

# Security Sector Reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina: The Limitations of “Europeanization”

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## Abstract

Security sector reforms (SSR) generally refers to a process in Western-based international development and democratization to make changes to the security sector of a state towards good governance and its principles, such as freedom of information and the rule of law. SSR has become a vital part of the European Union’s (EU) efforts to transform the Western Balkans from a conflict-ridden area into a stable and democratic region of Europe. This paper will focus on SSR in Bosnia and Herzegovina (hereafter, Bosnia) as a case study of the multidimensional and complex Europeanization policies employed by the EU in the region. The research will examine the changes in two sectors of Bosnia’s security system with the aim of providing an understanding of the EU’s impact on the domestic conditions of candidate states.

## Thesis + Question

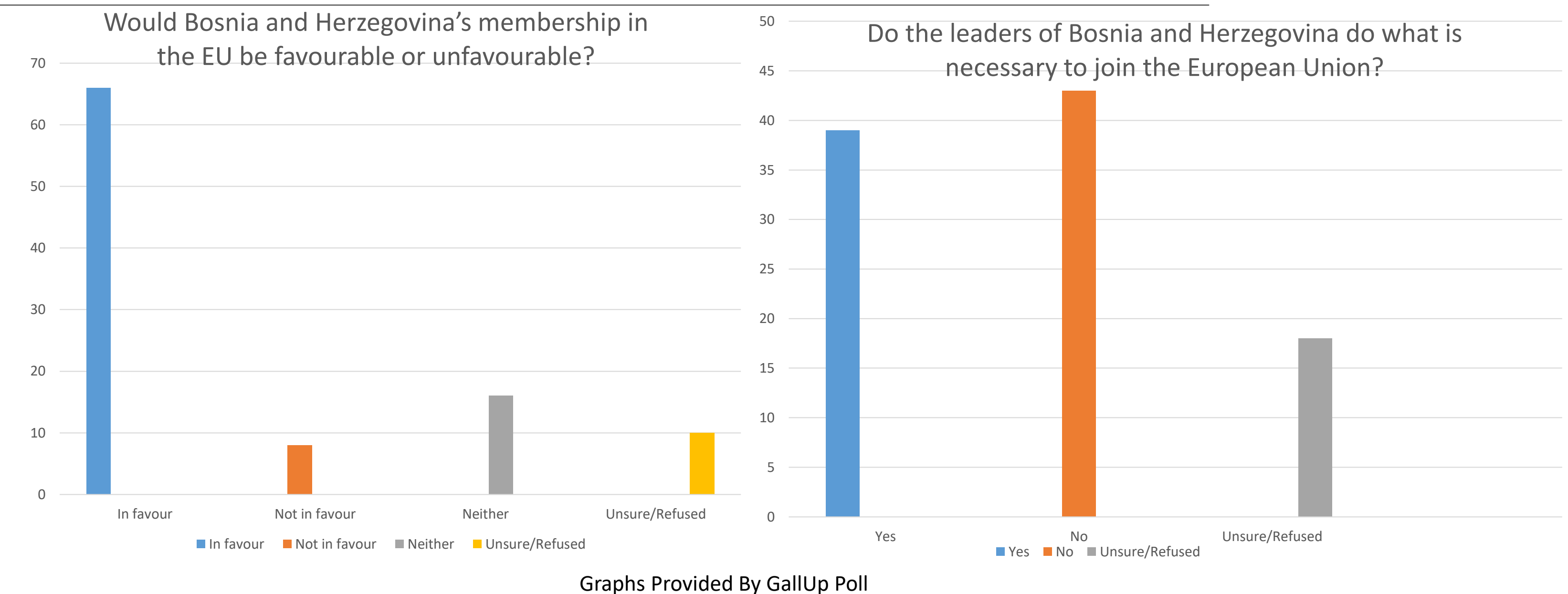
The main argument is that the EU used police and intelligence reforms in Bosnia (both of which were part of the SSR efforts in the country) as state-building tools. However, due to Bosnia’s lack of domestic competence and the inexperience of the EU to properly and effectively implement SSR, the reforms have had very little success and reveal the limitations of the state’s Europeanization. Thus, the following questions are posed: How does the SSR encompass the EU’s approach to the Western Balkans (specifically Bosnia) and what can the successes/failures of the police and intelligence reforms in Bosnia dictate the state’s compliance with and the EU’s needs for change?

## Approach

The research has been informed by peer-reviewed research papers and various European Union Commission documents to understand, in the context of Europeanization studies, the establishment of SSR in Bosnia and how diverse and multifaceted Europeanization is in the Western Balkans while demonstrating how much the EU has evolved as an international actor.



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## Summary

### Police Reform

- Due to the volume of EU agreements and institutions, there was a lack of coherence with regard to their approach in police reform in Bosnia.
- Lack of coordination of actions between the Commission and the Council in regards to these agreements.
- Lack of coordination among the police bodies in Bosnia as they have “multiple police agencies with differing jurisdictions and responsibilities” (Kudlenko, p. 69).

### Civil Intelligence Reform

- The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska (in regards to intelligence matters) “[allowed] political parties to have full control of their own intelligence services” (Hadzovic, p. 219) which heightened nationalist sentiments between each other.
- The Intelligence and Security Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina (OSA) was created but lacks “executive control and direction” (Lurās, p. 611).

## Conclusion

To say that the EU has achieved all of the goals laid out on paper for both sectors would be a stretch. Bosnia still lacks domestic competence and the EU still has a long way to go in finalizing SSR in the region; the police force still needs to strive towards coordination/cooperation amongst the various police bodies (and, hopefully, unifying all of the police bodies) while the intelligence services still needs to gain the support of other state bodies. Seeing as how SSR is a very long, complicated process, the implementation of SSR in Bosnia has demonstrated the reach (and, in some cases, lack thereof) of Europeanization in regions outside of the EU’s influence. Even though both sectors have complied with EU demands, it has only been partial. This is not to say that the EU should not revel in the fact that it has not made strides with the police and intelligence sectors in the region, but they must devise plans to make such strides even greater so as to not decrease its momentum and devolve any accomplishments in the region thus far.