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Formiranje i komparacija scenarija geopolitičkoga razvoja Zapadnog Balkana

Formation and comparison of scenarios of geopolitical development of the Western Balkans

U radu se problematiziraju geopolitičke prilike Zapadnog Balkana, regije koju je državnim granicama odredila Europska unija. U regiju spadaju Albanija, Bosna i Hercegovina, Crna Gora, Kosovo, Sjeverna Makedonija i Srbija. U svrhu istraživanja provedena je anketa među studentima geografije u osam gradova Zapadnog Balkana i u Zagrebu. Na anketu se nastavila metoda Delfi u dva kruga. Provođenjem istraživanja putem tih dviju metoda stvorena su tri scenarija geopolitičkoga razvoja do 2031. godine: euroatlantska integracija, *status quo* i rekonstrukcija Zapadnog Balkana. Usporedbom scenarija došlo se do spoznaje da se geopolitički razvoj regije narednih deset godina može očekivati prema scenariju *status quo*, odnosno prema sadašnjim geopolitičkim obrascima regije.

The paper examines the geopolitical situation of the Western Balkans, a region defined along state borders by the European Union. The region includes Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Kosovo, North Macedonia and Serbia. For the purpose of the research, a survey was conducted among geography students in eight cities of the Western Balkans and in Zagreb. The survey was conducted according to the Delphi method in two rounds. By conducting research using a survey and the Delphi method, three scenarios of geopolitical development through 2031 were formed: "Euro-Atlantic integration", "Status quo" and "Reconstruction of the Western Balkans". By comparing the scenarios, it is apparent that the geopolitical development of the region in the next ten years will mostly follow the "Status quo" scenario, that is, according to the current geopolitical patterns of the region.

Ključne riječi: geopolitički razvoj, metoda Delfi, Zapadni Balkan

Key words: geopolitical development, Delfi method, Western Balkans

Uvod

Područje jugoistoka Europe tokom prošlosti imalo je brojne nazive, poput Balkanskog poluotoka, Turske Europe, Jugoistočne Europe, Balkana itd. To je prostor u kojem su se tijekom 19. i 20. stoljeća događali veliki političko-geografski procesi, koji su većinom utjecali na negativne konotacije samoga pojma Balkan. Ratovima u 1990-im Balkan ponovno postaje žarište sukoba i stvara novu stranicu povijesti, koju do današnjih dana obilježavaju neriješena pitanja.

Pitanje je što je točno danas prostorni pojam Balkan, koje područje obuhvaća i je li to valjan toponim ili neka sveopća mentalna konstrukcija (Todorova, 2009). Kako bi se izbjegle potencijalne nedoumice u vezi s fluidnošću pojma Balkan, u ovom će se radu koristiti konkretniji pojam *Zapadni Balkan*, koji uključuje Albaniju, Bosnu i Hercegovinu, Crnu Goru, Kosovo, Sjevernu Makedoniju i Srbiju. Uz navedene države u prostorni obuhvat uzeta je i Hrvatska jer je ona bila dionik Zapadnog Balkana sve do ulaska u EU te je tako dobro poslužila za dobivanje šire slike, odnosno praćenje razvoja nakon napuštanja Zapadnog Balkana. Jedan je od razloga odabira pojma Zapadni Balkan i njegova navezanost na prostor budućega širenja EU-a, odnosno euroatlantskih integracija, koje predstavljaju jednu od okosnica metodologije ovoga rada. Naime, sve susjedne države regije već su članice EU-a i NATO-a, što utječe na relevantnost ostalih naziva regije. Valja napomenuti da se riječ „Zapadni” također piše velikim slovom zbog dijela imena, odnosno kad bi se pisalo malim slovom, označavala bi se samo strana svijeta.

Područje Zapadnog Balkana na Zagrebačkom samitu 2000. godine jasno se usmjerava k euroatlantskim integracijama, no razvojem novijih geopolitičkih odnosa u svijetu to usmjerenje kao da slabi pod utjecajem drugih država (Bieber i Tzifakis, 2019b). Evidentna je prisutnost sve većega broja geopolitičkih aktera u regiji te ona predstavlja sve veće izazove za Zapadni Balkan, koji se dugo vremena smatra dvorištem Europske unije (Skara, 2021). Stoga je svrha ovoga istraživanja dati prilog poznavanju mogućih scenarija geopoliti-

Introduction

Throughout history, the area of Southeastern Europe has had numerous names, such as the Balkan Peninsula, Turkish Europe, Southeastern Europe, the Balkans, etc. It is an area where major political and geographical processes took place during the 19th and 20th centuries, which mostly had a negative impact regarding the connotations of the term Balkans itself. With the wars in the 1990s, the Balkans once again became a focus of conflict, which resulted in unresolved issues that are still current at the time of writing.

But, what are the Balkans today? What area do the Balkans encompass? Is it a universal toponym or some general mental construction (Todorova, 2009)? In order to avoid potential confusion regarding the fluidity of the term, this paper focuses on the Western Balkans, which includes Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Kosovo, North Macedonia and Serbia. In addition to the mentioned countries, Croatia will also be included in the spatial coverage because it was a stakeholder in the Western Balkans until joining the EU, and will serve to obtain a broader picture, i.e. a real example of development after leaving the Western Balkans. One of the reasons for choosing the term Western Balkans is that it implies an area of future EU expansion, i.e. Euro-Atlantic integrations, which represent one of the backbones of the methodology of this work. Furthermore, all the neighbouring countries of the region are already members of the EU and NATO, which detracts from the relevance of other names of the region.

At the Zagreb Summit in 2000, the area of the Western Balkans was clearly oriented towards Euro-Atlantic integration, but with the development of geopolitical relations in the world since, this orientation seems to be weakening under the influence of other powers (Bieber and Tzifakis, 2019b). The presence of an increasing number of geopolitical actors in the region is evident, and it represents increasing challenges for the Western Balkans, which has long been considered the backyard of the European Union (Skara, 2021). Therefore, the purpose of this research is to contribute to the knowledge of possible scenarios for the ge-

tičkoga razvoja Zapadnog Balkana u novim okolnostima multipolarnoga svijeta koji nastaje pred očima cijeloga svijeta (Dugin, 2017). Da je tema i više nego relevantna, dokazuje sve veći broj novijih znanstvenih, stručnih i preglednih radova (niže navedenih) vezanih uz Zapadni Balkan. Predmet je ovoga istraživanja formiranje geopolitičkih scenarija razvoja te njihova usporedba, a sve to uz pomoć anketnoga upitnika i mišljenja sudionika metode Delfi.

Prostor tzv. Balkana uvijek je aktualna istraživačka tema s većim brojem objavljenih radova i knjiga. Slobodno se može reći da je kapitalno djelo o Balkanu *Imaginarni Balkan*, autorice Marije Todorove iz 2009. godine, odnosno prva verzija iz 1997. godine. Uzimajući konkretno prostor Zapadnog Balkana u obzir, gleda se na dvije knjige Anđelka Milardovića (2000, 2009): *Zapadni Balkan – pojam, ideje i dokumenti o rekonstrukciji Balkana u procesu globalizacije* i *Zapadni Balkan*. Prva knjiga također je kapitalno djelo za geopolitiku Zapadnog Balkana jer detaljno prikazuje početak euroatlantskih integracija regije, dok potonja govori s određenom dozom ironije o odnosu EU-a i Zapadnog Balkana. Djelo blisko ovoj temi jest i *Balkan: od geografije do fantazije* iz 2013. godine, autorice Katarine Luketić. Od inozemne literature Bieber i Tzifakis 2019. godine pišu o odnosnima Zapadnog Balkana s drugim državama, Elbasani 2013. godine piše o europskoj integraciji regije, a Hayden i Bugajski (2014) pišu o historijskom razvoju Zapadnog Balkana od raspada Jugoslavije do današnjih tendencija integracije k EU-u. Od malo starije literature treba izdvojiti poglavlje u Bartlett (2007) i Uvelić (2010), koji također daju određen politički pregled razvoja regije. Skara (2021) te Džankić i dr. (2019) preispituju sam proces integracije u EU i predlažu drugačije pristupe. Zanimljivo je da se većinski pojam Zapadni Balkan ponajprije veže uz knjige i radove (geo)političke i kulturne naravi, što je izravna konotacija na njegovu izvornost, kreiranu od Europske unije s ciljem objedinjavanja država na njihovu integracijskom putu.

Uz spomenute knjige mnogo je radova o geopolitici Zapadnog Balkana nastalo u novi-

opolitical development of the Western Balkans in an increasingly multipolar world (Dugin, 2017). It is undeniable that the topic is more than relevant due to the increasing number of recent scientific, professional and overview works (listed below) related to the Western Balkans. The subject of this research is the formation of geopolitical scenarios of development and their comparison, all with the help of a survey questionnaire and the opinions of the participants of the Delphi method.

The Balkans are always a current topic for research, about which a large number of papers and books have been published. It is safe to say that the capital work on the Balkans is *Imaginary Balkans*, authored by Marija Todorova in 2009. Taking specifically the area of the Western Balkans into account, there are two very relevant books by Anđelko Milardović (2000, 2009): *Western Balkans – Concepts, ideas and documents about the reconstruction of the Balkans in the process of globalization* and *Western Balkans*. The first book is also a capital work for the geopolitics of the Western Balkans, because it shows in detail the beginnings of the Euro-Atlantic integration of the region, while the latter speaks with a certain amount of irony about the relationship between the EU and the Western Balkans. Katarina Luketić's work, *Balkans: from geography to fantasy* from 2013, is close to the theme of this paper. Among foreign literature, there is the book by Bieber and Tzifakis from 2019 about the relations of the Western Balkans with other countries, Elbasani wrote about European integration in the region in 2013, and Hayden and Bugajski (2014) wrote about the historical development of the Western Balkans from the breakup of Yugoslavia to contemporary tendencies towards EU integration. Among the slightly older literature worth noting, there is a chapter by Bartlett (2007) and a chapter by Uvelić (2010), which also provide a certain political overview of the development of the region. Skara (2021) and Džankić et al. (2019) reviewed the EU integration process itself and suggest various possible approaches. It is interesting to note that the term Western Balkans is primarily associated with books and works of a (geo-) political and cultural nature, which is a direct connotation of its originality, as it was created by the European Union with the aim of unifying countries in their path of integration.

je vrijeme. Na primjer, tom regijom i utjecajem drugih država na nju bave se Polović i Dujčić Frlan (2019), pozicioniranjem Hrvatske prema Zapadnom Balkanu Slukan Altić (2009) i Tomac (2005), Kurečić i Crljenko (2013) bave se, pak, promjenom geopolitičke slike Hrvatske ulaskom u EU. Laura Šakaja (2001, 2019) istraživala je percepciju zagrebačkih gimnazijalaca prema samom Balkanu, dok su Pleić i dr. (2021) istraživali percepcije studenata o vernakularnoj regiji Balkana. Nakić (2013) piše o pojedinačnom putu zapadnobalkanskih država u EU, Babić (2018) o izazovima geopolitike Balkana itd.

