

INVITATION

To a seminar on **‘EU integration of the Western Balkans: Mission to be accomplished’**

The conference will be dedicated to EU enlargement, the integration of the Western Balkans into the EU and regional cooperation. The purpose of the conference is to promote the significant role that enlargement, as one of the most successful EU policies, has played in bringing peace and reconciliation, and in promoting regional cooperation after the years of conflict in the Western Balkans. It is important for integration to happen sooner rather than later so that sustainable peace can be achieved and the challenges posed by open issues in the region can be overcome.

The challenge facing us today is how to move forward with the process at times of new economic, technological, demographic and security challenges in the EU in a changing geopolitical context. How can we speed up the enlargement of the Western Balkans into the EU through creative mechanisms, while maintaining the credibility of the integration process? And in this context, how can Nordic cooperation serve as a role model for regional cooperation on the Western Balkans?

Regional cooperation is regarded as a cornerstone of the EU’s policy framework for the Western Balkans and an important criterion for its European pathway, but more importantly, as a crucial ingredient for stability, a catalyst for reconciliation, good neighbourliness and good political relations, and for promoting mutual understanding and political dialogue in the region.

Two panels will assess the outcome of EU progress reports and subsequent reforms, as well as the prospects for faster EU integration from the perspective of the European Commission and Sweden.

The conference is being jointly organised by the Western Balkans, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Sweden and the European Commission Representation in Sweden.

Date: Friday 18 December
Time: 09.00–12.10 (registration from 08.30)
A light lunch will be served after the seminar
Location: Europahuset, Regeringsgatan 65, 2nd floor, in Stockholm
Registration: <http://bit.ly/1Ktu4aN> by 16 December

The seminar will be held in English and will be webcast via the European Commission [website](#).

We look forward to seeing you there!

Draft programme

08.30–09.00 Registration

09.00–09.10 Opening remarks and welcome by Ms Katarina Areskoug Mascarenhas, Head of the European Commission Representation in Sweden

09.10–10.40 Panel 1: EU progress reports and subsequent reforms

- Ministers for Foreign Affairs and EU integration from the Western Balkans

10.40–11.00 Coffee Break

11.00–11.30 Panel 2: Prospects for faster EU integration of the Western Balkans and the Nordic model of cooperation

Speakers:

- Ms Margot Wallström, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Sweden
- Mr Johannes Hahn, EU Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations

11.30–12.10 Concluding remarks, Q&A session

Moderator: Ms Katarina Areskoug Mascarenhas

12.10–13:00 Light buffet

13.00 End of the conference