



## Summary

Laurent Fabius, the French Foreign Minister, has expressed support for a revival of accession negotiations with Turkey, blocked in 2007 by Nicolas Sarkozy (Echos, FR, 14/2). The Financial Times reported that if France's decision to start dismantling roadblocks to Turkey's membership of the EU is genuine, it is an overdue step towards sanity in managing a vital European relationship. There are still huge hurdles, especially Cyprus, which could well bar the door to the Turks. But whether Turkey eventually joins the EU is less important than that it finishes its transformation into a vibrant democracy, dynamic economy and admired regional power. As talks resume, the EU should remove visa requirements for Turkish businessmen, start re-inviting Turkish leaders to summits, and involve Turkey's defence establishment in EU foreign and security policy (Financial-Times, UK, 14/2). The Turkish Foreign Minister, Ahmet Davutođlu has demanded "*shock therapy*" for the relationship between Turkey and the EU. This includes the suspension of the visa requirement and more visible participation of Turkey in EU meetings, the minister said in Paris (Standard, AT, 14/2). Within Turkey changes to the penal code have been drafted, narrowing the definition of terrorist propaganda in a step to boost freedom of expression in line with EU demands. The European Commission has called on Ankara to amend its laws to distinguish between incitement to violence and expression of non-violent ideas (Independent, UK, 14/2).

- Echos, FR, 14/2, [http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130214/mi/item\\_148598811.pdf](http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130214/mi/item_148598811.pdf)
- Financial-Times, UK, 14/2, [http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130214/mi/item\\_148618084.pdf](http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130214/mi/item_148618084.pdf)
- Standard, AT, 14/2, [http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130214/mi/item\\_148638583.pdf](http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130214/mi/item_148638583.pdf)
- Independent, UK, 14/2, [http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130214/mi/item\\_148618167.pdf](http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130214/mi/item_148618167.pdf)

The Head of the EU Delegation in Serbia Vincent Degert stated on Wednesday that the recognition of Kosovo was not a condition for Serbia's EU accession (kerdos.gr, EL, 14/2) and in Kosovo Prime Minister Hashim Thaçi has said that his meeting with Serbian Prime Minister Ivica Dačić later this month could be "*a new chapter*" in the process of normalising Kosovar-Serbian relations, Thaçi said that the process would be more effective if the issue of the removal of Serbian security structures from Kosovo's ethnic-Serb-populated north were resolved. "*We definitely expect the beginning of a normalisation of the situation in the north of Mitrovica, the dissolution and removal of Serbian security structures from there, and this is the direct responsibility of the Serbian Prime Minister, Dačić*" Thaçi said. (rferl.org, CZ, 13/2).

- kerdos.gr, EL, 14/2, <http://www.kerdos.gr/default.aspx?id=1875351&nt=103>
- rferl.org, CZ, 13/2, <http://www.rferl.org/content/kosovo-serbia-thaci-talks/24901356.html>

UK media continued to report on the £100m given to Turkey for a new high-speed rail line in a very negative tone : "*More arrogance from EU; DESPITE them pleading poverty in budget negotiations last week Brussels officials have just given away more than £100million of taxpayers' money to Turkey to help it build a new high-speed rail line. This huge grant to a country that is not even in the European Union follows hard on the heels of a cheap loan also made to Turkey by the European Investment Bank*"(Daily Express, UK, 1/2).

- Daily Express, UK, 14/2 (no link available)

The Netherlands is no longer linking Romania's accession to Schengen to the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism reports (CVM), according to Romania's Foreign Affairs Minister, Titus Corlăţean who has been in The Hague on an official visit. His Dutch counterpart Frans Timmermans said that although the new Dutch Government is no longer making the link to the CVM reports, it still remains interested in the issue. Corlăţean had asked for support from his counterpart in receiving the green light for Schengen accession at the March 7-8 Justice and Home Affairs Council meeting. The two ministers agreed to stay in touch in the meantime to explore solutions that would benefit all EU members, ahead of the Council meeting in March.

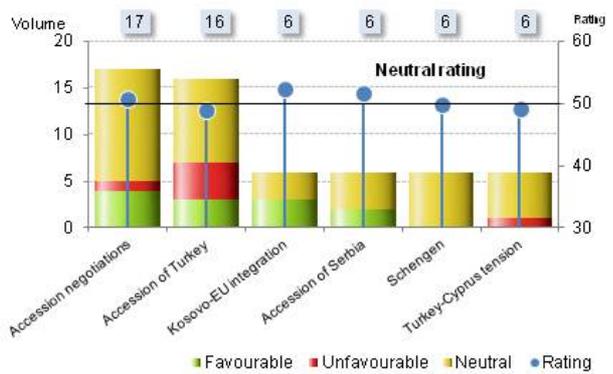
- focus-fen.net, BG, 13/2, <http://www.focus-fen.net/?id=n299350>

## Key Quotes

**A frustrated Turkey is pushing for a breakthrough in negotiations on EU membership. "We should have already been members yesterday,"**said Bagis (Dagens-Nyheter, Sweden, 15/2). [http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130215/mi/item\\_148732875.pdf](http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130215/mi/item_148732875.pdf)

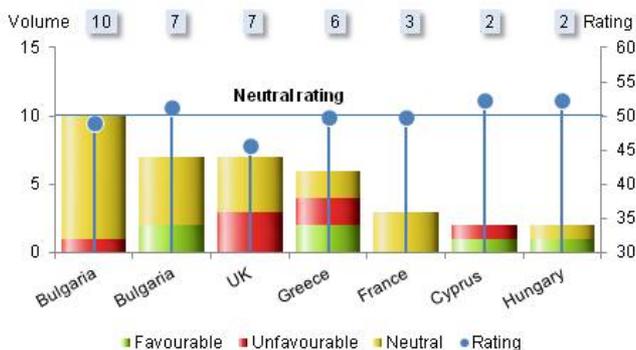
## Charts

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Volume	33 items
Rating	49.5
Favourable %	18.2%
Unfavourable %	21.2%
Neutral %	60.6%

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ELARG: **Key Stakeholders & Sources**  
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ELARG: Stakeholders & Sources	Number of mentions
Ahmet Davutoğlu (Foreign Minister, Turkey)	8
François Hollande (President, France)	6
Laurent Fabius (Foreign Minister, France)	6
Egemen Bağış (Minister for European Affairs, Turkey)	5
Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (Prime Minister, Turkey)	3
Boris Tadić (Former President, Serbia)	3
Tsvetan Tsvetanov (Minister of Interior Affairs, Bulgaria)	3

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