



Summary

Croatia will become the 28th EU member state on July 1 but according to the Salzberger Nachrichten (AT, 8/2) experts believe that the country's agricultural sector and industry are still not competitive. It goes on to say that nevertheless the European Commission will present a positive assessment of the country in its current monitoring report. One problem is that Croatia's public sector is much too big. Standard & Poors has recently downgraded Croatia to junk level and has demanded a job market reform. Vladimir Cavrak, professor at the Faculty of Economics in Zagreb said: "*The EU accession of Croatia will not solve problems*".

- Salzburger-Nachrichten, AT, 8/2, http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130208/mi/item_148099822.pdf

Enlargement Commissioner Štefan Füle will raise the issue of the opening of chapters blocked by the Republic of Cyprus in Turkey's accession negotiations with the new President of Cyprus. In particular he will ask for the opening of the chapter on Justice and Fundamental Rights. This is expected to revitalise Turkey's stalled accession negotiations reports Simerini, (CY, 8/2). However, Turkey's growing economic and diplomatic strengths are changing the dynamics of this conversation. Amidst weakening support for EU membership among the Turkish public and division of opinions within the EU about Turkey's accession, there is a risk that the talks may be called off (rusi.org, UK, 7/2). Turkey has also come under fire in the UK for spending money overseas while it is still a major recipient of EU and international development assistance. In a blistering report on EU aid, the British parliament's International Development Committee noted that sending money to a relatively rich country like Turkey undermined efforts to help impoverished nations (guardian.co.uk, UK, 7/9).

- Simerini, CY, 8/2, http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130208/mi/item_148095489.pdf
- rusi.org, UK, 7/2, <http://www.rusi.org/events/rss/ref:E51126BDF703E8/#.URSG16WIF9A>
- guardian.co.uk, UK, 7/9, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/global-development/2013/feb/07/eu-pares-budget-turkey-korea-step-up-spending>

Following their meeting in Brussels, Serbian President Tomislav Nikolić and Kosovo President Atifete Jahjaga have stated that they want "*a better future for their citizens*" and that "*everything should be solved through dialogue*." Both countries have also confirmed their interest in becoming members of the European Union (Lidove-Noviny, CZ, 8/2)

- Lidove-Noviny, CZ, 8/2, http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130208/mi/item_148075821.pdf

As reported by focus-fen net, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (fYRoM) daily Utrinski Vesnik commented that the European Parliament's Rapporteur on the fYRoM, Richard Howitt, will visit the fYRoM next week and hold intensive talks with representatives of political parties. The forthcoming visit is sending a message that the current time period is crucial and sensitive - ahead of the European Commission's report on the fYRoM's progress. The major issue to be discussed is the political crisis in the fYRoM and its effect on the process of European integration. Two weeks after Commissioner Füle, is expected to visit the country, too (focus-fen.net, BG, 8/2). Focus.fen net also quoted the fYRoM MIA news agency which reported that the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Nikola Poposki, had held a meeting with the ambassadors of EU and NATO countries serving in the fYRoM to present the steps taken by the government in relation to the conclusions reached at EU's summit in December (focus-fen.net, BG, 8/2).

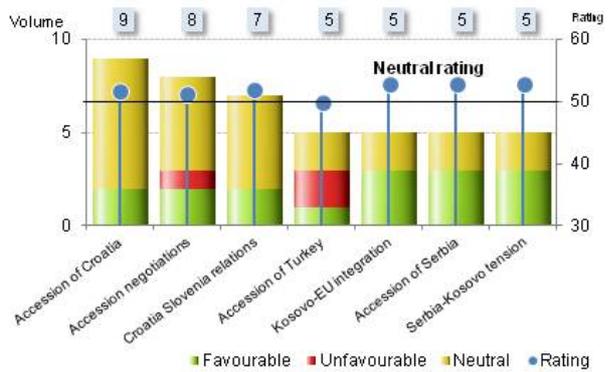
- focus-fen.net, BG, 8/2, <http://www.focus-fen.net/?id=n298884>
- focus-fen.net, BG, 8/2, <http://www.focus-fen.net/?id=n298878>

Key Quotes

Since Bulgaria and Romania's accession in the EU every year thousands of their citizens come to Germany. Since 2007 Bulgaria and Romania are full members of the European Union (EU) and thus no one can stop the Bulgarian and Romanian citizens go to Germany hoping to find a job there (Focus News, Bulgaria, 11/2) <http://www.focus-fen.net/index.php?id=n299091>

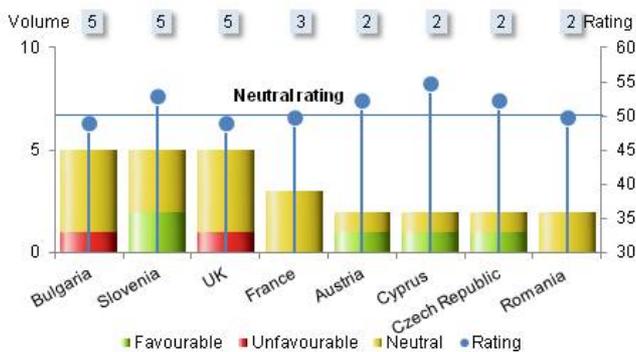
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ELARG: **Key Stakeholders & Sources**
by volume, favourability & rating

ELARG: Stakeholders & Sources	Number of mentions
Baroness Catherine Ashton, (High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, EU)	5
Vesna Pusić (Foreign Minister, Croatia)	5
Tomislav Nikolić (President, Serbia)	5
Atifete Jahjaga (President, Kosovo)	5
Karl Erjavec (Foreign Minister, Slovenia)	5
Štefan Füle (Enlargement Commissioner, EC)	4

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