

ARE THE BALKAN EU CANDIDATES DIFFERENT? BUILDING A BALKAN MODEL OF SUPPORT FOR EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

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Abstract

This article endeavors to test Anderson's theory of imagined communities by examining the European integration movement on the Balkan Peninsula. By addressing economic choice and national identity in driving support for both the European Union and NATO, the findings here indicate that differences exist in how voters endorse joining the West in three societies in one distinct region of the post-communist world. In societies which are more ethnically and linguistically heterogeneous such as Bulgaria and Romania, there is greater variation in backing endorsement for Western Europe based on ethnicity and languages in 1997 than in Slovenia which is more homogeneous.

Keywords: Balkans, ethnicity, EU integration, imagined community

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