Želja za spoznajom kako mlade generacije vide geopolitičku budućnost regije u kojoj žive vodila je k provođenju ankete, a stručni komentari tih viđenja traženi su pomoću sudionika metode Delfi da bi se u konačnici oblikovali scenariji geopolitičkoga razvoja. Ovdje je zapravo metoda scenarija bila najbolja opcija jer je pružala mogućnost povezivanja prethodnih dviju metoda i sintetiziranja rezultata. Izabrani anketni ispitanici pripadaju studentima geografije u državama Zapadnog Balkana i u Hrvatskoj te predstavljaju prve poslijeratne generacije. Slični razlozi odabira ispitanika nalaze se i u radovima Šakaje (2001, 2019) te Pleića i dr. (2021). Šakaja (2019) govori o različitim percepcijama ispitanika gimnazijalaca prema nekim političkim i kulturnim pitanjima u odnosu na ispitanike iz 2001. godine, dok Pleić i dr. (2021) govore o različitosti percepcije Balkana između mariborskih i zagrebačkih studenata. Upravo se temeljem tih radova nastojao voditi odabir anketnih ispitanika u ovom istraživanju sa svrhom dobivanja percepcije mladege i nerijetko apolitičnog stanovništva, ali sa sveprisutnim osnovnim spoznajama o geopolitičkim odnosima u regiji.

Tijekom istraživačkoga postupka ispitane su postavljene hipoteze:

1. Većina sudionika istraživanja smatra da Zapadni Balkan nema povoljan geopolitički položaj.

In addition to the mentioned books, many works on the geopolitics of the Western Balkans have been written in recent times. This region and the influence of other countries on it are dealt with by Polović and Dujčić Frlan (2019); the position of Croatia in relation to the Western Balkans is dealt with by Slukan Altić (2009) and Tomac (2005); and Kurečić and Crljenko (2013) deal with the change in the geopolitical situation of Croatia after joining the EU. Laura Šakaja (2001, 2019) investigated the perceptions of Zagreb high school students towards the Balkans itself, while Pleić et al. (2021) investigated student perceptions of the vernacular region of the Balkans. Nakić (2013) wrote about the individual paths of Western Balkan states toward the EU. Babić (2018) wrote about the challenges of the geopolitics of the Balkans.

The desire to know the views of the younger generations about the geopolitical future of the region in which they live is the reason that the authors chose to carry out a survey for this paper, and expert comments on these views were obtained using the Delphi method, in order to ultimately form scenarios of geopolitical development. The scenario method was the best option in this case because it offered the possibility of connecting the previous two methods and giving a synthesis of the results. The selected survey respondents are geography students in the countries of the Western Balkans and Croatia and represent the first post-war generations. Similar reasons for selecting respondents can be found in the works of Šakaja (2001, 2019) and Pleić et al. (2021). Šakaja (2019) examined different perceptions of high school students regarding certain political and cultural issues, compared to the respondents from her paper from 2001, while Pleić et al. (2021) examined differences in the perceptions of the Balkans between students from Maribor and Zagreb. It was on the basis of these works that the selection of survey respondents was made, with the aim of ascertaining the perceptions of the younger population, who are often apolitical but have common knowledge about geopolitical relations in the region.

During the research procedure, the following hypotheses were tested:

1. The majority of research participants believe that the Western Balkans do not have a favourable geopolitical position.

2. Većina sudionika istraživanja smatra da je područje Zapadnog Balkana jasno usmjereno k euroatlantskim integracijama.
 3. Beogradski i banjolučki anketni ispitanici skloniji su razvoju neutralnosti (političkoj i vojnoj) nego euroatlantskim integracijama, a tiranski i prištinski ispitanici najviše izražavaju želju za članstvo u EU-u i NATO-u.
 4. Anketni ispitanici Sarajeva, Zagreba, Nikšića, Skoplja i Mostara načelno će podržati euroatlantske putove svojih država, odnosno regije.
 5. Većina sudionika istraživanja smatra da najveći utjecaj na Zapadni Balkan imaju redom EU, SAD, Rusija, Kina, Turska.
 6. Prema mišljenju većine sudionika istraživanja postoji jasna orijentiranost Zapadnog Balkana k državama Zapadne i Srednje Europe glede utjecaja, želje za preseljenjem, ekonomske pomoći i općenite suradnje.
 7. U formiranim scenarijima geopolitičkoga razvoja najviše će biti sklonosti prema održavanju tzv. *statusa quo* u Zapadnom Balkanu.
2. The majority of research participants believe that the area of the Western Balkans is clearly moderated by Euro-Atlantic integration.
 3. Survey respondents from Belgrade and Banja Luka are more inclined to the development of neutrality (political and military) than Euro-Atlantic integration, and respondents from Tirana and Pristina mostly express their desire for EU and NATO membership.
 4. The survey respondents from Sarajevo, Zagreb, Nikšić, Skopje and Mostar will, in principle, support the Euro-Atlantic paths of their countries and regions.
 5. The majority of research participants believe that the EU, USA, Russia, China, and Turkey have the greatest influence on the Western Balkans.
 6. According to the opinion of the majority of research participants, there is a clear orientation of the Western Balkans towards the countries of Western and Central Europe in terms of influence, desire to relocate, economic assistance and general cooperation.
 7. In the formed scenarios of geopolitical development, there will be a tendency towards maintaining the so-called status quo in the Western Balkans.

Metodologija

Za potrebe istraživanja korištena je metoda ankete, metoda Delfi i metoda scenarija. Uz primarno dobivene podatke korišteni su i sekundarni, koji su dobiveni prvenstveno iz prethodno navedene literature, da bi se sastavio teorijski okvir samoga istraživanja i dobilo polazište za primjenu navedenih istraživačkih metoda. U svrhu izvođenja zaključka i potvrđivanja, odnosno opovrgavanja hipoteza korištene su induktivne i deduktivne analize dobivenih rezultata.

Anketa je provedena *online* preko platforme Microsoft Teams u razdoblju od 5. do 18. travnja 2021. godine. Anketiranje na daljinu izabrano je prvenstveno zbog epidemioloških mjera uzrokovanih pandemijom COVID-19. Anketa je provedena u sedam država, odnosno devet gradova zbog odabira triju studija geografije u Bosni i

Methodology

For the purposes of the research, the survey method, the Delphi method and the scenario method were used. In addition to the primary data obtained, secondary data were also used, which were obtained primarily from the previously-mentioned literature, in order to compile the theoretical framework of the research itself and to obtain a starting point for the application of the research methods. Inductive and deductive analyses of the obtained results were used for the purpose of drawing conclusions and confirming or refuting hypotheses.

The survey was conducted online via the Microsoft Forms platform in the period of April 5 to April 18, 2021. Surveying via online service was chosen primarily because of the epidemiological measures in force during the COVID-19 pandemic. The survey was conducted in seven countries, i.e. nine cities—three

Hercegovini kao prikaza triju konstitutivnih naroda i njihova razilaženja u pogledu geopolitike među entitetima, odnosno narodima. Svaki anketni upitnik preveden je na jezik ispitanika, pa je tako anketa prevedena s hrvatskoga na pet jezika: albanski, bosanski, crnogorski, makedonski i srpski. Ispitanici su studenti geografskih usmjerenja do kojih se došlo posredstvom Europskoga udruženja geografa (EGEA) te preporukom sveučilišnoga profesora za ispitanike iz Prištine i Tirane. Anketu je u konačnici ispunilo točno 398 ispitanika od čega je 36 % muškoga spola, odnosno 64 % ženskoga spola, a gledajući dobnu strukturu, prosječna je dob 22,2 godine. Najviše ispitanika dolazi iz Tirane (38≈20 %), zatim iz Sarajeva (54≈14 %) i Zagreba (56≈14 %), potom iz Beograda (47≈12 %), Prištine (38≈10 %), Skoplja (40≈10 %), Banje Luke (32≈8 %), Nikšića (30≈8 %) i Mostara (20≈5 %).

U ovom je radu metoda Delfi primijenjena u dva kruga upitnika. Prvi upitnik od sedam pitanja temeljio se na rezultatima dobivenim u anketnom istraživanju i njihovoj kvalitativnoj te kvantitativnoj interpretaciji, a drugi je bio rezultat kvalitativne obrade odgovora dobivenih u prvom krugu i formiranja triju scenarija geopolitičkoga razvoja Zapadnog Balkana. U prvom krugu na upitnik je odgovorilo 18 sudionika u razdoblju od 28. travnja do 7. svibnja 2021. godine. U završnom, drugom krugu ispunjeni je upitnik poslalo 14 sudionika u razdoblju od 12. svibnja do 21. svibnja 2021. godine. Sva je komunikacija sa sudionicima obavljena elektroničkom poštom te se do sudionika dolazilo metodom snježne grude kriterijem upoznatosti s temom istraživanja sagledavajući pritom teme objavljenih radova, nositeljstvo relevantnih kolegija, rad u međunarodnim tijelima itd. Prvi krug ispunilo je sedam znanstvenika izvan akademske zajednice: četvero iz Hrvatske, po dvoje iz Srbije te jedan iz Crne Gore. Ostalih 11 sudionika bili su sveučilišni profesori, i to njih sedam iz Hrvatske, po jedan iz Albanije, BiH, Kosova i Sjeverne Makedonije. Drugi krug ispunilo je pet znanstvenika izvan akademske zajednice i devet sveučilišnih profesora te ih je u obama slučajima bilo po dvoje manje iz Hrvatske. Svi odabrani ispitanici upoznati su s temom

cities in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Mostar, Banja Luka, and Sarajevo) were chosen in order to reflect local complexity, as a representation of the three constituent nations and the differences in terms of geopolitics among the entities. Each survey questionnaire was translated into the language of the respondents, meaning that the survey was translated from Croatian into five languages: Albanian, Bosnian, Montenegrin, Macedonian and Serbian. The respondents are students of geographical studies, who were reached via the European Association of Geographers (EGEA) and by recommendation of university professors for the respondents from Pristina and Tirana. In the end, 398 respondents filled out the survey, of which 36% were male and 64% were female. Looking at the age structure, the average age is 22.2 years. Most respondents come from Tirana (38≈20%), followed by Sarajevo (54≈14%) and Zagreb (56≈14%), then from Belgrade (47≈12 %), Pristina (38≈10%), Skopje (40≈10%), Banja Luka (32≈8%), Nikšić (30≈8%) and Mostar (20≈5%).

