



# WORLD CONFERENCE ON SECURITY STUDIES

Milan, Italy

10-12 October 2024

## **Small States Dilemma of Insecurity! Multi-Lateral Security Cooperation in Western Balkans**

**Dr. Elira Luli**

“Luarasi” University, Albania

### **Abstract**

This article examines the strategies states in the Western Balkans employ to navigate their insecurity dilemmas through establishing international partnerships and aligning their foreign policies. It focuses on how states facing internal deficiencies seek external solutions to bolster their security. The discussion tries to diverge from the traditional security dilemma, which posits that a state's efforts to enhance its security can provoke reactions from other states, leading to an arms race or heightened tensions. Instead, the article explores how states shall attempt to mitigate these risks and foster cooperative security arrangements with external partners and neighbouring countries to ensure their safety without necessarily provoking a detrimental response from their peers. The Western Balkans have been a stage for reflecting security and insecurity dilemmas, especially in the post-1990s era. As the Russia-Ukraine conflict unfolds and power politics re-emerges on the international scene, this study examines the careful approach states must adopt in their dealings and interactions with international actors to safeguard their security interests. In a region highly exposed to different external actors, the research underscores the importance of states' vigilance and cooperation in navigating the intricate landscape of international security by reinforcing regional multi-lateral cooperation and a common approach to dealing with borderless common threats.

**Keywords:** insecurity dilemma, international actors, multi-lateral cooperation, common threats