

Summary

Kathimerini reported that the dialogue between the Kosovo and Serbia Prime Ministers took place in a tense climate on Wednesday. EU High Representative Catherine Ashton who was the mediator between the two sides, discussed the issue of the future of the North Kosovo area, with Belgrade asking for increased autonomy and Pristina rejecting a solution that would reduce its dominance in the area. It was reported that Mrs Ashton wants a solution by mid-April no matter what happens. (Kathimerini, GR, 3/4). The Director of the Office of Kosovo and Metohija in the Serbian government, Aleksandar Vulin stated that this is not the last round of dialogue for Serbia and that they are willing to talk as long as needed to find a solution, without being a slave to deadlines. Kosovo Prime Minister Hashim Thaçi stated that it will be difficult to come to an agreement, as Belgrade is rejecting their proposed solutions (Delo, SI, 3/4).

- Kathimerini, EL, 3/4, http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130403/mi/item_152980803.pdf
- Delo, SI, 3/4, http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130403/mi/item_152983814.pdf

Catherine Ashton is now putting pressure on former arch-enemies Ivica Dačić and Hashim Thaçi to reach an agreement on peaceful co-existence between Serbia and Kosovo. Billions in EU aid is at stake, writes Henrik Brors in Dagens Nyheter. The two Prime Ministers know they are running out of time with the June Council meeting set to decide on whether Serbia will begin negotiations for EU membership and Kosovo for a cooperation agreement. While the situation might appear hopeless at first, since Tomislav Nikolić was elected President of Serbia on a ticket of never recognising Kosovo, hundreds of countries, including the US and most of the EU, have done so. There is also a lot at stake for Catherine Ashton, who has suffered much criticism for a failure in leadership in EU foreign policy matters (Dagens-Nyheter, SE, 3/4). Although Belgrade and Pristina are seeking solutions for the life and work of the Serbian majority in northern Kosovo under the baton of the EU or in other words, Brussels, Delo suggests there will be no breakthrough without the help of Washington (Delo, SI, 3/4).

- Dagens-Nyheter, SE, 3/4, <https://web.retriever-info.com/go/?u=https%3A%2F%2Fweb.retriever-info.com%2Fservices%2Farchive.html%3Fmethod%3DdisplayPDF&p=269344&a=32138&sa=2017670&x=2170f9fc03e75637f321967aed68c1d3&d=08003120130403146761https://web.retriever-info.com/go/?u=https%3A%2F%2Fweb.retriever-info.com%2Fservices%2Farchive.html%3Fmethod%3DdisplayPDF&p=269344&a=32138&sa=2017670&x=2170f9fc03e75637f321967aed68c1d3&d=08003120130403146761>
- Delo, SI, 3/4, http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130403/mi/item_152983873.pdf

Enlargement Commissioner Štefan Füle welcomed the ratification of Croatia's accession treaty in the Slovenian National Assembly, along with the entire European Commission, whose final report on Croatia estimated that the country is ready for entry into the EU. The Slovenian President Borut Pahor stated that the ratification is an excellent starting point for further cooperation between the two countries, while the Croatian President Ivo Josipović stated that the move is conformation of solid, long-lasting and friendly relations between the two countries (Delo, SI, 3/4).

- Delo, SI, 3/4, http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130403/mi/item_152983827.pdf

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (fYRoM) has one week to present its progress in terms of the European integration, if European Enlargement Commissioner Štefan Füle is to write a positive report for the country. According to Utrinski Vesnik, the international community does not have much time; a day after the elections Commissioner Füle will visit the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, while the next day the European Parliament will vote on the resolution on the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. There will also be a new round of the name issue negotiations on the same day (focus-fen.net, BG, 3/4).

- focus-fen.net, BG, 3/4, <http://www.focus-fen.net/?id=n303262>

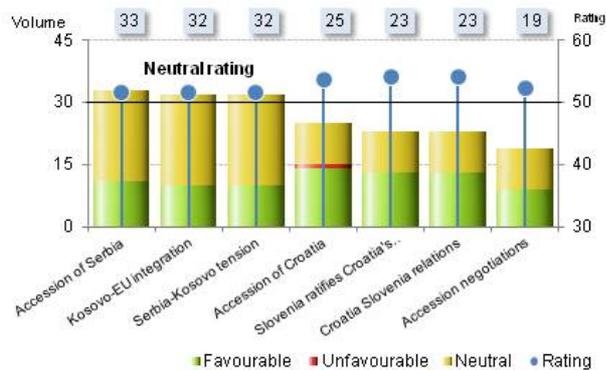
Key Quotes

Serbia has days to decide whether to accept a "catastrophic" plan to end the ethnic partition of its former Kosovo province or risk losing out on talks on joining the European Union, the country's powerful deputy prime minister said on Wednesday. "We're between a rock and a hard place," Deputy Prime Minister Aleksandar Vučić, leader of the largest party in Serbia's governing coalition, told state television. (Yahoo!, UK, 3/4) <http://uk.news.yahoo.com/blow-serbias-eu-bid-kosovo-talks-deadlocked-114613460.html#Ehbe06I>

Daniel Mason writes that "bringing Serbia and Kosovo so close to an historic deal – together with the resolution of various disputes between Croatia and Slovenia – shows how powerful the lure of membership can still be for countries in the troubled western Balkan region. That Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro and Macedonia have also joined the waiting list is testament to that" (Public Service Europe, UK, 3/4) <http://www.publicserviceeurope.com/editor-blog/202/serbia-and-kosovo-so-close-but-yet-so-far>

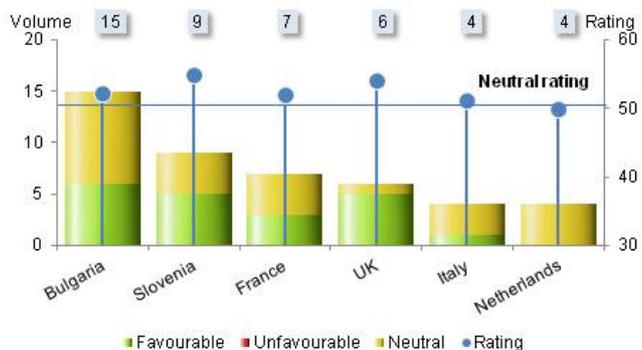
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Volume	59 items
Rating	52.6
Favourable %	42.4%
Unfavourable %	1.7%
Neutral %	55.9%

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ELARG: **Key Stakeholders & Sources**
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ELARG: Stakeholders & Sources	Number of mentions
Baroness Catherine Ashton, (High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, EU)	26
Hashim Thaçi (Prime Minister, Kosovo)	26
Ivica Dačić (Prime Minister, Serbia)	25
Aleksandar Vučić (First Deputy Prime Minister, Serbia)	9
Alenka Bratušek (Prime Minister, Slovenia)	9
Zoran Milanović (Prime Minister, Croatia)	8
Tomislav Nikolić (President, Serbia)	8

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