In this paper, the Delphi method was applied in two rounds of questionnaires. The first questionnaire of seven questions was based on the results obtained in the survey and their qualitative and quantitative interpretation, and the second was the result of qualitative processing of the answers obtained in the first round and the formation of three scenarios of the geopolitical development of the Western Balkans. In the first round, 18 participants answered the questionnaire in the period from April 28 to May 7, 2021. In the second round, 14 participants sent completed questionnaires in the period from May 12 to May 21, 2021. All communication with the participants was done via e-mail, and the participants were approached using the snowball method based on familiarity with the research topic, topics of published papers, holding relevant courses, work in international bodies, etc. The first round consisted of seven scientists from outside the academic community: four from Croatia, two from Serbia and one from Montenegro. The other 11 participants were university professors, seven from Croatia, one each from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and North Macedonia. The second round consisted of five scientists from outside the academic community and nine university professors, and in both cases there were two fewer from Croatia. All selected respondents are

istraživanja što se vidjelo iz njihovih odgovora te se smatraju relevantnima.

Posljednja metoda bila je prognozirajući oblik scenarija koji se temelji na analizi postojećega stanja i trendova s ciljem ispitivanja mogućih razvojnih tokova u budućnosti (Radeljak Kaufmann, 2016). Budući da je cilj predstaviti moguće varijante budućega geopolitičkog razvoja Zapadnog Balkana, ovaj oblik scenarija pruža upravo najbolju mogućnost kombinacije sadašnjih stavova anketnih ispitanika i komentara iz prvoga kruga metode Delfi s mogućim razvojnim geopolitičkim tokovima u regiji. Kvaliteti scenarija značajno pridonosi i različitost država stanovanja obiju vrsta ispitanika, što pruža mogućnosti za stvaranje široke geopolitičke predodžbe regije. Načinjena su tri scenarija te je izvršena njihova usporedba.

Geopolitički razvoj Zapadnog Balkana

Gledajući povijesno, Balkan je prvenstveno bio naziv za Staru planinu u Bugarskoj, no s vremenom je naziv zahvatio puno šire područje, u literaturi često spominjano kao Balkanski poluotok (Todorova, 2009). Davne je 1808. godine Johann August Zeune prvi upotrijebio naziv poluotok jer je krivo zaključio da se Stara planina proteže od Crnoga do Jadranskoga mora (Todorova, 2009). Prema mnogim izvorima neupitne su tri granice Balkanskog poluotoka (sl. 1), a to su: Jadransko more na zapadu, Crno more na istoku i krajnji rt Peloponeza (okružen Jonskim i Egejskim morem) na jugu (Klemenčić, 1997). Problem se javlja kod sjeverne granice jer poluotok mora imati kopnenu granicu koja je kraća od morske, a ako se za granicu uzme linija Trst – Odessa, onda je to duža linija nego Trst – Peloponez (sl. 1) (Slukan Altić, 2009). Razvojem znanosti uvidjelo se da Stara planina nije najveća niti dominira jugoistokom Europe, pa se stoga pokušao ispraviti pogrešan naziv. Njemački geografi i političari, među njima najviše Theobald Fischer, zalagali su se za pojam Jugoistočna Europa i vidjeli taj prostor kao dio njemačkoga geopolitičkog utjecaja (Todorova, 2009). Nakon niza povijesnih događaja, poput Balkanskih ratova, odlaska Osmanlija i stvaranja mnogih država, Balkan je dobio znatnu

familiar with the topic of the research, which was evident from their answers, and are considered relevant.

The last method was the Scenario method, which is based on an analysis of the current situation and trends with the aim of examining possible development flows in the future (Radeljak Kaufmann, 2016). As the goal is to present possible variants of the future geopolitical development of the Western Balkans, this form of scenario provides the best opportunity to combine the current attitudes of survey respondents and comments from the first round of the Delphi method with possible geopolitical development trends in the region. The quality of the scenario is also significantly contributed to by the diversity of the countries of residence of both types of respondents, which provides opportunities for creating a broad geopolitical image of the region. Three scenarios were formed and compared.

Geopolitical development of the Western Balkans

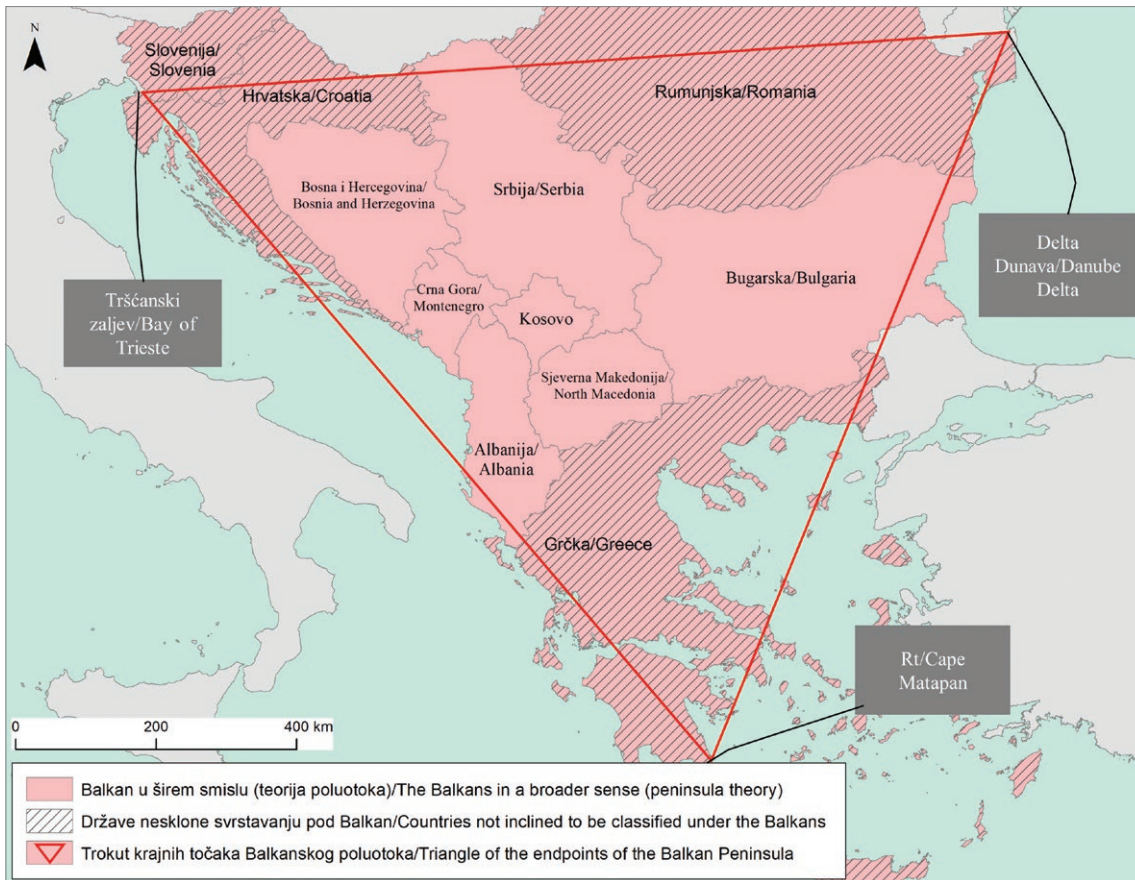
Historically, Balkan is the name for the Old Mountain (*Stara planina*) in Bulgaria, but over time the name came to cover a much wider area, often referred to in the literature as the Balkan Peninsula (Todorova, 2009). In 1808, Johann August Zeune was the first to use the name peninsula because he wrongly concluded that the Old Mountain stretched from the Black Sea to the Adriatic Sea (Todorova, 2009). According to many sources, three borders of the Balkan Peninsula (Fig. 1) are indisputable, namely: the Adriatic Sea in the west, the Black Sea in the east and the extreme cape of the Peloponnese (surrounded by the Ionian and Aegean Seas) in the south (Klemenčić, 1997). The problem arises with the northern border because the peninsula must have a land border that is shorter than the sea border, and if the line Trieste-Odessa is taken as the border, then it is a longer line than Trieste-Peloponnese (Fig. 1) (Slukan Altić, 2009). With the development of science, it became clear that the Old Mountain does not dominate Southeastern Europe, so an attempt was made to correct the name. German geographers and politicians, Theobald Fischer foremost, advocated for the term Southeast Europe and saw this as an area of German geopolitical influence (Todorova, 2009). After a series of historical events such as the Balkan Wars, the departure of the Ottomans and the creation of many states, the Balkans acquired a significant negative connotation as a

negativnu konotaciju kao naziv vezivan uz rastuće područje nasilja, a u 1930-ima i 1940-ima također i naziv Jugoistočna Europa. Krajem 20. stoljeća Europska unija razvija naziv Zapadni Balkan. Određenje pojma Zapadni Balkan, u današnjem smislu, dala je Europska unija 1997. godine donošenjem Politike regionalnog pristupa za zemlje Zapadnog Balkana (Milardović, 2000).

