

Key Quotes

On Friday, Serbia's prime minister threatened to pull out of EU-mediated talks with Kosovo after the former Serbian province denied him permission to visit, underscoring the fragility of a landmark accord between the two. **"We in government, in the interest of the state, we risked our lives and careers and now someone wants to humiliate us with such a decision,"** Dačić said. **"If the European Union finds that normal, then I no longer have any interest in taking part,"** he said. **"I won't allow anyone to humiliate me,"** Dačić continued. **"Let them find someone else to negotiate with. I hope this won't be my last trip to Brussels for talks, but if it is, I won't exactly miss it"** (Reuters, UK, 4/10).

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/10/04/uk-serbia-kosovo-eu-idUKBRE9930M320131004?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews>

Turks have lost their hopes of joining the EU. This is the conclusion, at least, of a poll published by Turkish newspaper Haberturk. According to the Turkish paper, **"accession by 2027 is pure fantasy"**, say Turkish citizens (Sofia Globe, BG, 7/10).

<http://sofiaglobe.com/2013/10/07/turks-do-not-believe-eu-accession-will-happen-poll/>

Summary

Tony Blair to advise Albania

Tony Blair is to advise Albania, one of the poorest countries in Europe, on its campaign to join the European Union, it was announced. The former prime minister said he would "love" the ex-Communist country to join the 28-nation bloc. Albania has previously been turned down for EU membership for not doing enough to fight corruption and crime and embrace democratic reforms. Edi Rama, the Albanian Prime Minister, said Mr Blair would use his "extraordinary experience and political geniality" to "personally, totally and voluntarily" help his government and would not receive a fee. Funding for a team of officials who will work with Mr Blair would be sought from international institutions, he said. Mr Rama, who pledged to campaign for EU membership before winning a landslide election victory in June, said "I harbour no illusions. European integration is easy to speak of but very hard to attain" (Independent, UK, 4/10). The former Labour prime minister is considered a hero in the country of three million people. He was involved in the NATO intervention in Kosovo in 1999, where ethnic Albanians were being attacked by Serb forces. Many children in the country were named "Tonibler" in his honour. At a joint briefing in Tirana, Mr Blair - who is not being paid - said joining the EU was the "right and proper" prospect for Albania (Daily-Telegraph, UK, 4/10).

- Independent, UK, 4/10, [link not available]
- Daily-Telegraph, UK, 4/10, [link not available]

New dispute between Serbia and Kosovo

Serbian Prime Minister Dačić's ban from entering Kosovo has given rise to a new conflict between Belgrade and Pristina. Dačić was outraged and said "This decision is a scandal and a setback in the peace process". Aleksandar Vučić, the Deputy Prime Minister, described the ban as "unreasonable, irrational and meaningless" (Standard, AT, 4/10). EU High Representative Catherine Ashton has invited Dačić and the Kosovo Prime Minister Hashim Thaçi to talks. The negotiations were announced by Ashton's spokesperson Maja Kocijančič, without mentioning the latest dispute. The meeting will be extraordinary, as new negotiations were not planned (Vecer, SI, 4/10).

- Standard, AT, 4/10, http://193.178.140.110/delivery/20131004/mi/item_171401965.pdf
- Vecer, SI, 4/10, http://193.178.140.110/delivery/20131004/mi/item_171402306.pdf

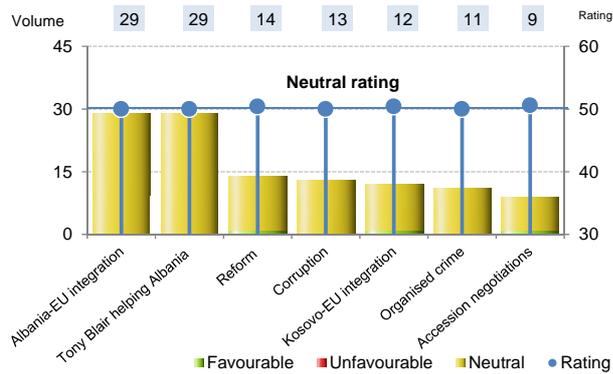
Turkish legal reforms causes disappointment

The Turkish government's long awaited "democratisation package" this week has been met with considerable disappointment among Turkey's minority religious communities. On Monday, Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan revealed a broad array of reform laws, drafted by his ruling Justice and Development Party for parliamentary debate and approval. Questioned in Brussels on October 2 about Ankara's refusal to allow Christians to educate their clergy, Turkish Minister for European Union Affairs Egemen Bağış addressed his answer to Greece: "Encourage us to open Halki Seminary. There is still no mosque in Athens, still no Muslim cemetery there...The time has come to keep your word. Encourage us!" (christiantoday.com, UK, 4/10). The EU Commissioner for Enlargement Štefan Füle, after meeting the Turkish Minister for EU Affairs, Egemen Bağış, said the EU-Turkey accession negotiations need to regain momentum and the formal opening of the chapter on regional policy will represent an important step, "I have underlined the importance of continuous EU engagement in Turkey and of the EU remaining the benchmark for reform in Turkey, not the least to enhance respect for fundamental rights" Füle declared (ansamed.info, IT, 3/10).

- christiantoday.com, UK, 4/10, <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/promised.legal.reforms.disappoint.turkeys.religious.minorities/34253.htm>
- ansamed.info, IT, 3/10, http://www.ansamed.info/ansamed/en/news/sections/politics/2013/10/03/EU-Fule-Turkey-negotiations-need-regain-momentum_9402796.html

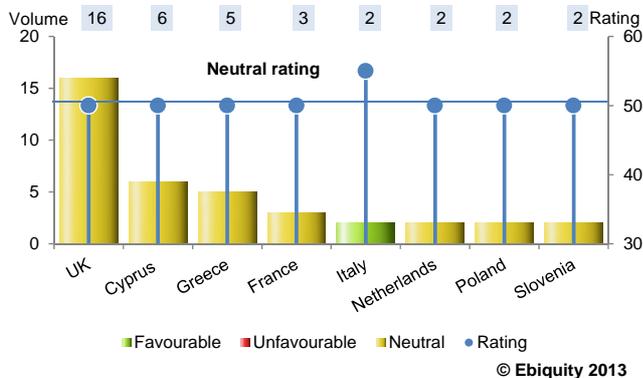
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ELARG: Key Stakeholders & Sources
by volume, favourability & rating

ELARG: Stakeholders & Sources	Number of mentions
Edi Rama (Prime Minister, Albania)	29
Tony Blair (former Prime Minister, UK)	29
Ivica Dačić (Prime Minister, Serbia)	6
Baroness Catherine Ashton, (High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, EU)	5
Hashim Thaçi (Prime Minister, Kosovo)	5
Egemen Bağış (Minister for European Affairs, Turkey)	3
Nicos Anastasiades (President, Cyprus)	3

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