



Key Quotes

German Chancellor Angela Merkel said that Turkey's help was needed to stem the flow of refugees to Europe but that this hadn't changed her view that Ankara should not become a member of the European Union. **"I have always been against EU membership, President Erdoğan knows this, and I still am,"** Merkel said. Merkel was an outspoken opponent of Turkey joining the EU before she took power in 2005, advocating instead a **"privileged partnership"** that stopped short of full membership (uk.reuters.com, UK, 8/10).

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/2015/10/07/uk-europe-migrants-germany-turkey-idUKKCN0S12RF20151007>

Bekim Çollaku, Kosovo's Minister of European Integration, writes that: **"Kosovo's stability and economic development is closely linked to its EU perspective. Any further delays would not only endanger the integration agenda, but also would play into the hands of the extremist elements in the country. The greater the EU's presence in our country, the more prosperous and stable it will be. This will benefit the region and the rest of Europe"** (theparliamentmagazine.eu, BE, 7/10).

<https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/opinion/it%E2%80%99s-time-eu-help-consolidate-kosovo%E2%80%99s-european-ambitions>

Summary

Serbian-Albanian relations

A year after their match in Belgrade was abandoned due to violence, Albania host Serbia in a crucial Euro 2016 qualifier on Thursday. The bitter rivals will meet amid high-level security after last October's match had to be brought to a halt when violence broke out both on and off the pitch. The incident escalated into a political crisis and highlighted the fragile relations between the two Balkan nations. Bilateral relations have traditionally been frosty, especially since Kosovo, populated by mostly ethnic Albanians, declared independence in 2008. Under pressure from Brussels, Serbia and Albania have worked to normalise relations, with both aspiring to join the European Union. After Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama visited Belgrade, his Serbian counterpart Aleksandar Vučić paid a historic visit to Tirana in May and both men have pledged to turn the page with the common goal of preserving stability in the Balkans (eubusiness.com, UK, 7/10).

- eubusiness.com, UK, 7/10, <http://www.eubusiness.com/news-eu/serbia-albania-fbl.14nb/>

Turkey: the dangers of realpolitik;

L'Opinion's Luc Barochez writes about the European efforts to give Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan a warm reception and criticises the EU's strategic choices. As it *"rediscovered the strategic interest of Turkey"* in order to contain the massive influx of migrants into its territory, the EU offered to speed up the process of lifting visa restrictions for Turkish travellers, to revive EU accession talks and add an extra €250 million to its financial assistance. The reaction comes a little late, considering that Turkey had everything it takes to become a major partner before it became the main gateway to Europe. However, supporting President Erdoğan may not be a judicious choice. His failing Syrian strategy's only purpose is to prevent Syrian Kurds from funding their own State and he may not even be re-elected after next month's election. Is it really in Europe's interest to endorse him now Mr Barochez asks.

- L'Opinion FR, 7/10, http://193.178.140.110/delivery/20151007/mi/item_268432342.pdf

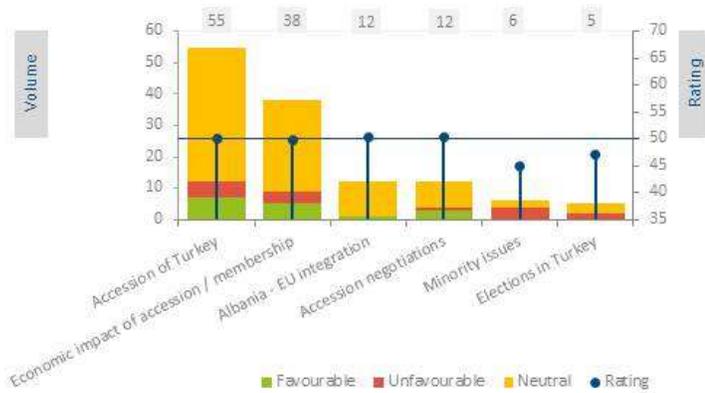
Talks in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia fail to meet the deadline

Following intensive negotiations which lasted up until the early hours, the main political parties in Skopje could not manage to strike a deal for the remaining obligations of the agreement for the solution of the political crisis. The negotiations focused on the new electoral model and changes to the Electoral Code. The political parties didn't want to comment the causes of the failure of the talks. In briefings with journalists their representatives underlined that the talks will continue and that an agreement is expected to be finalized between the leaders of the four main political parties (balkaneu.com, GR, 7/10).

- balkaneu.com, GR, 7/10, <http://www.balkaneu.com/political-parties-fyrom-reach-agreement-deadline/>

Charts

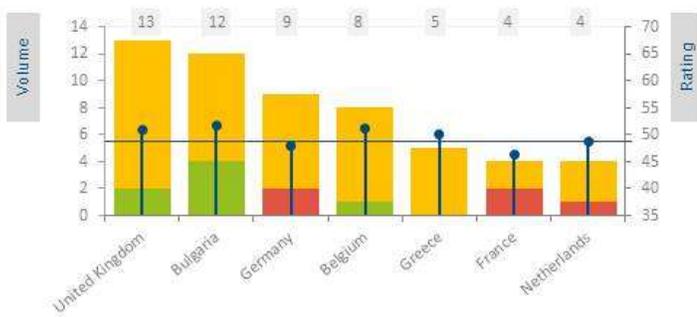
ELARG: **Leading Daily Issues**
by volume, favourability & rating



ELARG: **Highlights**
by volume, overall rating and percentage favourability

| | |
|----------------|----------|
| Volume | 70 items |
| Rating | 50.1 |
| Favourable % | 11.4% |
| Unfavourable % | 7.2% |
| Neutral % | 81.4% |

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



ELARG: **Key Stakeholders & Sources**
by volume

| ELARG: Stakeholders & Sources | Number of mentions |
|--|--------------------|
| Recep Tayyip Erdoğan - Turkey President | 48 |
| Jean-Claude Juncker – President EC | 30 |
| Donald Tusk – President European Council | 14 |
| Bujar Nishani - President Albania | 10 |
| Rosen Plevneliev -President Bulgaria | 8 |
| Federica Mogherini – HR Foreign Affairs | 6 |

Copyright © Ebiqity plc 2015

Disclaimer: The access to this press report is restricted to European Commission staff. It should not be forwarded or circulated.