Kad se sada pogleda geopolitički razvoj Balkana, to je prostor koji je uvijek bio na periferiji svih civilizacija koje su se oko njega razvijale. Najbliži centri razvoja odnose se na antičku Atenu, osmanski Istanbul, austrijski Beč i mađarsku Budimpeštu (Hayden, 2014). Mnogo puta se kroz geopolitički razvoj dogodilo da se interesi „velikih sila” sukobljavaju upravo na ovome području, a najveća zaokruženost cijeloga područja zabilježena je pod osmanskom vlašću. Balkan je Europi dugo vremena bio nešto što *drugo* i *drugačije*, prostor na koji treba širiti europski interes zanemarujući domicilne narode ili neizravno podupirući jedan narod pa vladati po načelu *divide et impera* (Kolstø, 2016). Prostor je to kasne formacije država u odnosu na ostatak Europe iako je i sama Europa tokom povijesti bila više vernakularna nego geografska regija, pa se već Balkan etiketirao kao Orijent (Pleić i dr., 2021). Kada se, pak, pogleda vjerska karta ovoga prostora, opet se vidi prisutnost brojnih vjeroispovijesti, pa čak i povijesnoga identificiranja naroda prema vjeri. Ultimativni je cilj gotovo svake sadašnje države u regiji na bilo koji način ograditi se i pobjeći od etikete ičega balkanskog na svojem prostoru, a najdalje su u tome dospjele Hrvatska, Rumunjska, Grčka i Slovenija (sl. 1) (Slukan Altić, 2009). Upravo u takvim okolnostima geopolitičkoga i povijesnoga razvoja danas je vrlo nezahvalno govoriti o jedinstvu regije Balkana, koji je ostao jedinstven jedino u slabom gospodarskom razvoju u odnosu na ostatak Europe. Zapadni Balkan danas je okružen Europskom unijom i smatra se zapravo prirodno gravitirajućim područjem EU- a, no njegov geopolitički razvoj iz 1990-ih otvorio je brojne sukobe prošlih vremena i pobudio interese „velikih sila”, što samo koči daljnju željenu europeizaciju „ratobornog i divljeg Balkana” ili onoga što je od njega ostalo (Bieber i Tzifakis, 2019a). Upravo taj široki spektar utjecaja bio je i osnovom pretpostavki za izradu hipoteza jer je evidentan različit geopolitički razvoj zapadnobalkanskih država očekivan

name associated with an area of growing violence and unrest; and in the 1930s and 1940s, the name Southeastern Europe was also used. At the end of the 20th century, the name Western Balkans was created by the European Union. The definition of the term Western Balkans, in today’s sense, was defined by the European Union in 1997 with the adoption of the Regional Access Policy for the countries of the Western Balkans (Milardović, 2000).

When we now look at the geopolitical development of the Balkans, it is an area that has always been on the periphery of great civilizations, and the closest centres of development are actually ancient Athens, Istanbul, Vienna and Budapest (Hayden, 2014). Over the course of history, the “great powers” clashed in this area many times and, in fact, the greatest share of the entire area under a single power was during Ottoman rule. For a long time, the Balkans were something Other and Different to Europe, an area where European interests should be expanded, ignoring the local peoples or indirectly supporting one nation and ruling according to the system of *divide et impera* (Kolstø, 2016). It is an area of the late formation of states in relation to the rest of Europe, although Europe itself was more of a vernacular region than a geographical one throughout history, and the Balkans were often labelled as the Orient (Pleić et al., 2021). Moreover, if you look at the religious map of this area, you can again see the presence of numerous religions, and even the historical identification of people according to religion. The ultimate goal today of almost every country in the region is to fence itself off and escape from the label of “Balkan”, and Croatia, Romania, Greece and Slovenia all made great strides in this pursuit (Fig. 1) (Slukan Altić, 2009). Precisely in such circumstances of geopolitical and historical development, it is inappropriate to talk about the unity of the Balkan region, which remains unique only in weak economic development compared to the rest of Europe. Today, the Western Balkans is wholly surrounded by the European Union and is actually considered a naturally gravitating area of the EU, but its geopolitical development in the 1990s resulted in numerous conflicts and aroused the interests of the “big powers”, which only has hindered further Europeanization of the “belligerent and wild Balkans” or what is left of it (Bieber and Tzifakis, 2019a). It was this broad spectrum of influence that was the basis of the assumptions underpinning the creation of the hypotheses in this paper, because the various geopolitical developments of the Western Balkan states are evident as reflected in the survey results according to



Sl. 1. Određenje Balkana kroz teoriju poluotoka, pomoću državnih granica i percepcije stanovništva

Fig. 1 Determining the Balkans using the theory of the peninsula, using national borders and the perception of the population

Izvor: Autor prema Slukan Altić (2009) i Eurostatu (2020)

Source: Author, according to Slukan Altić (2009) and Eurostat (2020)

kao preslika u anketnim rezultatima po ispitanicima različitih gradova. Čisto prostorno gledajući, naziv Zapadni Balkan prilično je pogrešan. Naime, polazeći od teze da je planina Balkan okosnica regije i njezin fizički okvir, ona mora imati dominantan utjecaj u regiji, što ona nema (Fuerst-Bjeliš, 2015).

Rezultati ankete

Prvi dio anketnoga upitnika tematizira geopolitički razvoj i položaj pojedine države ispitanika. Prosječna razina upoznatosti ispitanika s geopolitičkim položajem njihove države iznosi 3,74. Budući da za geopolitički razvoj ne postoji tako jednostavno određenje kao za položaj, u anketi se kroz pojam položaja pribjeglo jasnoći za ispitanike. Gledajući rezultate po gradovima,

the respondents of different cities. In spatial terms, the name Western Balkans is rather inaccurate, starting from the thesis that the Balkan Mountains are the backbone of the region or the physical framework, it follows they must have a dominant influence in the region, which they does not have (Fuerst-Bjeliš, 2015).

Survey results

The first part of the survey questionnaire presents the geopolitical development and situation of the respondent's individual country. The average level of familiarity of respondents with the geopolitical situation of their country was 3.74. Given that there is no simple definition for geopolitical development or situation, the survey attempted to clarify this for respondents. Observing the results by city, respondents from Pris-

najveću prosječnu razinu upoznatosti bilježe ispitanici iz Prištine, i to od 4,27 što se može povezati s sa stanjem u njihovoj državi, koja još uvijek vodi diplomatsku bitku za međunarodno priznanje, a te su teme dnevno prisutne u medijima (Janev, 2013). S druge strane, najmanja prosječna upoznatost, od samo 3,31, bilježi se kod banjolučkih ispitanika. U korelaciji s Banjom Lukom može se primijetiti i niska prosječna razina upoznatosti kod Mostara (grad većinski hrvatskoga stanovništva), od 3,41, dok je u Sarajevu ona natprosječna i iznosi 4,60. Dakle, u BiH je očita tendencija važnosti glavnoga grada u formiranju geopolitičke upoznatosti ispitanih studenata.

Iduće anketno pitanje nastavljalo se na prethodno te su ispitanici trebali konkretizirati svoje znanje o geopolitičkom položaju na primjeru svoje države, odnosno izjasniti se je li geopolitički položaj njihove države povoljan. Prema ispitanicima najpovoljniji geopolitički položaj ima Albanija, čijih je 89,13 % ispitanika odgovorilo potvrdno na pitanje. Najmanje potvrdnih odgovora za povoljan geopolitički položaj BiH bilježe ispitanici Banje Luke, i to samo 37,51 %, a nisko su još i Mostar s 45,13 % i Sarajevo s 51,93 %.

Drugi dio ankete odnosio se na političko određenje Zapadnog Balkana. Ispitanici su prvo birali opciju za budućnost političkoga razvoja svoje države. Ispitanici su se većinski opredijelili za ulazak (ostanak) u EU, i to sa 64,12 %, dok se opcija neutralnosti birala u 15,31 % odgovora, odnosno suradnja s ne-EU članicama u 13,31 % odgovara. Na začelju se nalazi novoosnovani „Mini-Schengen”, koji previđa regionalnu suradnju država Zapadnog Balkana, no Crna Gora i BiH još uvijek nisu članice (Đukonović i Đorđević, 2020). Ispitanici su nadalje trebali odgovoriti smatraju li da će njihova država ući u EU, odnosno države regije za zagrebačke ispitanike. Gledajući ukupni rezultat, 52,43 % ispitanika smatra da će njihova država, odnosno Zapadni Balkan, ući u EU. Ukupni rezultat jedva prelazi polovicu, a od devet gradova samo tri imaju većinski potvrdni stav ispitanika o ulasku, i to Tirana, Priština i Nikšić. Apsolutno najveći udio ispitanika podražavatelja ulaska u EU ima

tina recorded the highest average level of familiarity, at 4.27; this can be connected to the situation in the country, which is still fighting a diplomatic battle for international recognition, and such topics are present in the media on a daily basis. (Janev, 2013). On the other hand, the lowest average level of familiarity was recorded among respondents from Banja Luka, of only 3.31. In correlation with Banja Luka, a low average level of familiarity was also noted in Mostar (a city with a majority Croatian population) of 3.41, while in Sarajevo it was above average: 4.60. Therefore, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the importance of the capital city in the formation of the geopolitical familiarity is clear.

The next survey question was a continuation of the previous question, and respondents were asked to specify their knowledge about the geopolitical situation using the example of their country, i.e. to state whether the geopolitical position of their country was favourable or not. According to the respondents, Albania has the most favourable geopolitical position, with 89.13% of respondents answering in the affirmative. The least affirmative answers for favourable geopolitical position of Bosnia and Herzegovina were recorded by the respondents of Banja Luka, only 37.51%, while Mostar was also low with 45.13% and Sarajevo with 51.93%.

The second part of the survey referred to the political determination of the Western Balkans. The respondents first chose an option for the future political development of their country. The majority of respondents chose enter the EU, with 64.12%, while the option of neutrality was chosen in 15.31% of respondents, and cooperation with non-EU members by 13.31% of respondents. Underpinning this is the newly-established “Mini-Schengen”, which is meant to generate regional cooperation among the countries of the Western Balkans, but Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina are still not members (Đukonović and Đorđević, 2020). Furthermore, the respondents were asked to answer whether they thought that their country would enter the EU, or, in the case of respondents from Zagreb, whether the countries of the Western Balkans would enter the EU. Looking at the overall results, 52.43% of respondents believe that their country will enter the EU. The total result barely exceeds half and, out of nine cities, only three had a majority affirmative view of the respondents regarding EU membership prospects, namely, Tirana, Pristina and Nikšić. Pristina

Priština, pa Tirana, koji su s 87,44 % odgovora, odnosno 76,51 % potvrdili vjerojatnost ulaska svoje zemlje u EU. Povezujući te rezultate s jednim od prethodnih pitanja, uočava se povezanost važnosti geopolitičkoga položaja i sklonosti EU članstvu. Najveći su skeptici među ispitanicima glede ulaska u EU Banjolučani s velikih 87,31 % negirajućih odgovora za ulazak u EU.

