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Tough love : the European Union's relations with the Western Balkans

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This book presents legal and political ways and means to restructure the international community's efforts to stabilize the Western Balkans. As part of the international presence in the region, the European Union adopted sanctions, brokered political agreements, launched its first-ever police and military missions and directed economic, legal and administrative reforms to eradicate the roots of instability. Yet, despite the comprehensive nature of the EU's actions, its strategies have been marked by confusion, its actions by concurrent or competing mandates of other international organisations. The Western Balkans still contain the possibility of a genuine security threat, hence there is a real imperative to move the region as a whole from the stage of international protectorates and weak states to the stage of accession to the euro-atlantic organisations to which they aspire. The author argues that, under the leadership of the European Union, only a 'tough love' strategy, based on a firm but fair application of the conditionality principle, can lead to the integration of the Western Balkans into the European mainstream.

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