



Summary

European Commission President, José Manuel Barroso said that the EU decision on the stabilisation and accession agreement with Serbia by the end of June will depend on the progress of the Pristina-Belgrade talks. The signing of any agreement will also depend on the speed of the reform implementation, especially in the areas of public administration and tackling organised crime. EU High Representative Catherine Ashton will be travelling to Pristina and Belgrade for a new round of negotiations according to Rizospastis (GR, 13/3). However kerdos.gr, (GR, 13/3) reports Serbian President, Tomislav Nikolić as saying that Serbia will not strive to become an EU member at any cost: *"We greatly desire Serbia to become a member of the European Union and we will do everything that a sovereign and independent country, which is proud of itself, can do"*adding *"and then everyone's demands escalated. Today I've said that there are things Serbia is not ready to do even if membership of the European Union is the price"*. The seventh round of bilateral negotiations between premiers Ivica Dačić and Hashim Thaçi is set for March 20 in Brussels. EU-mediated talks between Belgrade and Pristina have been going on for two years reports ansamed.info (IT, 12/3). This morning rferl.org (CZ, 14/3) reported Nikolić said a deal had been reached in Brussels allowing for greater autonomy in northern Kosovo, which is populated mainly by ethnic Serbs who, like Belgrade, reject Kosovo's independence. Kosovo Prime Minister Hashim Thaci, however, denied Nikolić's claims and EU officials did not mention any agreement.

- Rizospastis, EL, 13/3, http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130313/mi/item_151085387.pdf
- kerdos.gr, EL, 13/3, <http://www.kerdos.gr/default.aspx?id=1889691&nt=103>
- ansamed.info, http://www.ansamed.info/ansamed/en/news/sections/politics/2013/03/12/Kosovo-Serbian-communities-be-granted-powers-Nikolic_8383599.html
- rferl.org, CZ, 14/3, <http://www.rferl.org/content/kosovo-european-union-serbia-ashton-/24928108.html>

During the Turkish President, Abdullah Gül's visit to Sweden, the Prime Minister, Fredrik Reinfeldt, discussed Turkey's EU membership and the reforms needed to meet the European Union's requirements. Mr Reinfeldt said that the strategic and economic value of Turkish membership is stronger than ever, but that the new Constitution must make freedom of the press clear. President Gül said Turkey was working on the application of the law and the rights of minorities. Landskrona Posten suggested that the EU should learn from the mistake made in letting Romania and Bulgaria into the EU too soon as well as Hungary. The paper stated that the principle is simple, and should not be negotiable - countries that want to and meet the requirements are welcome into the EU. The EU should be firm but fair with countries that do not (Landskrona-Posten, SE, 13/3).

- Landskrona-Posten, SE, 13/3, http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130313/mi/item_151089742.pdf
- Algemeen-Dagblad, 13/3, http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130313/mi/item_151057316.pdf

Also concerning Turkey, in the Netherlands Hans Houweling writing in Algemeen-Dagblad (13/3) took a more sceptical view of Turkish accession saying that Turkey does not want its citizens to integrate with dangerous Western and Christian people. According to Phileleftheros (Cy, 13/3), the Cypriot MEP, Ioannis Kasoulides told his fellow MEP, Oomen-Ruijten (EPP), that Cyprus is willing to open two negotiation chapters for Turkey, but only if Turkey implements its obligation to return the fenced-off city of Famagusta to its rightful citizens, as stipulated by the UNSC resolution).

- Phileleftheros, CY, 13/3, http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130313/mi/item_151074313.pdf

A debate, initiated by the Romanian delegations, on the European Commission's Cooperation and Verification Mechanism (CVM) for Bulgaria and Romania looked at the CVM methodology, current enforcement and future development. The debate was organised in connection with the forthcoming interim EC report on Romania (focus-fen.net, BG, 13/3).

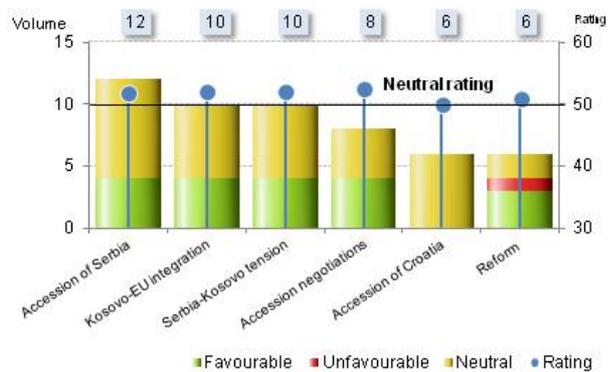
- focus-fen.net, BG, 13/3, <http://www.focus-fen.net/?id=n301566>

Key Quotes

"No alternative for Macedonia's European prospect" said acting PM of Bulgaria Marin Raykov (Focus News, Bulgaria, 14/3)
<http://www.focus-news.net/?id=n1759717>

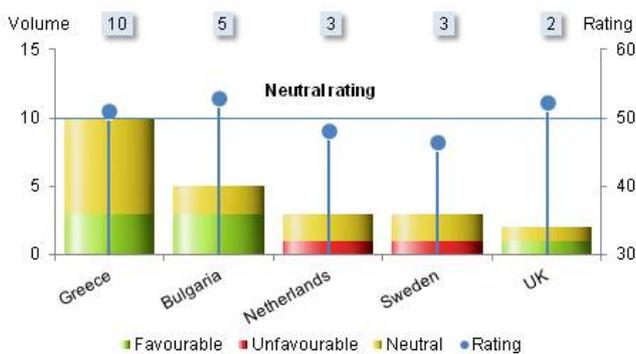
Charts

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Volume	27 items
Rating	50.7
Favourable %	25.9%
Unfavourable %	7.4%
Neutral %	66.7%

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

ELARG: Stakeholders & Sources	Number of mentions
Tomislav Nikolić (President, Serbia)	7
Ivica Dačić (Prime Minister, Serbia)	5
José Manuel Barroso (President, EC)	4
Baroness Catherine Ashton, (High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, EU)	4
Aleksandar Vučić (First Deputy Prime Minister, Serbia)	4
Ivan Mrkić (Foreign Minister, Serbia)	4

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