

Key Quotes

Serbian Prime Minister Ivica Dačić has urged European countries to stop setting new conditions on the vexed issue of Kosovo. Dačić complained in an interview with AFP that **"you never know where the finish line is"** in negotiations with Brussels over Serbia's efforts to join the EU. **"We don't ask for any privileges; the only thing that we ask for is not to introduce new criteria on top of the criteria and benchmarks that have already been set,"** Dačić added (fr.news.yahoo.com, FR, 29/10).

<http://fr.news.yahoo.com/d%C3%A9marches-serbes-dadh%C3%A9sion-%C3%A0-lue-pollu%C3%A9es-kosovo-141140522.html>

Summary

Kosovo: EU starts negotiations on association agreement

After his meeting with President Jahjaga of Kosovo on 28 October UK Foreign Secretary William Hague welcomed the opening of EU Stabilisation & Association Agreement negotiations with Kosovo saying *"I am delighted that Kosovo is starting its negotiations on a Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) with the EU today."* He went on to say that *"The UK continues to stand firmly behind Kosovo on her path towards EU membership. I remain a long-standing supporter of enlargement of the EU, which will help deliver stability, security and prosperity for the Western Balkans"*(gov.uk, UK, 28/10). The European Commission expects to have concluded the talks by spring 2014, with the full text ready to be approved by the EU Council of Ministers and the European Parliament by the summer, Enlargement Commissioner Štefan Füle said (Periodico, ES, 29/10). focus-fen.net also reported Commissioner Füle's cancelled visit to Kosovo which according to unnamed diplomatic sources was aimed at *"avoiding any possible interpretations that his visit was in some way connected to the electoral campaign"* (BG, 29/10).

- gov.uk, UK, 28/10, https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-welcomes-kosovos-negotiations-of-eu-stabilisation-association-agreement?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=press-release-uk-welcomes-kosovos-negotiations-of-eu-stabilisation-association-agreement
- Periodico, ES, 29/10, http://193.178.140.110/delivery/20131029/mi/item_174281453.pdf
- focus-fen.net, BG, 29/10, <http://www.focus-fen.net/index.php?id=n317805>

Reaction from Kosovo

Hashim Thaçi, Kosovo's Prime Minister, said it was an historic day and that an irreversible chapter was being opened, uk.news.yahoo.com, (UK, 28/10) reported and the bulletin went on to say that it was another landmark move in Kosovo's pursuit of full international acceptance, more than five years after it declared independence from Serbia, with the backing of the West. Serbia does not accept the secession but it has bowed to pressure from the EU to cooperate with Kosovo, in pursuit of its own membership agenda. Novinite.com, (BG, 28/10) reports that one of the main difficulties for Kosovo to join the EU will be its status. Currently, 5 EU member states have not recognised the former province of Serbia, which declared independence in 2008.

- uk.news.yahoo.com, UK, 28/10, <http://uk.news.yahoo.com/video/kosovo-starts-landmark-talks-eu-181403760.html>
- novinite.com, BG, 28/10, <http://www.novinite.com/articles/155001/EU+Starts+Association+Talks+With+Kosovo>

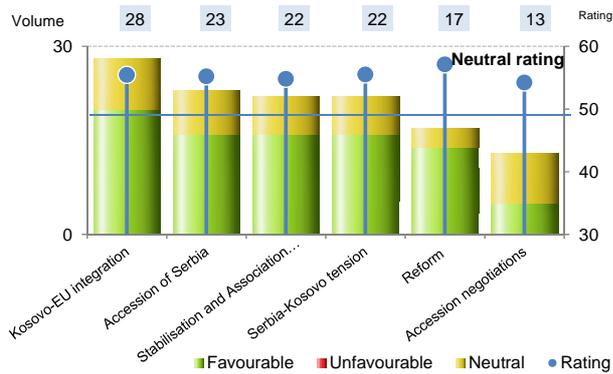
Serbia's new leaders set sights on EU membership

A ground breaking agreement to normalise relations with the former province of Kosovo in April, brokered by EU Foreign Policy Chief, Catherine Ashton, unlocked the way for Serbia to begin EU membership talks by next January. That is only the beginning of a road that could take years to traverse – membership is unlikely before the next decade. But it is a hugely important beginning. (ft.com, UK, 29/10).

- ft.com, UK, 29/10, <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/20976d6a-3a42-11e3-9243-00144feab7de.html?siteedition=uk#axzz2jCCm8GTv>

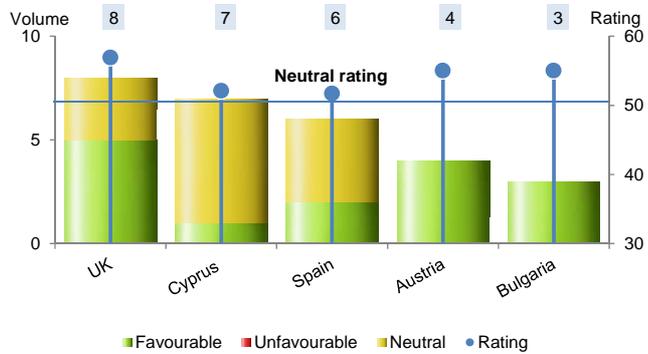
Charts

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Unfavourable %	0%
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ELARG: Key Stakeholders & Sources
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ELARG: Stakeholders & Sources	Number of mentions
Štefan Füle (Enlargement Commissioner, EC)	19
Alexander Downer (Special Adviser on Cyprus, UN)	5
Nicos Anastasiades (President, Cyprus)	5
José Manuel Barroso (President, EC)	4
Hashim Thaçi (Prime Minister, Kosovo)	4
Tomislav Nikolić (President, Serbia)	4
Ivica Dačić (Prime Minister, Serbia)	3
Aleksandar Vučić (First Deputy Prime Minister, Serbia)	3

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