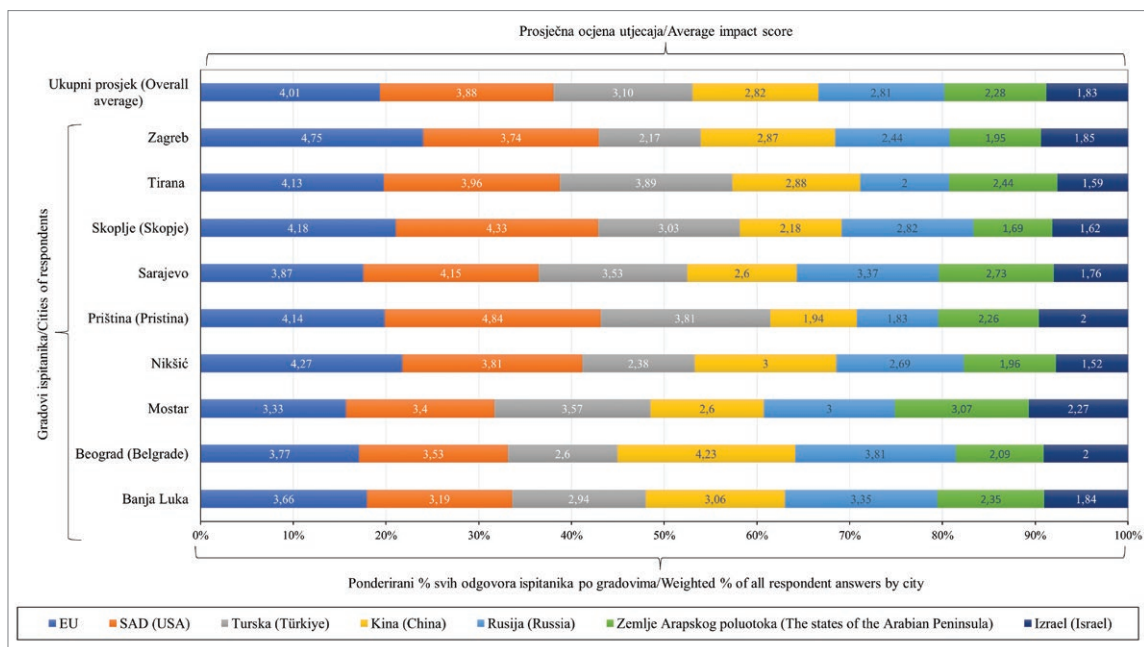
Treći dio ankete odnosio se na vojnu budućnost regije, a anketna pitanja razlikovala su se od grada do grada, ovisno o članstvu u NATO-u. Prvu opciju vezanu uz ulazak/ostanak u NATO savezu izabralo je ukupno 55,34 % ispitanika, a rezultati se značajno razlikuju od grada do grada. Ispitanici Prištine u 92,31 % odgovora odabrali su ulazak u NATO. Činjenica je ipak da je Kosovo tek 2018. donijelo odluku o osnivanju vojske na koju je NATO gledao sa zadržkom. NATO ima na Kosovu najveću vojnu bazu u ovom dijelu Europe i jako je prisutan u UN-ovoj mirovnoj misiji na Kosovu (Vuletić, 2018). Gledajući komparativno, u Beogradu su opciju ulaska u NATO odabrali u samo 2,11 %, a u Banjoj Luci u 6,31 % odgovora. Od sadašnjih članica NATO-a najmanje je podrške za članstvo zabilježeno za Crnu Goru, i to samo 24,31 %. Naredno pitanje bio je svojevrsni sukob političke i vojne budućnosti, to jest sadašnjosti Zapadnog Balkana. Od ispitanika se tražilo da prepoznaju trenutne ključne geopolitičke prilike regije i njihove buduće implikacije te odaberu između opcija: sukob utjecaja više država, europska periferija i jasno usmjereno područje euroatlantskim integracijama. Ispitanici su sa 62,43 % odgovora odabrali upravo opciju sukoba utjecaja više država kao dominantnu geopolitičku priliku Zapadnog Balkana. Ta se opcija najviše birala u Nikšiću, a najmanje u Tirani.

Četvrti dio ankete od ispitanika je tražio prepoznavanje utjecaja drugih država na njihove. Mogući odgovor bio je pomoću Likertove ljestvice od 1 – minimalni utjecaj do 5 – maksimalni utjecaj. Prema mišljenju ispitanika najveći utjecaj ima Europska unija (sl. 2), prosječno 4,01, i to baš kod zagrebačkih ispitanika. Druge su po utjecaju Sjedinjene Američke Države, i to prosječno 3,88, najviše kod ispitanika Prištine

and Tirana have the absolute largest share of respondents who support EU entry, with 87.44% and 76.51%, respectively, confirming the probability of their countries' entry into the EU. Connecting these results with one of the previous questions, a link between the importance of geopolitical position and preference for EU membership can be observed. The biggest sceptics among the respondents regarding EU accession were respondents from Banja Luka, of which 87.31% did not think that EU accession was likely.

The third part of the survey was about the military future of the region, and the survey questions differed from city to city, depending on NATO membership. The first option related to entering/staying in NATO was chosen by a total of 55.34% of respondents, and the results differ significantly from city to city. In 92.31% of the answers, Pristina's respondents indicated their desire to join NATO; the fact is, however, that Kosovo only made a decision to establish an army in 2018, which NATO views with reservations. NATO's largest military base in this part of Europe is in Kosovo, where the UN peacekeeping mission in Kosovo is based (Vuletić, 2018). Comparatively, only 2.11% chose the option of joining NATO in Belgrade, and 6.31% in Banja Luka. Of the current members of NATO, the least support for membership was recorded in Montenegro, with only 24.31%. For the next question, the respondents were asked to recognize the current key geopolitical circumstances of the region and their future implications, and to choose between the following options: the conflict of influence of multiple states, the European periphery, and an area clearly focused on Euro-Atlantic integration. With 62.43% of the answers, the respondents chose the option of the conflict of influence of several states as the dominant geopolitical state of the Western Balkans. This option was chosen the most in Nikšić, and the least in Tirana.

The fourth part of the survey asked respondents to recognize the influence of other countries on their own. Respondents were able to answer using the Likert scale from 1-minimum influence to 5-maximum influence. According to the opinion of the respondents, the European Union has the greatest influence (Fig. 2), with an average of 4.01, highest among respondents from Zagreb. The second most influential is the United States of America, with an average of 3.88, the



Sl. 2. Prosječni utjecaj pojedine države i EU-a na Zapadni Balkan prema ispitanicima
Fig. 2 The average influence of individual countries and the EU on the Western Balkans according to respondents

Izvor: Autor prema anketnom istraživanju (2021)
Source: Author, according to survey research (2021)

gdje se percipiraju kao najutjecajnije. Na trećem se mjestu utjecaja našla Turska i to najviše kod ispitanika Prištine i Tirane, obaju glavnih gradova država s većinskim udjelom stanovništva islamske vjeroispovijesti. Donosilac islamske vjeroispovijesti Osmansko Carstvo bilo je dugi niz godina glavni geopolitički faktor Balkana, a utjecalo je na stvaranje brojnih odnosa koje pratimo sve do danas kada tu ulogu nastoji preuzeti Turska (Bieber i Tzifakis, 2019b). Četrto mjesto po prosječnom utjecaju zauzela je Kina, i to daleko najviše kod beogradskih ispitanika. Daljnji raspored po utjecaju je: Rusija, države Arapskog poluotoka i Izrael. Iznenađujuća je pozicija Rusije tek na petom mjestu, suprotno percepciji o njenom snažnom utjecaju.

Zadnje pitanje ankete tražilo je od ispitanika da navedu mjesto na koje bi se odselili, a pitanje je bilo slobodnoga odgovora. Rezimiranjem odgovora na ovo pitanje mogu se uočiti određene pravilnosti: 74,23 % mjesta potencijalnoga preseljenja nalazi se u Europi, a od tih mjesta njih oko 20,43 % otpada na Njemačku i Švicarsku, odnosno njihove gradove. Povezujući ove odgo-

highest among respondents in Pristina, where they are perceived as the most influential. The third most influential was Turkey, highest among the respondents of Pristina and Tirana—both capitals of countries with Islamic majorities (Albania and Kosovo). The Ottoman Empire was the main geopolitical actor in the Balkans for many years, and it influenced the creation of numerous relationships that are still present today as Turkey attempts to re-establish influence in the region (Bieber and Tzifakis, 2019b). The fourth place in terms of average influence was China, and by far the highest among respondents from Belgrade. The further distribution by influence is: Russia, the countries of the Arabian Peninsula, and Israel. It is surprising that Russia is only in fifth place, which is contrary to common perception of its strong influence.

The last question of the survey asked respondents to indicate the place to which they would move/re-locate, and was open-ended. By summarizing the answers to this question, certain regularities can be observed, 74.23% of the places of potential resettlement are located in Europe and, of these places, 20.43% are in Germany and Switzerland. Connecting these answers with the influential countries in

vore s utjecajnim državama na Zapadnom Balkanu, vidi se da su SAD i Rusija slabo poželjni za preseljenje, dok se Kina i Izrael uopće ne spominju. Turska i UAE pojavljuju se kod ispitanika Tirane i Prištine kao mjesta preseljenja što, može biti povezano s islamskom vjeroispovijesti ili sa sklonošću tomu kulturnom krugu.

Rezultati metode Delfi

Sudionici metode Delfi u prvom su pitanju iznosili svoj stav o geopolitičkom položaju Zapadnog Balkana i komentirali rezultate ankete glede istoga dijela istraživanja. Postoji vrlo jasna dihotomija između određenja povoljnoga i nepovoljnoga geopolitičkog položaja regije. Povoljnost se opravdavala na različite načine, npr. položaj na dodiru utjecaja više kontinenta (Europe i Azije), povoljnost prometnog položaja (koridor X), zainteresiranost drugih država za regiju itd. S druge strane, određenje nepovoljnosti bilo je u blagoj većini zbog prevladavajućega stajališta da je regija „zapela” u vremenu i zbog slaba napretka u integracijama. Glede komentara rezultata ankete ispitanici su dali dosta slične odgovore. Svi su složni da postoji premala informiranost studenata o geopolitičkom položaju njihovih država te su dosta visoki prosječni rezultati vlastite procjene i određenja povoljnosti položaja zapravo rezultat neznanja.

