



Summary

A solution for northern Kosovo still not in sight according to Delo (SI, 15/3): EU High Representative Catherine Ashton met with the Kosovo political leadership yesterday in Pristina, but did not give any statement after the meeting. If the two governments do not come to an agreement in the 7th round of the dialogue, it is unlikely that Serbia and Kosovo will advance their European integration in June this year. Following the meeting the Kosovo Prime Minister Hashim Thaçi stated that he is unwilling to concede legal and executive power to the collective organ that will represent the Kosovo Serbs. He added that the responsibilities of the union of the Serbian municipalities will be within the framework of the constitution and without any legal or executive power (Kathimerini, EL, 15/3). Thaçi also added that he thought an agreement of the normalisation of relations with Serbia is in its final stages (Vecer, SI, 15/3).

- Kathimerini, EL, 15/3, http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130315/mi/item_151293890.pdf
- Delo, SI, 15/3, http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130315/mi/item_151282100.pdf
- Vecer, SI, 15/3, http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130315/mi/item_151295566.pdf

The Economist online (15/3) reported that when Croatia joins the European Union in July, Bosnians will no longer be able to export eggs, meat and dairy products to their richer neighbour as Bosnia and Herzegovina's politicians cannot agree on who should certify whether their producers meet the EU's sanitary and veterinary rules. Muslim Bosniaks want the job done by a central body, whereas Serbs prefer agencies in the two autonomous parts of Bosnia. The EU says it does not matter who does the certifying, although it wants one central body to talk to. Peter Sørensen, the EU's special representative, complains that "*the producers seem to think it is the EU's fault*". Only if the deadlock is broken can Bosnia formally apply to join the EU.

- economist.com, UK, 15/3, <http://www.economist.com/news/europe/21573595-politicians-need-work-together-if-bosnia-join-european-union-balkan-dysfunction?fsrc=rss>

During the European Parliament's debate on the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism (CVM) it was the first time that MEPs from the two most recent EU member states protested so aggressively against monitoring by the European Commission. Up to now, Bulgaria and Romania had described monitoring of justice and home affairs as beneficial for reforms in these spheres. The unusually blunt language from their MEPs surprised European Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy Štefan Füle, who represented the European Commission reports Trud (Bulgaria, BG, 15/3). However new Justice Minister, Dragomir Yordanov commented on the benefits saying that the dialogue with Brussels will continue to be a leading priority for the ministry. He said sociological surveys from recent months had shown a very positive public attitude towards the mechanism. On a governmental level, it was admitted repeatedly that the mechanism is beneficial as it helped to distinguish the specific fields requiring reforms and where progress had been. He concluded by noting however that there was a very notable difference in the EC's approach towards Bulgaria and Romania, given the frequency of reports (focus-fen.net, BG, 15/3).

- Trud-Daily-Bulgaria, BG, 15/3, http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130315/mi/item_151278013.pdf
- focus-fen.net, BG, 15/3, (no link available)

Key Quotes

Dnevnik: "*Only Greece has the right to use the name Macedonia*" says Greek MEP (Focus News, Bulgaria, 18/3)

<http://www.focus-fen.net/?id=n301952>

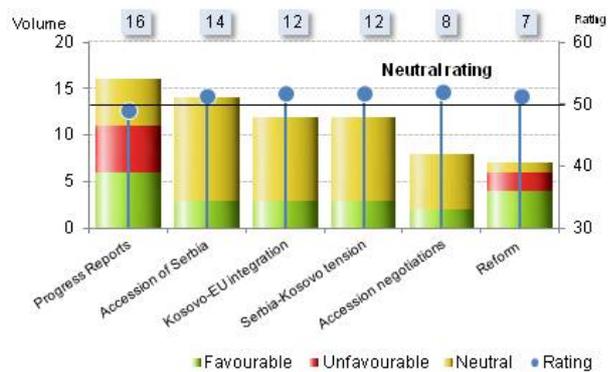
The prime minister of Montenegro, Milo Djukanovic: "*Europe is our home. Europe has its problems, but we are sure that it cannot resolve these problems, and it cannot be competitive, unless it is united. So Europe has to resolve the problems it is facing now, but this is not to say that you should only start talking about integration afterwards. It is now that Europe must discuss integration*"

(Publicserviceeurope.com, UK, 17/3)

<http://www.publicserviceeurope.com/article/3223/western-balkans-too-long-on-the-marqins-of-europe>

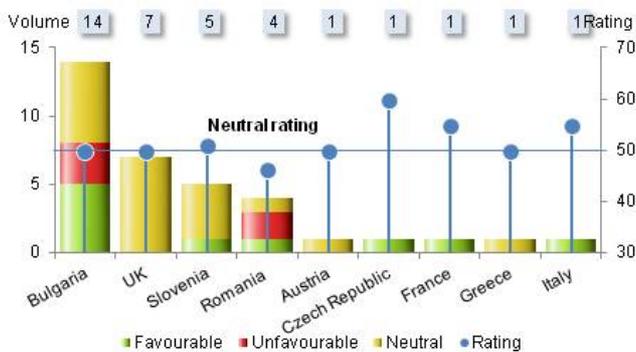
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ELARG: **Key Stakeholders & Sources**
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| ELARG: Stakeholders & Sources | Number of mentions |
|--|--------------------|
| Štefan Füle (Enlargement Commissioner, EC) | 12 |
| Baroness Catherine Ashton, (High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, EU) | 12 |
| Hashim Thaçi (Prime Minister, Kosovo) | 10 |
| Ivica Dačić (Prime Minister, Serbia) | 8 |
| Tomislav Nikolić (President, Serbia) | 7 |
| Iliana Yotova (Bulgarian MEP) | 4 |
| Andrey Kovachev (Bulgarian MEP) | 4 |
| Atifete Jahjaga (President, Kosovo) | 4 |

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