

Key Quotes

Bosnia and Herzegovina under pressure to change if it wants EU membership. **"The European Union can only facilitate. It is up to the political leaders of the country to step up to the challenge in a genuine engagement,"** said Štefan Füle. **"Do I agree that the time has come for the alarm to ring for Bosnia and Herzegovina? Yes,"** said Füle, who had already warned that Bosnia and Herzegovina's EU accession bid could be "frozen" (Reuters, UK, 23/5)

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/05/23/uk-eu-bosnia-idUKBRE94MOR520130523?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews>

Herman Van Rompuy said: **"Turkey's ties to the union are very strong. Last December, under my presidency, all 27 heads of state or government of the union confirmed their commitment to Turkey's accession process. After a moment of standstill, this commitment will give a new impetus and will soon be translated into a concrete step forward. And I am confident other such concrete steps forward will follow. The accession negotiations are the main driver of in our relationship. We knew in advance they would take time"** (Public Service Europe, UK, 24/5)

<http://www.publicserviceeurope.com/article/3504/van-rompuy-sees-concrete-steps-in-turkeys-eu-bid>

Summary

Iceland suspends EU talks until after referendum

Iceland has suspended talks on seeking European Union membership until after a referendum that is almost certain to reject the proposal. The move follows overwhelming public hostility to joining the EU and is the first time that a country has changed its mind midway through entry talks. A date for the referendum is yet to be set. Iceland had applied for EU membership in 2009 following the collapse of its banks, which were not bailed out by the government but now enjoys faster economic growth than the EU average (The Daily Telegraph, UK, 23/5). Sigmundur Davíð Gunnlaugsson, Iceland's new prime minister, said on Wednesday *"the government intends to halt negotiations between Iceland and the European Union."* (guardian.co.uk, UK, 22/5). A government policy document signed by the centrist-agrarian Progressive Party and the right-wing Independence Party stated *"We will not continue the accession talks with the European Union until after a referendum,"* (libero.milanofinanza.it, IT, 22/5). Many Icelanders fear their monopoly on fishing waters around the island will be eroded by demands from Brussels to allow access to foreign boats (bbc.co.uk, UK, 22/5).

- The Daily Telegraph, UK, 23/5, (link not available)
- guardian.co.uk, UK, 22/5, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2013/may/22/iceland-eu>
- libero.milanofinanza.it, IT, 22/5, http://libero.milanofinanza.it/news/dettaqlio_news.asp?id=201305221542041315&chkAgenzie=TMFI
- bbc.co.uk, UK, 22/5, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-22624110>

Croatia: Euphoria of country risking bankruptcy

An article by Giuseppe Raguzzoni in Padania, (IT, 22/5) notes that as Croatia is due to enter the EU, Croatia's ordinary people are expecting this to boost the economy and jobs. However, it is not clear whether Croatia's public finances are abiding by the EU rules. Moreover, entering the EU might penalise several sectors of Croatia's economy, such as tourism, now extremely competitive compared to other European countries. An opinion piece in BILD (DE, 23/5) criticises the intention to go ahead with accepting Croatia into the European Union as Croatia is experiencing economic difficulties and its debt has risen to 60% of its GDP. *"In plain speak: Despite the debt crisis, the EU is embracing the next problem case,"* the author writes. In addition, the European Commission has repeatedly warned about the country's biggest problem - corruption.

- Padania, IT, 22/5, http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130522/mi/item_157484938.pdf
- BILD, DE, 23/5, http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130523/mi/item_157529494.pdf

The UK, Germany, Sweden, the Netherlands and Denmark are making a case, not to let Croatia's EU accession cause another EU contribution increase for the current member states. The EC intends to transfer €374 million EU funds to Croatia during the remainder of 2013. The 5 countries mentioned want this money to be taken out of the current budget, instead of being charged as an additional contribution. All 5 countries have a veto with respect to the additional funding for Croatia (Het Financieele Dagblad, NE, 23/5)

- Het Financieele Dagblad, NE, 23/5, http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130523/mi/item_157521261.pdf

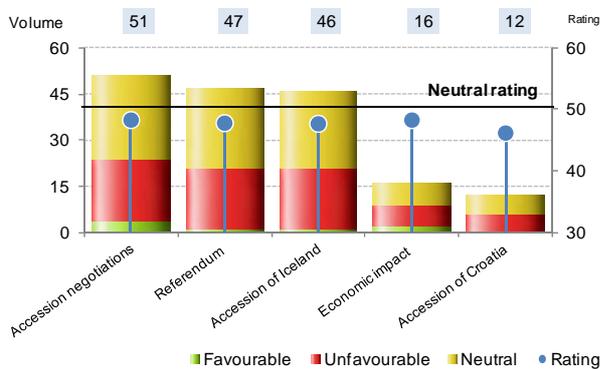
Serbia and Kosovo agree deal in principle

European Union foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton says the prime ministers of Serbia and Kosovo have agreed in principle on the implementation of a deal normalising their relations. She announced the agreement after talks with Serbia's Prime Minister Ivica Dačić and Kosovo's Prime Minister Hashim Thaçi in Brussels. Ashton confirmed the two leaders *"have agreed a fixed text which they are now consulting upon,"* adding *"they will be in touch with me by the end of the week"* (rferl.org, CZ, 22/5). No details of the draft agreement were made public (uk.reuters.com, UK, 22/5).

- rferl.org, CZ, 22/5, <http://www.rferl.org/content/serbia-kosovo-implementation-normalization-deal/24993708.html>
- uk.reuters.com, UK, 22/5, <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/05/22/uk-serbia-kosovo-eu-idUKBRE94L13K20130522>

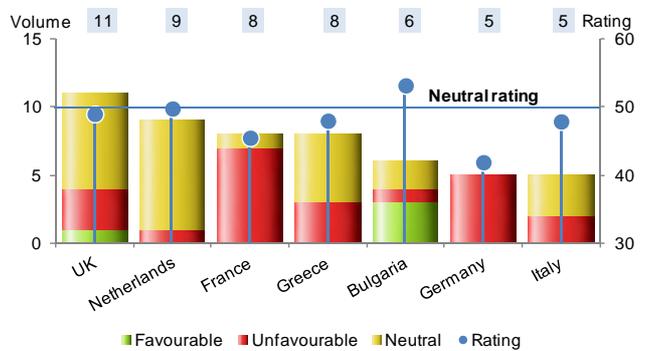
Charts

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by volume, favourability & rating



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Volume	72 items
Rating	48.7
Favourable %	9.7%
Unfavourable %	36.1%
Neutral %	54.2%

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

ELARG: Stakeholders & Sources	Number of mentions
Sigmundur Davíð Gunnlaugsson (Chairman Progressive Party, Iceland)	27
Bjarni Benediktsson (Leader Independence Party, Iceland)	15
Hashim Thaçi (Prime Minister, Kosovo)	7
Ivica Dačić (Prime Minister, Serbia)	7
Baroness Catherine Ashton, (High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, EU)	6
Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir (Prime Minister, Iceland)	2
Richard Howitt (MEP)	2
Nikola Poposki (Foreign Minister, fYRoM)	2

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