Nastavljajući se na geopolitičko određenje položaja regije, gotovo svi se slažu da ulazak u Europsku uniju nema alternativu za države regije, no on se neće dogoditi, kako napominju, prije 2030. godine. Nekoliko ispitanika navodi da je kriza proširenja Unije počela još za ekonomske krize 2008. godine i još uvijek traje te je hrvatski ulazak bio više izuzetak nego pravilo. Napominje se da postoji jasan zamor od proširenja i potpuna neusklađenost između članica glede te teme, konkretno, kao primjer se navodi neslaganje Francuske (pružanje otpora) i Njemačke (pružanje potpore) oko proširenja Unije. Komentirajući mišljenja anketnih ispitanika o ulasku u EU (od 52,43 %), navodi se da je „... to dosta realističan pokazatelj toga da su

the Western Balkans, it can be seen that the USA and Russia are less desirable for resettlement, while China and Israel are not mentioned at all. Turkey and the UAE appear among the respondents of Tirana and Pristina as places of relocation, which may be related to religion or to a preference for the culture.

Results of the Delphi method

For the first question, the participants of the Delphi method stated their opinions on the geopolitical situation of the Western Balkans and commented on the results of the survey regarding the same part of the research. There is a very clear dichotomy between determining the favourable and unfavourable aspects of the geopolitical position of the region. Favourability was justified in various ways, such as ‘... position at the intersection of the influence of several continents (Europe and Asia), favourable traffic position (X corridor), interest of other countries in the region, etc.’ On the other hand, the determination of disadvantage was mild to majority, due to the prevailing view that the region is “stuck” in time, and due to weak progress towards integration. Regarding the comments on the results of the survey, the respondents gave quite similar answers. They all agreed that there is too little information among students about the geopolitical position of their countries, and the rather high average results of their own assessment and determination of the favourable position were actually the result of ignorance.

Regarding the geopolitical determination of the region's position, almost everyone agreed that there is no good alternative joining the European Union for the countries of the region, but it will not happen, as they note, before 2030. Several interviewees stated that the crisis of enlargement began before the economic crisis of 2008 and is still ongoing, and Croatian entry was the exception rather than the rule. It was noted that there is a clear fatigue for enlargement and an inconsistency among member states regarding this topic—specifically, the disharmony between France (resisting) and Germany (supporting) regarding enlargement of the Union is cited as an example. Regarding opinions of the sur-

ljudi svjesni svojih unutarnjih problema i nemaju lažne nade glede članstva.” Spominje se još i slaba upoznatost studenata s prednostima članstva, odnosno „...tokom cijelog života slušaju o ulasku u EU, a on još nije ni na vidiku”.

U slučaju vojne budućnosti stavovi sudionika se razlikuju, odnosno većina i dalje vidi NATO članstvo kao jedinu opciju, ali postoje i zagovaratelji neutralnosti. Navodi se više puta da je NATO jamstvo sigurnosti regije i očuvanja granica, ali je opetovano navođeno kako članstvo nužno ne donosi mir i suradnju, izdvajajući pritom primjer sukoba Turske i Grčke 1974. godine. Većina mišljenja ima formulaciju poput „dugoročni benefiti manje su vidljivi od obveza, koje stanovništvo ne percipira povoljno”. Referirajući se na rezultate ankete, svi su se složili da su oni očekivani i logični glede pojedinačnoga grada, rivalstvo Rusije i SAD-a glede (ne)članstva u NATO-u vidljivo je upravo u rezultatima ankete, odnosno ispitanici navode da Rusija znatno utječe na BiH i Srbiju da se dalje ne približavaju Savezu.

Kad je riječ o utjecaju drugih država na regiju, veći broj sudionika slaže se s rezultatima ankete i bez dublje analize potvrđuje valjanost geopolitičkoga utjecaja pojedine države kod ispitanika pojedinoga grada u smislu da se opće percepcije poklapaju s rezultatima ankete. S druge pak strane, neki ispitanici govore da su ti utjecaji nametnuti dominacijom medija i političkih elita, a da se stvarni utjecaji ogledaju kroz ekonomiju (kapital).

Glede željenih mjesta preseljenja bilo je različitih komentara, no većina je izrekla slične stavove. Svi su se složili da su europske države i gradovi najbliži i najprihvatljiviji za preseljenje stanovnika Zapadnog Balkana zbog prometne blizine i sličnosti kulture. Navodi se i da postoji višedesetljetni odlazak na „privremeni rad” u srednjoeuropske zemlje te ta blizina dopušta brz povratak u regiju tijekom vikenda ili praznika. Navodi se da SAD predstavlja odviše veliku kulturnu razliku u odnosu na Europu, a tako i Kina.

vey respondents about joining the EU (of 52.43 %), it was stated that ‘. . . it is quite a realistic indicator that people are aware of internal problems and have no false hopes regarding membership.’ The lack of familiarity among students is also mentioned. In regard to the advantages of membership, interviewees had a resigned outlook: ‘. . . all their lives they have heard about joining the EU, and it is not even on the horizon.’

In the case of future military integration, the participants’ views differed, but the majority still see NATO membership as the only option, while a smaller number advocate for neutrality. It was stated many times that NATO membership is a guarantee of the security of the region and the preservation of borders, but it was also stated that membership does not necessarily bring peace and cooperation, singling out the example of the conflict between Turkey and Greece in 1974. Most of the opinions were along the lines of: ‘. . . long-term benefits are less visible than the obligations, which the population does not perceive favourably.’ Referring to the results of the survey, everyone agreed that they were as expected and logical, and the rivalry between Russia and the USA regarding membership in NATO is visible in the results of the survey, i.e. respondents stated that Russia significantly influences Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia in order to prevent NATO membership.

Regarding the influence of other countries on the region, a large number of participants agreed with the results of the survey and, without a deeper analysis, confirmed the “validity” of the perceptions of geopolitical influence of a particular country among the respondents of relevant cities, in the sense that their own general perceptions coincide with the results of the survey. On the other hand, some respondents stated that these influences are imposed by the dominance of the media and “political elites”, and that the real influences are reflected in the economy (capital).

Regarding desired places of relocation, there were different comments, but the majority expressed similar views. Everyone agreed that European countries and cities are the closest and most acceptable for the resettlement of the inhabitants

Tab. 1. Formirani scenariji geopolitičkoga razvoja Zapadnog Balkana
 Tab. 1 Formed scenarios of the geopolitical development of the Western Balkans

1. scenarij: Euroatlantska integracija / 1. "Euro-Atlantic integration" scenario	2. scenarij: Status quo / 2. "Status quo" scenario	3. scenarij: Rekonstrukcija Zapadnog Balkana / 3 "Reconstruction of the Western Balkans" scenario
a) Ulazak država Zapadnog Balkana u EU / Entry of the Western Balkan countries into the EU b) Ulazak BiH u NATO savez / The entry of Bosnia and Herzegovina into NATO c) Očuvanje srpske vojne neutralnosti / Preservation of Serbian military neutrality d) Normalizacija odnosa (priznanje) Srbije i Kosova / Normalization of relations (recognition) between Serbia and Kosovo e) Očuvanje svih sadašnjih državnih granica / Preservation of all current state borders f) Rješavanje međudržavnih problema, regionalna suradnja / Solving interstate problems, regional cooperation g) Izražen utjecaj ponajprije EU-a, potom SAD-a / Pronounced influence of the EU, and the USA	a) Teško napredovanje država prema EU-u / Difficult progress of countries towards the EU b) Ostanak BiH izvan NATO- a / Bosnia and Herzegovina remaining outside NATO c) Očuvanje srbijanske vojne neutralnosti / Preservation of Serbian military neutrality d) Stagnacija srbijansko- kosovskoga dijaloga / Stagnation of Serbia-Kosovo dialogue e) Vjerojatno očuvanje svih državnih granica / Likely preservation of all state borders f) Regionalna ekonomska suradnja i stagnacija u dijalozima / Regional economic cooperation and stagnation in dialogues g) Pojačavanje utjecaja Rusije, Kine, Turske / Increasing influence of Russia, China, Turkey	a) Odustajanje od integracije u EU / EU integration abandoned b) Izlazak Crne Gore iz NATO-a / Withdrawal of Montenegro from NATO c) Ostvarenje različitih vojnih suradnji / Realization of various military cooperations d) Dezintegracija BiH – više opcija / Disintegration of Bosnia and Herzegovina e) Promjene državnih granica / Changes in state borders f) Bez rješavanja problema i regionalne suradnje / Poor problem solving and regional cooperation g) Snažan rast utjecaja Rusije, Kine, Turske i ostalih država / Strong growth of the influence of Russia, China, Turkey and other countries h) Prevladavanje perifernoga položaja / Overcoming peripheral position.

Izvor: Autor prema rezultatima ankete i metode Delfi (2021)
 Source: Author, according to survey results and Delphi method (2021)

of the Western Balkans due to transport proximity and cultural similarities. The long history of inhabitants from the Western Balkans relocating for “temporary” work in Central European countries was also emphasized; the proximity allows easy travel to workers’ home countries for long weekends or holidays. It was stated that the USA and China are too different from Europe in terms of culture.

Formiranje i komparacija scenarija geopolitičkoga razvoja Zapadnog Balkana

Formation and comparison of scenarios of geopolitical development of the Western Balkans

Formiranje scenarija

Na temelju provedene ankete i njezine kvantitativne analize te provedenoga prvog kruga metode Delfi i kvalitativne analize pristupilo se formiranju scenarija geopolitičkoga razvoja Zapadnog Balkana do 2031. godine. Kao što je prethodno i spomenuto, metoda scenarija bila je izrazito prihvatljiva za ovo istraživanje jer postoji zaista mnogo varijabli koje utječu na geopolitički razvoj te se one znaju vrlo različito manifestirati. Upravo je sagledavanje više mogućih scenarija preduvjet za bolje razumijevanje geopolitičkoga razvoja, za što su poslužili rezultati ankete i metode Delfi. Prvi scenarij (tab. 1) geopolitičkoga razvoja u većini se temelji na sadašnjoj službenoj politici svih država Zapadnog Balkana i na većini izraženih mišljenja što u anketi što u prvom krugu metode Delfi. Drugi scenarij temelji se na zadržavanju sadašnjih situacija u geopolitici regije i u budućnosti, sve do 2031. godine. Taj je scenarij poznat u svjetskoj geopolitici kao opcija na koju se ne može staviti veto i stoga služi za određeno „zamrzavanje” svih naponosti (Haselswerdt i Bartels, 2015). Posljednji scenarij temelji se na opcijama koje su većinski izvan službene politike svake države Zapadnog Balkana, ali su sveprisutne u medijima i spomenute više puta u metodi Delfi te ponuđene među anketnim odgovorima.

