

Key Quotes

Positive steps taken by leaders in Belgrade and Priština in recent months have led to historic agreements and fundamental progress towards normalising relations, the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Kosovo Farid Zarif said, but cautioned that implementation of agreements in northern Kosovo remains a key challenge. ***"It is essential for the parties to keep their focus on the implementation of what has been agreed, without introducing additional fundamental issues which are, at present, outside of the political dialogue,"*** said Zarif, who is also the head of the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) (sofiaglobe.com, BG, 30/8) <http://sofiaglobe.com/2013/08/30/un-envoy-serbia-and-kosovo-making-positive-steps-towards-normal-relations/>

Summary

Serbo-Kosovo negotiations

Even after 15 rounds of negotiations between Belgrade and Priština, negotiators have not reached final agreement on telecommunications and energy. Kosovo Prime Minister Hashim Thaçi said that the meeting passed in a constructive and fair atmosphere, but agreement on telecommunications and energy required *"more consultation at a technical level"* (Nepszava, HU, 29/8).

- Nepszava, HU, 29/8, http://193.178.140.110/delivery/20130829/mi/item_167156348.pdf

Report of United Nations Secretary General on Kosovo

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) debated the situation in Kosovo and Metohija on Thursday and discussed Ban Ki-Moon's latest report, in which the UN Secretary General listed the implementation of the Brussels agreement between Belgrade and Priština as the biggest challenge. The Serbian delegation headed by Foreign Minister Ivan Mrkić reported on the situation in Serbia's southern province and the efforts that the government is making in terms of the implementation of the Belgrade-Priština agreement from April 19. Mrkić announced that the Serbian delegation at the highest level will point out that it is most important to really implement what was agreed. The UN Secretary General also noted that *"Belgrade continues talks with representatives of Serbs in Northern Kosovo who are against the implementation of the agreement"* (madata.gr, 29/8).

- madata.gr, 29/8, <http://www.madata.gr/epikairota/world/295902.html>

Romanian recognition of Kosovo

The differences of opinion between the government and the presidency over the issue of recognising Kosovo were once again revealed during the Romanian ambassador's meeting. While Premier Ponta reiterated the government's position that Romania will have to recognise Kosovo, President Băsescu told the Romanian diplomats that *"the President has constitutional prerogatives in recognising a state"* and that Bucharest's position on the Kosovo issue remains in line with that of Belgrade and the other five European countries that do not recognise the independence of the province. Moreover, the Head of State pointed out that in the future the flexibility of Romania's position will be governed by the gradual agreements between Belgrade and Priština (nineoclock.ro, 28/8). Referring solely to Serbia, Băsescu stated that Romania will not produce a gridlock in Serbia's EU accession negotiations, however it will make sure the protocol on minority rights, signed last year with Belgrade, is fully implemented (ziuadecj.realitatea.net, RO, 28/8).

- nineoclock.ro, 28/8, <http://www.nineoclock.ro/pm-ponta-asks-ambassadors-not-to-accept-the-blaming-of-the-country/>
- ziuadecj.realitatea.net, RO, 28/8 <http://ziuadecj.realitatea.net/politica/basescu-vom-avea-grija-ca-protocolul-cu-serbia-privind-minoritatile-sa-fie-aplicat-integral--116268.html>

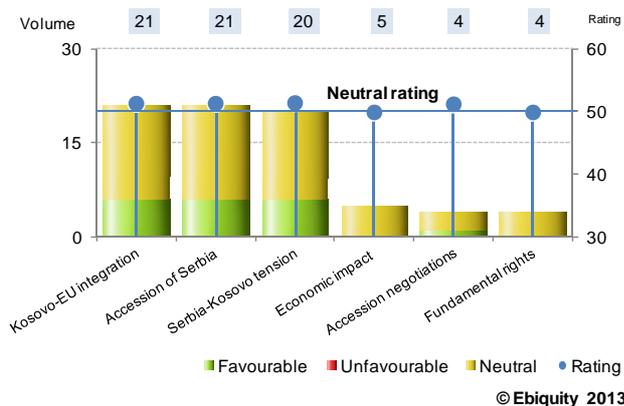
Finding an identity, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

How should a country assert itself when it is, like the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, a small country with one neighbour, Bulgaria, which contests its national identity and another, Greece that contests its name. For two years now this small Balkan republic of two million people, forced officially to call itself the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, has deployed phenomenal energy and methods to prove that it has roots as ancient as those of its two prickly neighbours. It is rewriting its history in bronze and stucco, in dozens of statues that now adorn Skopje, its capital. The most imposing of them, 23 meters high, which everybody understands to be Alexander, bears the official name of 'Warrior on horseback' in order not to offend Athens (and the European Union which, backing Greece, is delaying membership for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia). The Warrior on Horseback faces the "Warrior on Foot" – Alexander's father, Philip II of Macedon (presseurop.eu, FR, 28/8).

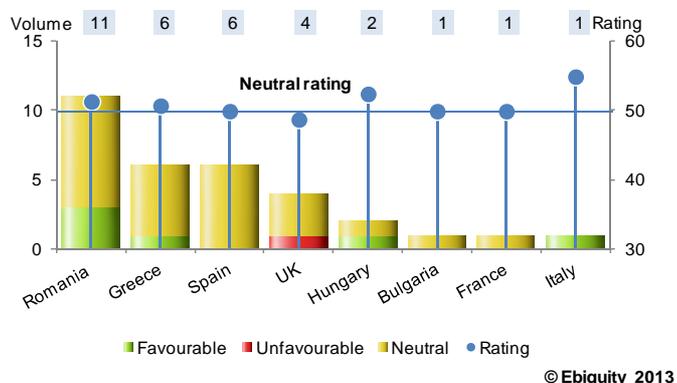
- presseurop.eu, FR, 28/8, <http://www.presseurop.eu/en/content/article/4094091-tweaking-history-skopje>

Charts

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Volume	32 items
Rating	50.8
Favourable %	18.8%
Unfavourable %	3.1%
Neutral %	78.1%

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

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ELARG: Stakeholders & Sources	Number of mentions
Ivica Dačić (Prime Minister, Serbia)	10
Hashim Thaçi (Prime Minister, Kosovo)	8
Baroness Catherine Ashton, (High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, EU)	6
Ban Ki-moon (Secretary General, UN)	4
Traian Băsescu (President, Romania)	4
Sian Jones (Kosovo Expert, Amnesty International)	4
Ivan Mrkić (Foreign Minister, Serbia)	4

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