYROM, in a regional context, the EU assistance in the framework of its CARDS programme has undoubtedly been the key instrument in addressing deficiencies in the development of security strategies of countries of the Balkans, especially in the realm of security sector reform (SSR) (Greco, 2004: 65). SSR is of crucial importance, because in post-conflict situations the security sector is often linked with organized crime and therefore rather a threat to citizens than a provider of protection. SSR includes the process of transforming or establishing new security institutions, including the army, police, judiciary and intelligence agencies. The goal is to create a functioning democratic state and society in which the citizens are able

to live without fear, whose human rights and fundamental freedoms are guaranteed and whose property rights are protected.

The army, police, intelligence agencies and other security sector agencies engaging in widespread abuses, organized crime and corruption became frequent cases in the countries of the Balkans in recent decades. Indeed, despite the financial and institutional efforts made by the EU, it can be concluded that on local level, the main obstacle in fighting organized crime is the unreformed security sector. In terms of regional level, the forms of cooperation among the states of the region in fighting crime have mostly been bilateral or Interpol-based, but that is not enough (Vukadinovic, 1999: 14). Because, transnational organized crime is a complex security threat that demands a multi-layered approach and response. Dejan Anastasijevic concludes that there is no comprehensive strategy to address the problem of organized crime neither locally, nor in the EU, although organized crime in the Western Balkans is widely recognized as the main threat against stability in the region and in Europe (Anastasijevic, 2010).

It is argued that top-down approach of the EU's institution-building strategy has its limits and should be balanced with bottom-up policies aimed at enhanced citizen participation and pro-reform consensus building (Bechev, Svetlozar, 2005: 3). In this context, the Barcelona Report puts particular emphasis on the bottom-up approach: "on communication, consultation, dialogue and partnership with the local population in order to improve early warning, intelligence gathering, mobilisation of local support, implementation and sustainability" (The Barcelona Report, 2004: 13-14). "This is not just a moral issue", is noted in the Barcelona Report, "it is also a matter of effectiveness" (The Barcelona Report, 2004: 17). Most of the threats targeting the physical integrity and dignity of human beings are locally produced and unique to the region. Therefore, a bottom-up approach which would provide participation of civil society in agenda making process is necessary, rather than setting up a human security agenda in Brussels (Ovalı, 2009: 177).

In terms of implementation of EU's human security perspective, Petar Atanasov proposes three priorities, particularly for the Western Balkans (Atanasov, 2008: 18). For him, priority number one in achieving human security is certainly human rights. Although the principle is obvious, there are deeply rooted institutional and cultural obstacles that must be overcome for this principle to be implemented in the reality (Atanasov, 2008: 18). Priority number two is human development. Atanasov explains this priority as follows: "This priority is a long-term one, difficult to realize over a short period of time. Human development, along with the human rights, is based on the development of democratic society in the region" (Atanasov, 2008: 18). For Atanasov, priority number three is the balance between liberalism and multiculturalism as a policy. This is particularly relevant at a sub-national level, i.e. for the minority communities and the communities in general, and "communal security sould be seen as a crucial prerequisite for complete attainment of human security" (Atanasov, 2008: 18-19).

Conclusion

During the first years of the 1990s, the EU did not develop a specific policy towards the Balkans but tried to apply policy originally designed for the Central and Eastern Europe countries. However, Delevic argues that "the wars that kept exploding on the territory of the former Yugoslavia and the EU's failed efforts to put out fires in particular countries clearly demonstrated the extent to which the achievement of lasting stability required a coherent approach that would provide a regional context" (Delevic,

2007: 22-23). Therefore, in order to tackle with the post-conflict situations, the EU prefers to follow a more comprehensive political framework which is in line with the necessities of human security conception. Ağır states that "through the documents of *European Security Strategy: A Secure Europe in Better World* and *A Human Security Doctrine for Europe*, the EU has started to securitize the human dimension of security" (Ağır, 2014: 371). During the last decade of the 20th century, Western Balkans' countries experienced situations of tension, which have been accompanied with armed conflicts, violence and ethnic cleansing, flows of refugees, etc., which constituted the main sources for jeopardizing human security. While successful in stabilizing the region, international involvement has nevertheless failed to tackle the underlying conditions which stand in the way of its full economic and societal recovery that would underpin a lasting peace. Therefore, a human security approach became essential both in the peace-making process and in security arrangements (Ovalı, 2009: 171).

The Western Balkans countries faced a 'triple transition' which is not comparable with any other Central or East European experience: (1) from war to peace, (2) from humanitarian aid to sustainable development and (3) from a socialist political system to a free market economy (Troncota, 2011: 65). Herd and Aldis explain this process as "the transition away from nationalism, dictatorship, and war towards peace, democracy, and a Europe an future". However, the process of European integration for all of the Balkans cannot be completed if soft security threats are still present in the region (Herd, Aldis, 2005: 148). Because, these kind of threats originated from the region reflect negatively on the process of European integration and the establishment of a security community.

In this respect, the key instrument for the implementation of human security doctrine is the process of enlargement of the EU. Because, the prospects of EU membership for the Western Balkans countries play a key role in human security promotion and its specific implementation. Thus, integration process can have a desecuritising effect on the sources of instability and insecurity in the Western Balkans. On the other hand, another major policy instrument for achieving integration should be the reform of the region's weak states. Without this, many efforts to absorb the region into the European space are likely to prove counterproductive (Krastev, 1999: 8). So, one of the basic prerequisites for improvement of human security is the improvement of the political, economic and social conditions in the countries of the region.

Indeed, the effectiveness of the EU's approach in the region will be determined to the extent that it successfully counters human insecurities in the region. Only then will the fears of spill-over effects of security problems originated from the Balkans be partly dispersed. Connected to this, the EU should keep engaged in several ways: by providing assistance and expertise, by insisting on regional cooperation and by prioritizing anti-corruption measures and reforms of security sector. All in all, human security can be promoted best by a combination of conditionality and European perspective. But, it still remains to be seen whether comprehensive European conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict reconstruction engagements and policies can achieve the human security in the Western Balkans.

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