

Summary

Although reported that the Slovenian and Croatian Presidents Borut Pahor and Ivo Josipović believe in timely ratification of the Accession Treaty of Croatia, the Maribor-based daily *Večer* does not share President Borut Pahor's optimism about Slovenia ratifying the Croatian EU Accession Treaty, noting that domestic squabbles may yet throw a spanner in the works (sta.si, SI, 4/3). European Commissioner Štefan Füle is "confident that Croatia is going to deliver." and a positive vote on the matter is expected. He plans to present a final report on Croatia's ability to join the EU. Croatia's accession reflects the EU's attractiveness despite the crisis and according to Mr Füle, this matter is "important for the whole Western Balkan region, because it shows that the EU keeps its promises" (Wirtschaftswoche, DE, 4/3).

- sta.si, SI, 4/3, <http://sta.si/en/vest.php?s=a&id=1860748>
- Wirtschaftswoche, DE, 4/3, http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130304/mi/item_150233193.pdf

Večer (SI, 4/3) reports chaos and havoc in Skopje where the election of an ethnic Albanian and former rebel commander as Defence Minister of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (fYRoM) has prompted protests and violence. After a protest against his appointment on Friday, hundreds of ethnic Albanians expressed support for him on Saturday. On Friday Enlargement Commissioner Štefan Füle, former EP President Jerzy Buzek and EP Rapporteur on the fYRoM Richard Howitt succeeded in bringing the heads of the main political parties together to discuss the return of opposition parties to the National Assembly. The opposition and the government have now agreed to end political deadlock; "This is a deal which has been struck late but I hope and believe not too late," Richard Howitt told reporters in Skopje. Füle warned that the conflict between the political forces may prevent the launch of the fYRoM's accession talks with the EU (radiomaryja.pl, PL, 1/4).

- *Vecer*, SI, 4/3, http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130304/mi/item_150252440.pdf
- radiomaryja.pl, PL, 1/4, <http://www.radiomaryja.pl/informacje/macedonia-opozycja-i-rzad-ustalily-zakonczenie-impasu-politycznego/>

Serbian Prime Minister Ivica Dačić met Philip Reeker, US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State in the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, in Brussels, Serbian daily *Blic* informed. At the meeting Reeker said that Washington backed Serbia's European integration and the dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina. Dačić commented that his country was interested in solving all open issues with Pristina, but to reach a compromise there was a need of good will and intention from both parties (focus-fen.net, BG, 4/3).

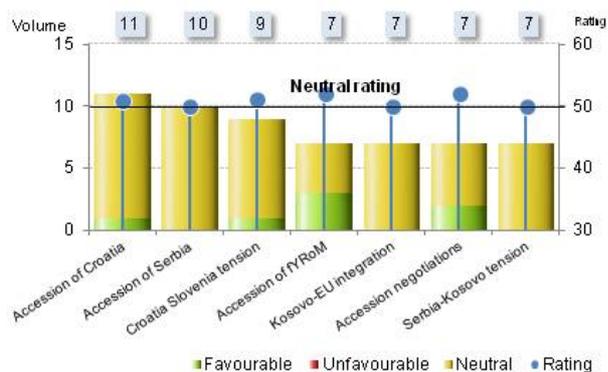
- focus-fen.net, BG, 4/3, <http://www.focus-fen.net/?id=n300891>

Key Quotes

Hans-Peter Friedrich said: "Should Romania and Bulgaria insist the vote be held, the attempt will be blocked by Germany's veto. The EU has long been evaluating whether or not Romania and Bulgaria are ready for acceptance". He added: "The last annual report showed progress, but it's not enough. Bulgaria and Romania still have to be more decisive in the fight against corruption. Our citizens will only accept an expansion of the Schengen Area if some fundamental conditions have been met. That is not yet the case." (Daily Express, UK, 5/3) <http://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/381880/Battle-to-keep-out-EU-migrants>

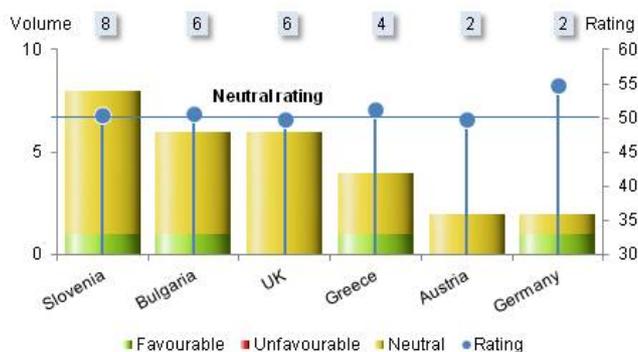
Charts

ELARG: **Leading Daily Issues**
by volume, favourability & rating



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ELARG: **Leading Daily Countries**
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ELARG: **Highlights**
by volume, favourability & rating

Volume	33 items
Rating	50.9
Favourable %	15.2%
Unfavourable %	0%
Neutral %	84.8%

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

ELARG: Stakeholders & Sources	Number of mentions
Štefan Füle (Enlargement Commissioner, EC)	7
Nikola Gruevski (President FYRoM President)	6
Hashim Thaçi (Prime Minister, Kosovo)	6
Ivica Dačić (Prime Minister, Serbia)	5
Ivo Josipović (President, Croatia)	5
Borut Pahor (President, Slovenia)	5

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