



Key Quotes

New Serbia-Kosovo talks planned in Brussels. German Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle hailed the April 19 agreement as **"historic"** but called for **"concrete steps"** to implement it (Rferl.org, Czech, 21/5)

<http://www.rferl.org/content/serbia-kosovo/24992145.html>

UK ratifies Croatian European Union Accession Treaty. The Foreign Secretary, William Hague, said: **"This will be an historic moment for Croatia and the EU, marking the culmination of six years of the toughest accession negotiations yet. The determination and commitment the Croatian government and people have shown has transformed the country as the EU's far-reaching reforms have taken effect. Successful EU membership is an opportunity to unlock prosperity for Croatia's people and provides a clear example to Croatia's western Balkans neighbours that hard work does indeed pay off"** (Foreign and Commonwealth Office, UK, 20/5)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-ratifies-croatian-european-union-accession-treaty>

Summary

Croatians vote in local elections, *"seen as a test for the centre-left government and its austerity policy ahead of the country's EU entry"*(focus-fen.net, BG, 19/5). Prime Minister Zoran Milanovic and his Social Democrat led government have reached a low point in their popularity since elected in 2011, according to a recent survey as cuts in spending and higher taxes have not helped to revive the economy. The results showed declining support for the SDP, while the nationalist Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) gained ground. Independent mayor of Zagreb, Milan Bandić *"has emerged as the major winner in the first round"*(presseurop, FR, 20/5).

- focus-fen.net, BG, 19/5 <http://www.focus-fen.net/?id=n306813>
- presseurop.eu, FR, 20/5, <http://www.presseurop.eu/en/content/news-brief/3789881-bandic-stronger-sdp-and-hdz-combined>

German Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle travelled to Belgrade for talks with Serbia's leadership and called on Serbia to implement the deal normalising relations with its former province Kosovo. This deal would expand Priština's authority to northern Kosovo, while giving a degree of autonomy in the area to 40,000 local Serbs who are largely opposed to the deal. *"An agreement on the implementation of the Brussels agreement and the start of its realisation is a key condition for Serbia's further progress on its European path"* Westerwelle said (dw.de, DE, 20/5).

- dw.de, DE, 20/5, <http://www.dw.de/german-foreign-minister-pushes-serbia-on-kosovo-deal/a-16824429>

In an interview with the Panorama political talk-show on Bulgarian National Television the Kosovo Prime Minister Hashim Thaçi was asked whether he thought Serbs and the Albanians had finally reached an agreement over Kosovo, he said that after long years of conflicts and problems, finally there was a peaceful agreement on relations between Kosovo and Serbia. He was then asked whether it was possible, after Kosovo, for Albanians to wish for parts of Montenegro, Macedonia, and Serbia, too. He replied that everywhere in the region Albanians will be part of NATO and the EU. Albania is in NATO, it will also join the EU. Kosovo, being a new democracy and a multi-ethnic country, will be member of the EU and NATO, too. The same will be valid for those Albanians living in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, who will join NATO and the EU within their country. The Albanians in Montenegro, too – will all be members of the big European family (focus-fen.net, BG, 18/5).

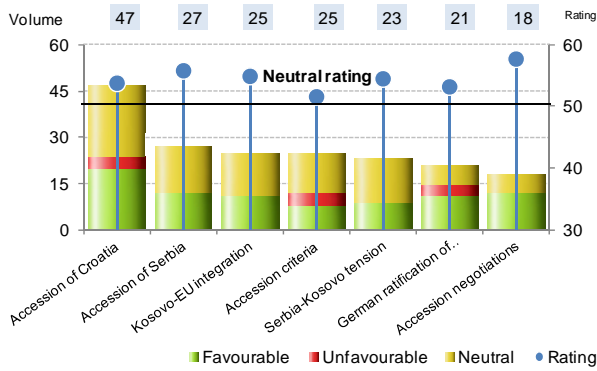
- focus-fen.net, BG, 18/5, <http://www.focus-fen.net/?id=f3262>

EU High Representative Catharine Ashton congratulated the Croatian political leadership on all that Croatia had achieved in the accession negotiations. Ms Ashton met Prime Minister Zoran Milanović, and the two discussed the situation in the region and emphasised the importance of cooperation between countries (Vecer, SI, 17/5).

- Vecer, SI, 17/5, http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130517/mi/item_157024211.pdf

Charts

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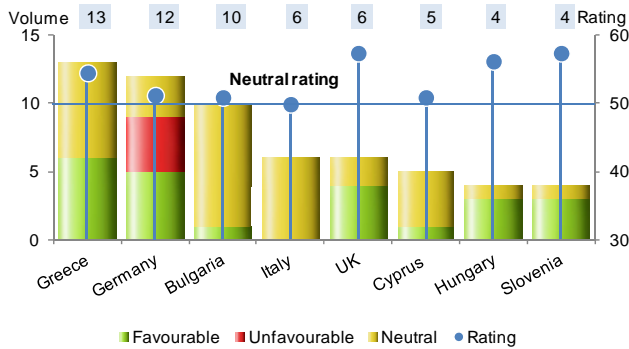
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ELARG: Key Stakeholders & Sources
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ELARG: Stakeholders & Sources	Number of mentions
Guido Westerwelle (Foreign Minister, Germany)	21
Ivica Dačić (Prime Minister, Serbia)	16
Baroness Catherine Ashton, (High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, EU)	15
Zoran Milanović (Prime Minister, Croatia)	15
Milan Bandić (Mayor of Zagreb, Croatia)	13
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