

## Summary

EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton cancelled a planned trip to Zagreb to attend a new round of talks on Kosovo (ansa.it, IT 19/4). The result of the talks was that Serbia and its former province of Kosovo have reached an EU-brokered accord aimed at normalising relations between the Balkan neighbours. Under the new deal, Serbs in northern Kosovo will have their own police and appeal court. Both sides also agreed to not block each other's efforts to seek EU membership. Brussels said it would open EU membership talks with Serbia if the country relinquished its de facto control over northern Kosovo. Beyond its own police and appeal court, there is none of the autonomy that Serbia had originally been demanding as part of the talks and there was certainly no recognition of Kosovo's independence by Belgrade. However, the agreement should allow both sides to move on with plans for membership of the EU reports BBC online (UK, 20/4). European Commission president José Manuel Barroso commented on Friday: *"The people of Serbia and Kosovo want to move forward and make their European perspective a reality. This is crucial for the stability, security and prosperity of south eastern Europe and of the EU as a whole."* He added that Ashton's efforts had been *"tireless"* (Publicserviceeurope, UK, 19/4).

- ansa.it, IT 19/4, [http://www.ansa.it/ansamed/it/notizie/stati/serbia/2013/04/19/Kosovo-Ue-Ashton-annulla-visita-Croazia\\_8577655.html](http://www.ansa.it/ansamed/it/notizie/stati/serbia/2013/04/19/Kosovo-Ue-Ashton-annulla-visita-Croazia_8577655.html)
- BBC, UK, 20/4, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-22222624>
- Publicserviceeurope, (UK, 19/4) <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-22222624>

A press release from the European Parliament reported that Croatia is on track to become the EU's 28th member state on 1 July. MEPs highlighted the strength of Croatia's democracy, social market economy and capacity to fulfil its membership obligations and called on the last two member states that still have to approve Croatia's accession to do so without delay. *"Croatia's quest for EU membership – which entailed a thorough transformation of all corners of public policy – is almost over. Croatia's accession will make the EU stronger and more secure,"* said Libor Rouček, the EP rapporteur on Croatia adding *"Croatia's success also sends an encouraging signal to other candidate and aspirant states in the region"* (focus-fen.net, BG, 18/4).

- focus-fen.net, BG, 18/4, <http://www.focus-fen.net/?id=n304464>

Ansamed.info (IT, 18/4) reports that the EU Council should approve a new round of membership talks for Turkey in the sectors of justice and fundamental rights, freedoms and security. This was recommended by European Parliament members last Thursday, who said that it had become necessary for Brussels and Ankara to renew their mutual engagement. *"We need commitment from both the EU and Turkey"* said Ria Oomen-Ruijten, the EP rapporteur for Turkey. *"Turkey needs to step up efforts to guarantee freedom of expression, media freedom and all other fundamental freedoms in line with the values of the EU"* adding. *"The EU must do its utmost to support Turkey in the reform process; renewed efforts for the opening of further negotiation chapters are important"*. Cyprus media presented the European Parliament's resolution as a failure of the efforts of the pro-Turkish lobby to pass amendments referring to the participation of Turkish Cypriot observers in the European Parliament and the opening of Direct Trade of the EU with the non-government controlled areas according to Simerini (CY, 19/4). Commissioner Füle called on EU states to recognise Turkey's reform efforts, to open further policy negotiations with Ankara and to show more *"credibility"* in the talks (Reuters, UK, 19/4).

- ansamed.info, IT, 18/4, <http://www.ansamed.info/ansamed/en/news/nations/europe/2013/04/18/EU-Turkey-open-chapters-rights-freedoms-8576203.html>
- Simerini, CY, 19/4, [http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130419/mi/item\\_154535165.pdf](http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130419/mi/item_154535165.pdf)
- Reuters, UK, 19/4 <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/04/19/uk-eu-turkey-idUKBRE9310QJ20130419?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews>

## Key Quotes

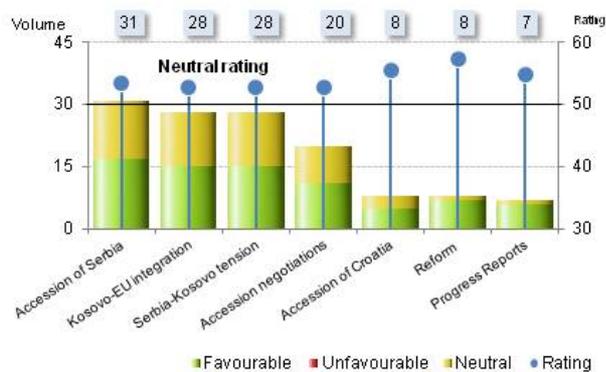
**EU Enlargement Commissioner Štefan Füle** said: *"It is an opportunity that cannot be missed"* (Berliner Morgenpost, Germany, 22/4) <http://www.morgenpost.de/politik/ausland/article115484256/Kosovos-Parlament-stimmt-fuer-Serbien-Abkommen.html>

**Vlora Citaku, Kosovo's minister for European integration, tweeted:** *"And the white smoke is out! Habemus pactum! Happy:))"* (bankier.pl, Poland, 20/4) <http://www.bankier.pl/wiadomosc/UE-porozumienie-Serbii-i-Kosowa-ws-normalizacji-stosunkow-2809731.html>

*"This is an historic day for Serbia-Kosovo relations, for the entire western Balkans region and for the EU,"* Štefan Füle said (ABC, Spain, 19/4) <http://www.abc.es/agencias/noticia.asp?noticia=1398673>

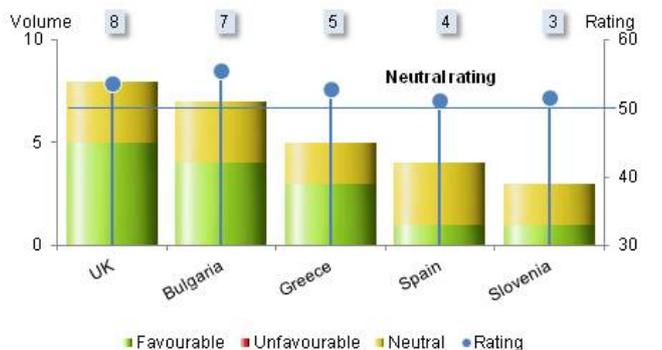
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ELARG: **Highlights**  
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Volume	41 items
Rating	53.2
Favourable %	48.8%
Unfavourable %	0%
Neutral %	51.2%

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ELARG: **Key Stakeholders & Sources**  
by volume, favourability & rating 42.9

ELARG: Stakeholders & Sources	Number of mentions
Baroness Catherine Ashton, (High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, EU)	26
Hashim Thaçi (Prime Minister, Kosovo)	21
Ivica Dačić (Prime Minister, Serbia)	21
Vlora Çitaku (Minister for European Integration, Kosovo)	6
Bekim Çollaku (Prime Minister's Chief of Staff, Kosovo)	4
Štefan Füle (Enlargement Commissioner, EC)	3
Ria Oomen-Ruijten (MEP)	2
Artur Mas (President of the Generalitat de Catalunya)	2

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