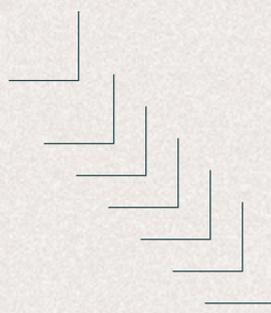


MONTHLY UPDATE

December, 2025



Understanding the Western Balkans in a Changing Geopolitical Landscape

Throughout December 2025, The Balkan Forum continued its commitment to fostering informed dialogue and evidence-based discussion on geopolitical developments shaping the Western Balkans. At a time marked by political uncertainty, electoral processes, civic movements, and evolving relations with the European Union, the organization placed strong emphasis on analysis, public communication, and knowledge sharing.

Through a combination of expert podcasts and analytical blogs, The Balkan Forum contributed to a more nuanced understanding of regional dynamics, democratic processes, and European integration pathways. Rather than promoting political positioning, the focus remained on contextual explanation, critical reflection, and informed debate, offering audiences across the region and beyond a clearer perspective on current developments.

The December communication outputs addressed key topics including elections, civic mobilization, governance challenges, and EU enlargement, highlighting how internal reforms and external geopolitical pressures continue to shape the Western Balkans' future.

Podcast Highlights

Literature, Identity, and the Weight of Memory – Conversation with Amra Pajalić

In a reflective discussion with Bosnian–Australian author and educator Amra Pajalić, the conversation explored themes of identity, belonging, and the lasting impact of conflict through the lens of her book *Time Kneels Between Mountains*. The episode offered a cultural perspective on the Western Balkans, highlighting how literature can help preserve memory while opening space for dialogue and understanding.



Albania, Democracy, and the European Path – Insights from Klodiana Beshku

This episode examined Albania’s trajectory toward European Union membership within the broader geopolitical context of the Western Balkans. Together with Assoc. Prof. Dr. Klodiana Beshku, the discussion addressed democratic reforms, institutional challenges, regional cooperation, and the influence of global geopolitical shifts on the EU enlargement process.



The EU Growth Plan and Enlargement: What Lies Ahead

In conversation with Stefan Ristovski from the European Policy Institute (EPI – Skopje), the podcast explored the EU Growth Plan for the Western Balkans and the European Enlargement Package. The discussion unpacked what these frameworks mean for reforms, funding, institutional readiness, and the credibility of the EU integration process across the region.



Geopolitical Analysis – Blog Highlights

Throughout December, The Balkan Forum published a series of analytical articles examining political developments across the Western Balkans:

North Macedonia's 2025 Local Elections: Political Victory Regardless of Civic Concerns

An analysis of local election outcomes in North Macedonia, highlighting the gap between political success and ongoing civic dissatisfaction, governance challenges, and public trust.

Serbia's Year of Protest: A Movement That Will Not Die

A closer look at the persistence of civic protest in Serbia, examining how grassroots mobilization has evolved into a long-term expression of public frustration and political engagement.

An Unusual Cause of Fear: A Solitary Street Event in Podgorica, Montenegro

A reflection on democratic space and freedom of expression, using a single public event in Podgorica to raise broader questions about civic participation and societal response.

Why This Matters

Geopolitics in the Western Balkans is shaped not only by institutions and negotiations, but also by citizens, narratives, and public trust. Through research-based blogs and policy and research perspectives, The Balkan Forum continues to support informed understanding, regional perspective, and constructive engagement on the issues shaping the region's European future.



North Macedonia's 2025 Local Elections: Political Victory Regardless of Civic Concerns

December 5, 2025



Serbia's Year of Protest: A Movement that Will Not Die

December 12, 2025



An Unusual Cause of Fear: A Solitary Street Event in Podgorica, Montenegro

December 19, 2025



UniGreen Project Launch

In December, The Balkan Forum participated in the first partner meeting of the international project UniGreen – Advancing Sustainability in Higher Education for the Benefit of All, hosted by AAB College. Funded under the Erasmus+ Capacity Building in Higher Education programme, the project aims to strengthen inter institutional cooperation and promote sustainable development through higher education.

AAB College, as the lead institution, welcomed national and international partners, academic representatives and project management experts. The meeting opened with remarks from the Project Coordinator, Prof. Aleksandar Takovski, followed by an overview of project coordination and implementation priorities presented by Ilirjana Geci, Director of the Project Office.

Partners discussed the project structure, work packages, management framework and quality assurance mechanisms, and presented their roles and contributions, reaffirming their commitment to the successful implementation of the UniGreen project.



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