

## Summary

A panel of European Union judges has sentenced three Kosovo Serbs to jail over their role in the 2008 violence that led to the death of a Ukrainian officer from the UN police force. The announcement of the verdicts was delayed for several hours as several hundred Serbs blocked the court building in Mitrovica in protest (rferl.org, CZ, 28/3). Serbia is calling on the EU not to humiliate Serbia in the dialogue with Kosovo; *"We will make compromises because it is important for the future of Serbia but those compromises have limitations"* Serbian Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister, Aleksandar Vučić said. Commenting on the Brussels negotiations, Vučić said that the offered document was not worth either respect or discussion (romandie.com, FR, 30/3).

- rferl.org, CZ, 28/3, <http://www.rferl.org/content/serbs-kosovo/24941916.html>
- romandie.com, FR, 30/3, [http://www.romandie.com/news/n/La\\_Serbie\\_demande\\_a\\_l\\_UE\\_de\\_ne\\_pas\\_l\\_humilier\\_dans\\_le\\_dialogue\\_avec\\_le\\_Kosovo87300320131623.asp](http://www.romandie.com/news/n/La_Serbie_demande_a_l_UE_de_ne_pas_l_humilier_dans_le_dialogue_avec_le_Kosovo87300320131623.asp)

Serbian Prime Minister Ivica Dačić announced he would visit Russia from 10-11 April. *"The Serbian government pays particular attention to relations with Russia,"* Dačić said when speaking to journalists. He also stressed that Russia was a reliable partner of Serbia's foreign policy. Some Serbian media speculated that Dačić would discuss the Kosovo issue in Russia, since Moscow is one of the most influential supporters of Serbia's resistance to Kosovo's independence according to KS Reporter (focus-fen.net, BG, 28/3). Meanwhile, Aleksander Vučić will be in Brussels on April 2 for negotiations, KS Reporter said. He highlighted that the Serbian delegation would be determined by then and also noted that Belgrade wanted to solve the essential problems with the authorities (the police, judicial system and military presence in North Kosovo) (focus-fen.net, BG, 31/3). German MEP Doris Pack said she hoped Belgrade and Pristina realised the seriousness of the situation and eventually reached an agreement ahead of the round of negotiations. According to Pack, over the last few months the two countries have achieved more progress than over the past few years. The German MEP also thinks that the European Union will exert pressure on both countries in order to improve their neighbourly relations (focus-fen.net, BG, 1/4).

- focus-fen.net, BG, 28/3, <http://focus-fen.net/?id=n302772>
- focus-fen.net, BG, 31/3, <http://www.focus-fen.net/?id=n302995>
- focus-fen.net, BG, 1/4, <http://www.focus-fen.net/?id=n303044>

WDR5 reports that despite Croatia's independence, corruption is still high, economic output is very low and the judicial system non-functional. Regardless of the fact that the country is not ready, political considerations have outweighed formal criteria when it comes to accession (WDR5, DE, 31/3). Despite the unchanged high level of corruption, even higher than in Bulgaria or Romania, Enlargement Commissioner, Štefan Füle has certified that Croatia is ready to join the EU (Frankfurter-Allgemeine-Zeitung, DE, 28/3).

- WDR5, DE, 31/3, (no link available)
- Frankfurter-Allgemeine-Zeitung, DE, 28/3, [http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130328/mi/item\\_152491343.pdf](http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130328/mi/item_152491343.pdf)

The Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu said that the outcome of accession negotiations of Turkey into the European Union is no longer as important. He also shared the same opinion as the Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, that now, other countries are more dependent on Turkey than before (klamm.de, DE, 31/3). Fitch upgraded the country to investment grade status in November and GDP growth in 2011 was 8.5%. In a nutshell, Turkey now looks a bit like the first lot of succession countries 10 years ago, a year before their accession to the EU says acqmagazine (acqmagazine.com, UK, 30/3).

- klamm.de, DE, 31/3, <http://www.klamm.de/news/tuerkei-aussenminister-ist-die-eu-beitritt-egal-8N1018012.html>
- acqmagazine.com, UK, 30/3, <http://www.acqmagazine.com/eurozone-shows-greater-appetite-for-turkish-delight>

## Key Quotes

**Kosovo and Serbia near accord to end ethnic partition. "Kosovo will no longer be identified as a problem, but as a functional state within its entire territory,"** said Kosovo's Deputy Prime Minister, Hajredin Kuci. **"This is a big victory"** (Reuters, UK, 1/4)

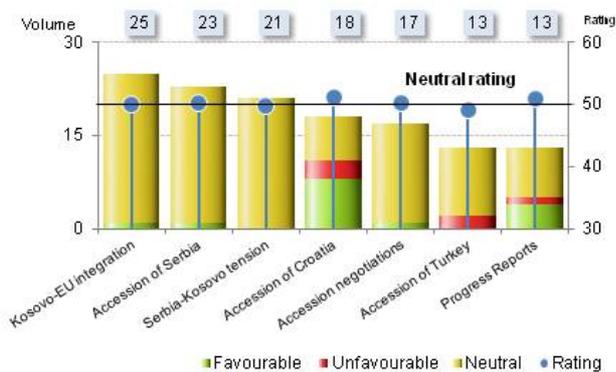
<http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/04/01/uk-kosovo-serbia-idUKBRE93005K20130401?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews>

**The ratification of Croatia's EU Treaty in Slovenian parliament symbolically ends a tough period in bilateral relations, Delo comments on Tuesday, noting that all signs point to it ushering in a new chapter** (sta.si, Slovenia, 2/4) <http://sta.si/en/vest.php?s=a&id=1871511>

**Slobodan Petrović, head of the Independent Liberal Party (SLS) and one of Kosovo's five Deputy Prime Ministers, states that access to the EU is the only chance for economic recovery and a better future. "The future," he says, "lies in integration, not in ethnic division"** (dw.de, DE, 1/4) <http://www.dw.de/most-serbs-in-kosovo-favor-cooperation/a-16712835>

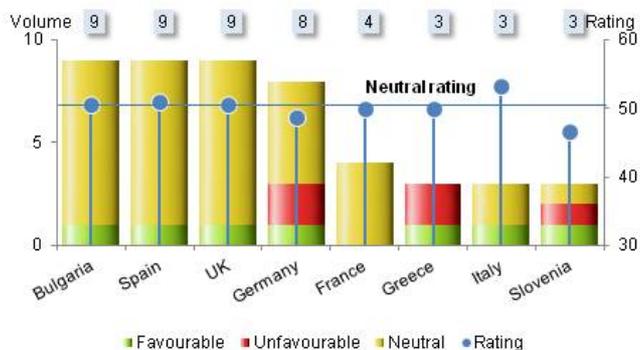
## Charts

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



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by volume, favourability & rating



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ELARG: **Highlights**  
by volume, favourability & rating

Volume	55 items
Rating	50
Favourable %	14.5%
Unfavourable %	10.9%
Neutral %	74.6%

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

ELARG: Stakeholders & Sources	Number of mentions
Ivica Dačić (Prime Minister, Serbia)	18
Hashim Thaçi (Prime Minister, Kosovo)	14
Aleksandar Vučić (First Deputy Prime Minister, Serbia)	14
Baroness Catherine Ashton, (High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, EU)	12
Štefan Füle (Enlargement Commissioner, EC)	5
Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (Prime Minister, Turkey)	3
Ahmet Davutoğlu (Foreign Minister, Turkey)	3
Tomislav Nikolić (President, Serbia)	3

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