

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Research

The European Union is an intergovernmental and supranational organization that made up of 28 countries from Eastern Europe, Central Europe and in the Balkans. EU was not integrated as tight as it is today before the Treaty of Maastricht was signed.

By the time it was founded, it was not yet named as European Union. In 1950, it was still European Coal and Steel Community, marked by the signed of treaty of Paris that formed by six founding fathers which are Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg, Germany, Italy and France aimed to unite European countries economically and politically to secure lasting peace. In 1957, European Economic Community or “Common Market” and e European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) was formed and marked by the sign of Treaty of Rome that used to only focus on economic cooperation in European region (EU, 2019).

The European Union was officially formed after the Treaty of Maastricht came into force in 1993, leading to creation of the euro and the European Union pillars structures which are: the European Community (EC) pillar, the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) pillar, and the Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) pillar which bring European countries neighbors even closer in terms of greater economic integration, common foreign and security policies, and cooperation between police and judiciary on criminal issues.

Due to the fact that Europe continent used to be divided into two political economy ideologies at the end of World War II, even after the end of cold war in 1991, which were coming from the Western Europe that represent capitalism and upholding democratic values, another one is the Eastern Europe that represent communism and totalitarian regime (Xhambazi, 2017). Therefore, during the establishment of European Union, long before the treaty of Maastricht came into force, the EU has conducted several enlargement process to expand its membership.

EU has conducted five times of enlargement. The first enlargement happened in 1973 where United Kingdom, Ireland and Denmark joined the European Union. Followed by Greece in 1981, Spain and Portugal in 1986, its fourth enlargement in 1995 where Austria, Finland and Sweden joined the EU and increased the number of member states to 15 countries. However, EU did not stop at its fourth enlargement because it was followed by the largest enlargement in history where Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia joined EU in 2004. Two countries from Eastern Europe, Romania and Bulgaria joined EU in 2007, and followed by Croatia from Western Balkans in 2013 (Emmert & Petrovi, 2014).

Enlargement policy has been considered as EU's most successful and strong policy. It could be viewed by how the supranational organization could attract Eastern Europe and the Balkans countries to apply for becoming the new member states and turned those countries that used to be under communist regimes to well-functioning democracy. (Vachudova, 2014).

The Western Balkans region was known as Yugoslavia, it used to be under communist ruler. After the break of Yugoslavia in 1991 into independent countries which were Bosnia & Herzegovina, Kosovo, Croatia, Slovenia, Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia. Geographically, the Western Balkans covered these countries and Albania. Those new emerge of independent countries by that time tried to develop differently. (Keil, 2012). For instance, Slovenia and Croatia made to join the EU quickly rather than the other Western Balkans countries. In the early of 1990's, After the collapse of socialism small countries in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) like Slovenia move gradually to economic transformation in which the country made the transition to a market economy and decided to adopt an open economic system.

Moreover, Slovenia became one of country among EU accession countries by that time who has relatively good socio-economic condition (Yoji, EU Accession and The Collapse of Casino Capitalism in Small Countries in Central and Eastern Europe: Focus on Latvia and Slovenia, 2015). Not only fulfill the EU's criteria from its economic aspect, Slovenia also had fulfilled its EU's political criteria. In the year of 2000, as they got pressure and under monitoring and constant evaluation from EU, they have to reform its public administration (Hafner, 2007), before they officially became the member of EU in 2004. Meanwhile in Croatia, the country made to join EU in 2013 because they had successfully transformed its former centrally planned economy into one driven by market forces, improving governance and strengthening its democracy as to fulfill the Copenhagen criteria. Moreover, the EU commission, they saw Croatia's accession by that time as to strengthen stability in a frisky region at the EU's

doorstep and also could bring new opportunities for the businesses and customers on both sides (Feher, 2013).

Different stories from Slovenia and Croatia, the other Western Balkans countries found it much harder to establish democracy and recover from the broke-up. Historically, the Western Balkans has always been an area of geo-strategic interest since the cold war in 1947, the influential major powers like the West and Soviet Union were competing for influence such as an ideological conformity and gaining in the region. According to European Parliament, after Slovenia joined EU in 2004, Croatia followed in 2013. Montenegro, Serbia, the Republic of North Macedonia and Albania are official candidates. Candidate countries are those who still in the negotiations process or waiting to start. Montenegro and Serbia are currently still in the negotiations process while Albania and North Macedonia are waiting to start for the negotiations. Meanwhile, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo are potential candidate countries. Potential candidate countries are those who promise the prospect of joining the union when they are ready (Munter, 2019).

