



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
NEIGHBOURHOOD AND ENLARGEMENT NEGOTIATIONS

D - Western Balkans
D.1 – Western Balkans Policy and Regional Strategy

Brussels,

Subject: Statement of 72 civil society actors from the Western Balkans on the results of the EU-Western Balkans summit in Brdo pri Kranju

Dear Mr Istrefi,

Thank you very much for your letter addressed to President von der Leyen.

Let me first of all reconfirm to you the European perspective of the Western Balkans and the deep links between the European Union and our Western Balkan partners. In the words of our President, the EU and the Western Balkans share the same destiny.

The enlargement process is at the core of our relations - it has a transformative power, upholding European values and supporting reforms. It is a strategic objective we share, which unites the whole region and the EU. The visit of President von der Leyen at the end of September, and the EU-Western Balkans Summit held last month in Brdo are a demonstration of our strong political commitment to the entire region and the accession process.

The Brdo Declaration and the special role played by the EU by associating the region to an unprecedented manner to mechanisms and measures normally reserved to EU Member States are not only a tangible result of EU's engagement, but want to send an important signal to all our partners.

The process of joining the European Union requires adherence to EU's core values and the implementation of a number of reforms and the capacity to take on the obligations of EU membership. The Commission publishes every year the analysis of the situation in the region in the Enlargement Package and makes recommendations on the way forward. You can find them under the following link: [2021 Communication on EU Enlargement Policy \(europa.eu\)](#)

Yours sincerely,

(e-signed)

Thomas HAGLEITNER
Head of Unit

Mr Astrit Istrefi
Executive Director – The Balkan Forum
Via email: astrit@thebalkanforum.org

Commission européenne/Europese Commissie, 1049 Bruxelles/Brussel, BELGIQUE/BELGIË - Tel. +32 22991111