Usporedba scenarija

U završnom su krugu metode Delfi sudionici trebali iznijeti svoja mišljenja o scenarijama geopolitičkoga razvoja Zapadnog Balkana, ocijeniti preciznost i usklađenost te predložiti moguće izmjene u scenarijima. Scenarij o euroatlantskoj integraciji izazvao je podijeljena mišljenja među sudionicima istraživanja. Više se puta navodi da je ovaj scenarij možda previše optimističan te moguće neostvariv u vremenu do 2031. godine, što i sažima jedan odgovor: „Scenarij je realističan konceptijski, ali vjerojatno ne i vremenski”. Također, više se puta naglašava da je scenarij idealan za Zapadni Balkan, ali postoji puno „kočnica” u njegovu ostvarivanju. Ovaj scenarij ispitanici su prosječno ocijenili s 3,5 kada je riječ o preciznosti

Creating scenarios

Based on the conducted survey and its quantitative analysis, as well as the first round of the Delphi method and its qualitative analysis, the formation of scenarios for the geopolitical development of the Western Balkans until 2031 was carried out. As previously mentioned, the scenario method was acceptable for this research because of the amount of variables that influence geopolitical development and their varying manifestations. The development of several possible scenarios is a prerequisite for a better understanding of geopolitical development, for which the results of the survey and the Delphi method served. The first scenario (Tab. 1) of geopolitical development is based mostly on the current official policy of all Western Balkan countries and on the majority of opinions expressed both in the survey and in the first round of the Delphi method. The second scenario is based on maintaining the current situation in the region's geopolitics into the future, i.e. until 2031. This scenario is an option that cannot be vetoed and therefore serves to “freeze” tensions (Haselswerdt and Bartels, 2015). The last scenario is based on options, which are mostly not part of the official policy of Western Balkan countries, but are ubiquitous in the media and were mentioned several times in the Delphi method and offered among survey responses.

Comparison of scenarios

In the final co-round of the Delphi method, the participants were asked to present their opinions on the scenarios of the geopolitical development of the Western Balkans, evaluate their accuracy and consistency, and propose possible changes. The “Euro-Atlantic integration” scenario provoked rather divided opinions among the research participants. It was repeatedly stated that this scenario may be too optimistic and possibly unrealizable by 2031, which is summed up by one quote: ‘The scenario is conceptually realistic, but probably not in terms of time.’ It was also repeatedly emphasized that this scenario is ideal for the Western Balkans, but there are many “obstacles” to its realization. The respondents rated this scenario with an average of 3.5 when it comes to precision and compliance. Among the proposals

i usklađenosti. Od prijedloga za poboljšanje nekoliko se puta navodi neusklađenost između inzistiranja na rješavanju međudržavnih problema i „brzoga” ulasku u Uniju.

Scenarij o *statusu quo* ocijenjen je kao najrealističniji scenarij kod većine ispitanika. Gotovo svi navode da je on realna slika trenutačnih geopolitičkih procesa što u regiji što u svijetu te je izgledno da će do 2031. godine on i dalje biti aktualan. Navodi se da je „... argumentacija za većinu navedenih ključnih točaka (scenarija) prilično snažna i uvjerljiva”. Nadalje, postoje i mišljenja da je *status quo* opasan za regiju zbog daljnjega „lutanja” država pod stranim utjecajima. Javlja se i mišljenje kako su neki problemi regije nerješivi bez pogubnih posljedica pa je najbolje ostati u *statusu quo*. Preciznost i usklađenost ovoga scenarija, prema ispitanicima, iznosi 4,1. Prijedlog za poboljšanje ide k tomu da neće doći do stagnacije geopolitičkoag položaja te će s vremenom Zapadni Balkan biti svakako mjesto rasta utjecaja drugih država.

Scenarij o rekonstrukciji Zapadnog Balkana doveo je do podijeljenosti mišljenja među ispitanicima. Određeni broj ispitanika navodi da je ovaj scenarij teško ostvariv zbog prevelikih uloga pojedinih utjecajnih država i pojedinačnih interesa država regije. S druge strane, govori se kako ni ovaj scenarij „...ni na koji način nije isključiv” jer je trenutno u tijeku veliko geopolitičko preslagivanje u svijetu što može imati posljedica i na samu regiju. Unatoč izraženosti pesimizma glede toga zadnjeg scenarija nekoliko ispitanika navodi kako bi on mogao biti i rješenje za Zapadni Balkan ako se primjereno sprovede. Prosječna ocjena preciznosti i usklađenosti iznosi 3,2, a sugestije idu k tomu da će EU u pregovorima vjerojatno prijeći na individualizirani pristup svakoj državi regije.

Usporedba scenarija zaključuje se citiranjem riječi jednoga ispitanika: „Balkanske države uvijek veslaju protiv struje. Kada je krajem 80-ih godina prošloga stoljeća europski trend bio k ujedinjenju, Balkan su razdirale borbe za neovisnost i međuetnička nesnošljivost. Sada, kada je Zapadnu Europu zahvatio trend autonomije i raste međuetnička nesnošljivost,

for improvement, the inconsistency between the insistence on solving interstate problems and “quick” entry into the Union was mentioned several times.

The “Status quo” scenario was evaluated as the most realistic scenario by the majority of respondents. Almost all stated that it is a realistic picture of current geopolitical processes, both in the region and in the world, and it is likely that it will continue to be relevant until 2031. It was stated that ‘... the argumentation for most of the mentioned key points (scenarios) is quite strong and convincing.’ Furthermore, many participants were of the opinion that the “Status quo” is dangerous for the region due to further “waving” of states under foreign influence. There was also the opinion that some of the region’s problems cannot be solved without serious consequences, so it is best to keep the status quo. According to the respondents, the accuracy and compliance of this scenario was 4.1. The proposals for improvement related to the fact that there would be no stagnation of the geopolitical position and, over time, the Western Balkans will certainly be subjected to growing influence of other countries.

The scenario “Reconstruction of the Western Balkans” also led to split opinions among the respondents. A certain number of respondents stated that this scenario is difficult to achieve due to the overlarge roles of certain influential states and the individual interests of the states of the region. On the other hand, it was said that even this scenario ‘... is by no means exclusive’, because a major geopolitical adjustment is currently underway in the world, which may also have consequences for the region itself. Despite the expression of pessimism regarding this last scenario, several interviewees stated that it could also be a solution for the Western Balkans if properly implemented. The average score for precision and coherence is 3.2, and suggestions were that the EU is likely to move to an individualized approach to each country in the region in the negotiations.

The scenario comparison can be concluded by quoting the words of one respondent: ‘Balkan countries are always “rowing against the current”. When, at the end of the 1980s, the European trend was towards unification, the Balkans were being torn apart by struggles for independence and inter-ethnic intolerance. Today, Western Europe is gripped by a trend of autonomy and inter-ethnic

Balkan teži ujedinjenju. To je osnovni razlog iz kojeg je balkanskim državama bilo teško uključiti se u europsku dominantnu struju. Hrvatska je uskočila u zadnji vagon.”

Rasprava

Kolstø (2016) navodi da proces europeizacije u slučaju Balkana ne funkcionira po principu prihvaćanja zapadnoeuropskih kulturnih i društvenih obrazaca ponašanja, nego po principu političkoga približavanja članstvu u EU-u i prihvaćanja njezine pravne legislative. Ovdje se javlja i mišljenje Todorove (2009) da se stanovnici Balkana istovremeno smatraju Europljanima, ali se preko njegovih sjevernih granica odvija podjela na „naše” i „njihove”. Ovakve paradigme vidljive su i u rezultatima ovoga istraživanja, prije svega u anketi, gdje i dalje većina ispitanika smatra vjerojatnim ulazak u EU, no istovremeno za imenovanje regije življenja biraju naziv Balkan. Upravo se te paradigme vide i kroz ocjene scenarija sudionika metode Delfi, koji većinski i dalje smatraju da je cilj napredovanje prema euroatlantskim integracijama, no postoji niz zadržka na tom putu, što cijelu regiju gura u *status quo*.

Bieber i Tzifakis (2019a) u svome radu vrlo detaljno tumače područje Zapadnog Balkana kao područje geopolitičke šahovske ploče gdje se isprepleću sve veći vanjskopolitički utjecaji brojnih država. Na tragu su takvih razmišljanja Polović i Dujic Frlan (2019), koje svoje teze temelje na ideji politike *divide et impera*. Upravo je i ovo istraživanje upozorilo na te nove utjecaje na Zapadnom Balkanu, gdje su se anketni ispitanici povodili za utjecajem Rusije, Kine i Turske. Više je sudionika metode Delfi naglasilo da države Zapadnog Balkana i dalje ekonomski ovise o Europskoj uniji i založili su se za scenarij o *statusu quo* radi daljnje ekonomske suradnje s državama EU-a barem do 2031. godine.

Džankić (2019) i Skara (2021) nazivaju Zapadni Balkan izazovom za Europsku uniju, što se zapravo može i vidjeti u formiranju scenarija geopolitičkoga razvoja u ovome radu. Zaista je

intolerance is growing, and the Balkans are striving for unification. This is the main reason why it was difficult for the Balkan states to join the European mainstream. Croatia jumped the last train.’

Discussion

Kolstø (2016) stated that the process of Europeanization in the case of the Balkans does not function according to the principle of accepting Western European cultural and social patterns of behaviour, rather according to the principle of political approximation to EU membership and acceptance of its legislation. The opinion of Todorova (2009) is also relevant here, that the inhabitants of the Balkans are considered Europeans, but across the northern borders there is a division into “ours” and “theirs”. Such paradigms are also visible in the results of this research, above all in the survey, where the majority of respondents still consider accession to the EU to be probable, but at the same time choose the name Balkans for the region they live in. It is precisely these paradigms that can be seen in the evaluations of the scenarios by the participants of the Delphi method, who largely still believe that the goal is progress towards Euro-Atlantic integration, but there are a number of obstacles along the way that keep the region mired in the status quo.