Enlargement policy has indeed become a successful foreign policy from European Union. It proved by how the policy has taken in Eastern European and Mediterranean countries that finally share strong commitment to European values, especially in the country of Slovenia that quickly move to democratic governments and recently the Croatia accession in the Western Balkans region in 2013 (Orenstein, 2015). The researcher found the significance of the Western Balkans region which some countries like Slovenia and Croatia that used to be under communist rule but could move to

democratic government through the implementing of enlargement policy and finally could joined the EU, yet candidate countries in Western Balkans region such as Albania, North Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia still encounter obstacles or challenges to have full membership of EU. Therefore, in this thesis, the researcher would like to analyze the enlargement policy of EU towards candidate countries in Western Balkans by using a concept of Common Foreign and Security Policy and enlargement policy and Copenhagen criteria.

B. Research Question

Based on the background of the research, the thesis is going to focus on addressing research question as follows:

Why do some of the Western Balkans candidate countries particularly in Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia still encounter obstacles to have full membership status of EU?

C. Theoretical Framework

In regards to the thesis, the researcher has selected a concept to help to address the research question proposed:

1. Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP)

European Union is not a state, but they had established foreign policy called '*The Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP)*' since the Maastricht Treaty in 1993. Foreign policy is an official conduct of state, it uses to pursue the nation's national interest and determines the way it interacts with other state and non-state actors (Frazier, 2019). CFSP is implemented and defined as EU's foreign policy by the member states of European Union (EU).

It is an EU foreign policy that allows member states to arrange joint policy and assert political identity of EU itself (Turunen, 2019). Moreover, CFSP has become an increasingly significant part of the accession conditionality since the countries from South-East Europe were started on the membership course. The obligation to adapt to EU norms in the area of CFSP is stronger for candidate countries who wish to join EU.

The CFSP is guided by the values of democracy, the rule of law, the universality and indivisibility of human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for human dignity, the principles of equality and solidarity, and respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter and international law (Dijkstra & Vanhoonacker, 2017). Moreover, on its instruments, it explains that their positions in taking decision are defined by the council, who hold top authority in CFSP which is The European council and are binding on the Member States and must be defended by them under all circumstances.

The candidate countries that are in pre-accession process are obliged to adopt with the EU norms and values in the area of CFSP. CFSP also pointed out that the member countries in taking decisions are in one voices, it included in put stance on their political identity as a democratic country and embrace the core values of European Union.

2. Concept of Enlargement Policy and Copenhagen Criteria

In 1989, According to Roy Ginsberg, he classified enlargement policy as a type of foreign policy action, which resulted specifically from the process of externalisation: a foreign policy option that could be executed in response to outside pressure from eligible

non-members who want to join the EU (Sjursen & Smith E, 2004). Moreover, Frank Schimmelfennig argued, that the Enlargement process could be regarded as widening of adoption of European norms, rules, practices, and model of governance beyond the formal borders of the relevant organization (Schimmelfennig & Sedelmeier, 2011). The enlargement policy was attached on Treaty of European Union which has set out the conditions (Article 49) and principles (Article 6(1)) to which any country wishing to become an EU member must conform. These certain criteria known as the Copenhagen criteria 1993 (EU Commission, 2016) that consists of:

- **Political** – it must have stable institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law and human rights.
- **Economic** – it must have a functioning market economy and be able to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the EU.
- **Legal** – it must accept established EU law and practice – especially the major goals of political, economic and monetary union.

We can see that EU emphasizes political criteria as the top priority to join the union in which the candidate countries or potential candidates who wish to join have to conform such guaranteeing or enforce democratic values in the region. Next, on the economic aspect, in which candidate or potential candidate countries have to be able run a functioning market economy. That's part of European norms, rules and practices that have to be fulfilled by the candidate or potential candidate countries.

D. Research Argument

The Western Balkans candidate countries (Montenegro, Albania and North Macedonia) still encounter obstacles to have full membership status of EU is caused by the tough process of transition from former communist-ruled to democratic system in which :

- Montenegro is still dealing with weak institutions and corruption
- Albania is still having difficulties of establishing an independent judiciary and still dealing with extensive corruption
- North Macedonia is still struggling to reform its public administration and fight against corruption

E. Research Methodology

The researcher used qualitative analysis methods supported by secondary sources. The data sources to complete in this thesis is obtained from journals, books, news, articles, official government reports, particularly from European Union reports and other relevant credible writings.

F. Systematic Writing

The structure of this thesis which examines European Union Enlargement policy towards the candidate countries in the Western Balkans is arranged as follows:

Chapter I, is an introduction that discusses the background of the issue, research question, theoretical framework, hypothesis, research methodology, and systematic writing.

Chapter II, the researcher would like to explain the history of the enlargement policy. Furthermore, in

this chapter the researcher would like to explore the importance of Copenhagen Criteria 1993 as criteria of enlargement policy and to explain about Pre-accession and Accession process.

Chapter III, will analyze and explain obstacles that encounter by Albania, Montenegro, and North Macedonia in joining EU from its political and legal criteria as candidate countries.

Next chapter, **Chapter IV** will analyze and explain obstacles that encounter by Albania, Montenegro, and North Macedonia in joining EU from its economic criteria

The last chapter, **Chapter V** will summarize and provide conclusions of the research.