

Key Quotes

As the European Commission unveiled its yearly *'progress reports'* on EU candidate countries, an Austrian think-tank revealed that domestic public support for enlargement had hit rock bottom, the *EurActiv* network reports. ***"Although the domestic economy is currently gaining from enlargement, thereby strengthening political stability in the region – as far as Austrian priorities are concerned, the EU should consolidate and solve its internal problems,"*** Paul Schmidt, ÖGfE Secretary General, explains (Euractiv.fr, FR, 17/10)

<http://www.euractiv.fr/elarqissement/elarqissement-de-ue-du-plomb-dan-news-531145>

EC report criticises EU applicants Turkey, Kosovo and Serbia on LGBT rights. Austrian MEP Ulrike Lunacek said: ***"In the face of continuing discrimination against LGBTI people in south-eastern Europe, it is good to see that the Commission paid more attention to the situation of LGBTI people throughout its accession reports than it has previously done. It shows that the EU takes its commitment to human rights serious"*** (pinknews.co.uk, UK, 17/10)

<http://www.pinknews.co.uk/2013/10/17/ec-report-criticises-eu-applicants-turkey-kosovo-and-serbia-on-lgbt-rights/>

Summary

EU Commission wants to continue accession talks with Turkey

On Wednesday, the European Commission published its annual assessments of political and economic reforms being made by countries that aspire to join the 28-nation bloc. They include criticism of excessive use of force by Turkish police in tackling protests this year (trust.org, UK, 16/10). The European Union accused Turkish police on Wednesday of using excessive force to quell protests earlier this year, urging the government to strengthen oversight of the police and to press ahead with investigations into their conduct. Turkey's EU Affairs Minister Egemen Bağış had complained on Twitter at the weekend about the EU publishing the report during the Muslim Eid al Adha festival, which began on Monday afternoon and lasts all week. On Wednesday his press adviser confirmed to Reuters that the government would not issue a response until after the holiday. Turkey is deeply frustrated at what it sees as humiliating treatment by Europe, which has turned public opinion in the country against EU membership (uk.reuters.com, UK, 16/10).

- trust.org, UK, 16/10, <http://www.trust.org/item/20131016111050-q20e8/>
- uk.reuters.com, UK, 16/10, <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/10/16/uk-eu-turkey-idUKBRE99FOIA20131016>

Balkan accession

The EU is currently evaluating seven countries in southeast Europe for their suitability as potential member states of the 28-nation bloc. Of those, four have received the status of candidate – Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia – while Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo are considered potential candidates (bne.eu, DE, 17/10). Brussels indicated that Albania could become a candidate member state, provided that the government intensifies the battle against organised crime and corruption (Financieel-Dagblad, NL, 17/10).

- bne.eu, DE, 17/10, <http://www.bne.eu/story5440>
- Financieel-Dagblad, NL, 17/10, http://193.178.140.110/delivery/20131017/mi/item_172878244.pdf

Serbia is new EU enlargement locomotive

Serbia needs to continue to encourage the widespread participation of Kosovo's Serbians in upcoming local elections, the European Commission told Belgrade in its latest report on enlargement. In its annual report on EU membership candidates or aspiring candidates, the European executive body stressed the constant tangible progress made in relations with Pristina, as well as the respect of agreements already in place, which remain 'essential' for Belgrade's EU integration process. Moreover Serbia needs to re-double efforts to align its laws with EU legislation with particular attention given to their effective implementation. Key areas of reform outlined in the report are legally constituted state, in particular the judicial system and anti-corruption policies, media freedom, the protection of minorities, the fight against organized crime. Though Brussels recognized efforts made by Belgrade's authorities for the protection of vulnerable groups like lesbian, gays, bisexual and transgender minorities, the report stressed that sufficient political support is still missing and the ban for the third consecutive year of the Gay Pride was a missed opportunity to show respect for fundamental rights (ansamed.info, IT, 16/10).

- ansamed.info, IT, 16/10, http://www.ansamed.info/ansamed/en/news/sections/politics/2013/10/16/Serbia-EU-Belgrade-needs-active-role-Kosovo-vote_9469612.html

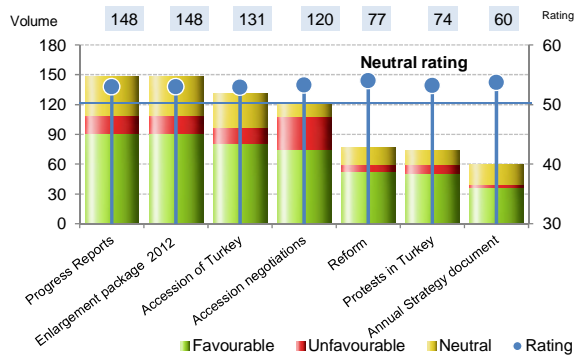
Fifth recommendation for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

The European Commission (EC) has for the fifth time recommended the opening of EU accession talks with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. In its annual progress report on EU applicants, the EC says that the country still fulfills the political criteria. However, EC notes that *"a constructive approach to relations with neighbouring EU Member States remains important"*, hinting at the country's dispute with Greece and the pending good-neighbour agreement with Bulgaria (Capital-Daily, BG, 17/10).

- Capital-Daily, BG, 17/10, http://193.178.140.110/delivery/20131017/mi/item_172892831.pdf

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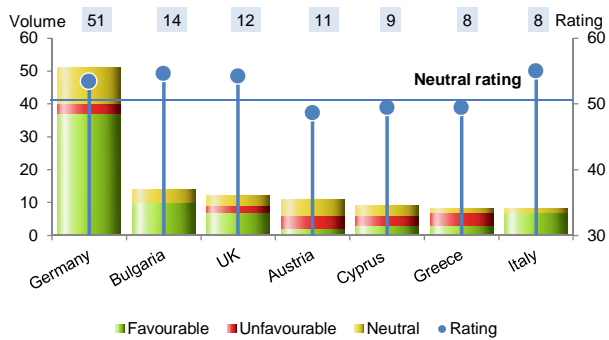
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Volume	148 items
Rating	53.0
Favourable %	61.5%
Unfavourable %	12.2%
Neutral %	26.3%

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ELARG: Leading Daily Countries
by volume, favourability & rating



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

ELARG: Stakeholders & Sources	Number of mentions
Štefan Füle (Enlargement Commissioner, EC)	81
Egemen Bağış (Minister for EU Affairs, Turkey)	16
Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (Prime Minister, Turkey)	12
Andreas Mölzer (MEP)	3
Markus Ferber (MEP)	3

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