In their work, Bieber and Tzifakis (2019a) portrayed the area of the Western Balkans as a geopolitical chessboard, where the ever-increasing foreign policy influences of numerous countries are intertwined. The paper by Polović and Dujic Frlan (2019) is of a similar mind, with theses based on the idea of *divide et impera* politics. It was this research that indicated new influences in the Western Balkans, where the survey respondents followed the influence of Russia, China and Turkey. Several participants in the Delphi method emphasized that the countries of the Western Balkans are still economically dependent on the European Union and advocated the “Status quo” scenario due to further economic cooperation with the EU countries, at least until 2031.

Džankić (2019) and Skara (2021) called the Western Balkans a challenge for the European Union, which can actually be seen in the formation of the geopolitical development scenario in this paper.

teško sa sigurnošću odrediti koliko će se regija nalaziti u fokusu europske i svjetske politike u narednih deset godina te hoće li europska i svjetska geopolitička kretanja u manjoj ili većoj mjeri utjecati na Zapadni Balkan (Bieber i Tzifakis, 2019b). U vidu toga izazova treba sagledati i anketne rezultate jer ako mlade generacije u samo 17 % odgovora smatraju da je Zapadni Balkan jasno usmjeren euroatlantskim integracijama, a u 62 % regiju određuju kao prostor sukoba utjecaja više država, može se reći da je prema anketnim ispitanicima vodeći scenarij geopolitičkoga razvoja zapravo spoj prvoga i trećega. Sudionici metode Delfi imaju određenih zadržki u određenju važnosti Zapadnog Balkana u europskoj i svjetskoj geopolitici te ga čak pojedinci nazivaju i perifernim prostorom. Prevladavajući scenarij *status quo* predviđa stagnaciju razvoja geopolitičkoga položaja regije.

Elbasani (2013) dovodi uopće u pitanje stvarnu spremnost država Zapadnog Balkana na prihvaćanje modernih euroatlantskih integracija i tekovina, odnosno koraćanja putem prvoga scenarija, zbog naviknutosti na „labavija” državna uređenja i perifernu položenost tokom duge povijesti, koja je uvijek rezultirala slabijim nadzorom nad teritorijem regije. Na ovome tragu stoji i podrška ulasku odnosno ostanku u NATO savezu izražena u anketi i metodi Delfi jer je nekoliko sudionika reklo da je vojsci Srbije i BiH jeftinije biti izvan NATO-a zbog visokih vojnih standarada zahtjevnih za ulaz, a opet su okružene NATO članicama te su tako u skladu s javnim mnijenjem svojih stanovnika.

Ukupno uspoređujući rezultate ovoga istraživanja s prethodnima, mogu se naći jasna poklapanja, no i određena manja odstupanja, poput primjerice većinske želje za preseljenjem u srednjoeuropske germanske države u odnosu na želje za preseljenjem u UK i skandinavske države zabilježene kod Šakaje (2019). Prisutna vernakularnost regije iz rada Pleića i dr. (2021) vidljiva je i u ovome radu odlukom uključivanja Hrvatske, kao prošloga dionika Zapadnog Balkana, no opet su se prostornom okviru dale jasnije odrednice kroz državne granice. Cjelokupni formirani scenariji imaju osim u anketi i metodi

It is difficult to determine with certainty how many regions will be in the focus of European and world politics in the next ten years, and how and to what extent European and global geopolitical developments will affect the Western Balkans (Bieber and Tzifakis, 2019b). In light of this challenge, the survey results should also be considered, because if only 17% of the younger generation believes that the Western Balkans is clearly focused on Euro-Atlantic integration, and in 62% defines the region as an area of conflict between the influences of several states, it can be said that the leading scenario of geopolitical development is actually a combination of the first and the third. The participants of the Delphi method had certain reservations in determining the importance of the Western Balkans in European and global geopolitics, and some even named it a peripheral area. The prevailing “Status quo” scenario predicts stagnation in the development of the region’s geopolitical position.

Elbasani (2013) calls into question the real readiness of Western Balkan countries to accept modern Euro-Atlantic integrations and achievements, i.e. to follow the first scenario, due to their tendency for “looser” state arrangements and peripheral location, which has always resulted in weaker control over the territory. Support for entering/staying in NATO, expressed in the survey and the Delphi method, is on the same track, because several participants said that it is cheaper for the armies of Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina to be outside NATO due to the high military standards required for entry, and yet they are surrounded by NATO members and are thus in line with the public opinion of their inhabitants.

Overall, comparing the results of this research with previous research, clear similarities can be found, but also minor deviations, e.g. the majority desire to move to the Central European Germanic countries compared to the desire to move to the UK and Scandinavian countries recorded by Šakaja (2019). The region’s vernacular character, as explored in Pleić et al. (2021) is visible in this paper as well from the decision to include Croatia, as a past member of the Western Balkans, but the spatial framework was given clear boundaries via state borders. In addition to the survey and the Delphi method, the overall formed scenarios have a foot-

Delfi uporišta i u prethodnim istraživanjima, pa čak i u istraživanjima državnih agencija, barem što se tiče želje za ulaskom u EU. Tako je, primjerice, Beogradski centar za bezbednosnu politiku (BCBP) 2020. godine utvrdio da postoji opća podrška javnosti od 49 % za ulazak u EU.

Zaključak

Je li Zapadni Balkan područje zamrznutih sukoba bez realne šanse za napredak? Samuel Huntington rekao je da svaka civilizacija vidi sebe kao centar svijeta i svoju povijest piše kao glavne činovne drame ljudske povijesti (Huntington, 1998). Balkan je imao tu (ne)sreću da je tijekom zadnjih dvaju stoljeća uistinu bio dionik brojnih svjetskih događaja te se još i danas osjećaju njihove implikacije na geopolitiku. Zapadni Balkan zadnje je poglavlje u povijesti prije obećane europeizacije cijele regije, no upitno je hoće li se to ikada dogoditi. Ovo je istraživanje kao osnovu imalo odrediti moguće pravce geopolitičkoga razvoja regije pomoću triju metoda formirajući tri najizglednije opcije u obliku scenarija euroatlantske integracije, *statusa quo* i rekonstrukcije Zapadnog Balkana. Istraživanjem na temelju anketnih rezultata i metode Delfi potvrđene su hipoteze da je Zapadni Balkan okrenut euroatlantskim integracijama prema svim sudionicima istraživanja, beogradski i banjolučki anketni ispitanici skloniji su razvoju neutralnosti (političkoj i vojnoj), a tiranski i prištinski anketni ispitanici članstvu u EU-u i NATO-u, države regije jasno su orijentirane k državama Zapadne i Srednje Europe glede utjecaja, želje za preseljenjem, ekonomske pomoći i općenite suradnje te će budućnost regije biti određena *statusom quo*.

Zaključno, scenariji geopolitičkoga razvoja Zapadnog Balkana do 2031. godine u ovom istraživanju skup su rezultata ankete i metode Delfi te geopolitičkih ideja koje se mogu iščitati iz rasprave, odnosno prethodne literature. Scenarij o euroatlantskoj integraciji najoptimističniji je razvoj događaja, no moguće teško ostvariv u narednih deset godina. Scenarij *status quo* najizgledniji je oblik daljnjega razvoja regije zbog složenosti ukupne svjetske geopolitike, a scenarij o rekonstruk-

hold in previous research, and even in the research of state agencies, at least as far as the desire to enter the EU is concerned. Thus, for example, the Belgrade Centre for Security Policy (BCSP) asserted in 2020 that the 49% of general public supports joining the EU.

Conclusion

Is the Western Balkans an area of frozen conflicts with no real chance for progress? Samuel Huntington said that every civilization sees itself as the centre of the world and writes its history as the main acts of the drama of human history (Huntington 1998). The Balkans had the (mis)fortune to be a major participant in numerous world events during the last two centuries, and their implications for geopolitics are still present at the time of writing. The Western Balkans is the last chapter in history before the promised Europeanization of the entire region, but it is questionable whether this will ever happen. This research was conducted to determine possible directions of geopolitical development of the region using three methods, forming the three most likely options as scenarios: Euro-Atlantic integration, Status quo, and Reconstruction of the Western Balkans. With research based on survey results and the Delphi method, the hypothesis that the Western Balkans is oriented toward Euro-Atlantic integration was confirmed according to all research participants, wherein Belgrade and Banja Luka respondents were more inclined toward neutrality (political and military), and Tirana and Pristina respondents favoured EU and NATO membership. The states of the region are clearly oriented towards the states of Western and Central Europe in terms of influence, desire to relocate, economic aid and general cooperation, and the future of the region will likely be determined by the *status quo*.

Suma summarum, the scenarios of the geopolitical development of the Western Balkans until 2031 presented in this research represent a certain totality of the results of the survey and the Delphi method, as well as geopolitical ideas that can be read from the discussion and previous literature. The "Euro-Atlantic integration" scenario is the most optimistic development of events, but likely difficult to achieve in the next ten years, the "Status quo" scenario is the most likely form of further

ciji Zapadnog Balkana nije u potpunosti isključen jer bi on možebitno riješio neke probleme nago-milane godinama, no isto tako bi mogao dovesti do novih ratnih sukoba. Tri formirana geopolitič-ka scenarija samo su jedni od mogućih te svakako postoji još opcija i isprepletanja glavnih značajki pojedinoga scenarija. Nekoliko sudionika meto-de Delfi upravo naglašava određenu „težinu” u određivanju pojedine značajke scenarija, stoga je ovaj rad i poticaj za neka buduća istraživanja geopolitičkih scenarija s određenim vremenskim odmakom.

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development of the region due to the complexity of overall world geopolitics, and the “Reconstruction of the Western Balkans” scenario is not completely exclu-sive because it may solve some problems accumulat-ed over the years, but could also lead to new conflicts. These three geopolitical scenarios are not the only pos-sible outcomes and there are certainly more options and interweaving of the main features of each scenario. Several participants of the Delphi method emphasized a certain “weight” in determining a particular feature of the scenario, thereby showing a possible avenue for future research into geopolitical scenarios.

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