

Key Quotes

Greek Government Vice President and Foreign Minister Evangelos Venizelos and Prime Minister of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Nikola Gruevski expressed their intention to accelerate negotiations over the latter country's name, under the auspices of the United Nations, and to strengthen bilateral cooperation. Venizelos, who is touring the western Balkans in his capacity as chairman of the European Union's Council of Ministers during Greece's EU Presidency, said that this role **"obliges me to speak within the framework of the decisions made by the European Council in December for the European perspective of FYROM. I therefore have made it clear to my hosts that they are obliged to accept this framework and the Council's common stance, which focuses on good neighbourhood relations"**

(amna.gr, GR, 20/2)

<http://www.amna.gr/english/articleview.php?id=5162>

Summary

Gül loses Twitter followers

Turkish President Abdullah Gül has approved a strict Internet Act and according to media reports, the European Commission in Brussels has again sent a letter of complaint to the Turkish government (Die Presse, AT, 20/2). Bulgaria's focus-fen.net went on to report that he has lost tens of thousands of Twitter followers after signing the controversial law, voted in by parliament that would tighten controls over web use. Gül, a frequent user of social media, lost almost 80,000 followers after he tweeted late on Tuesday that he had approved the contested bill. He said the government had assured him that it would soften two disputed articles of the legislation, which the opposition and rights groups say infringes citizens' freedoms. *"I am aware of the problems mainly on two points... These concerns will be taken into account in the new law,"* said Gül, who still has 4.3 million Twitter followers. Nonetheless, the move triggered an angry response on Twitter (focus-fen.net, BG, 19/2). Turkey already has strict Internet laws under which thousands of websites have been blocked, from news portals viewed as close to Kurdish militants to gay dating sites (uk.reuters.com, UK, 19/2).

- die presse, AT, 20/2, http://193.178.140.110/delivery/20140220/mi/item_188175883.pdf
- focus-fen.net, BG, 19/2, <http://www.focus-fen.net/news/2014/02/19/327747/turkey-president-loses-twitter-followers-over-web-law.html>
- uk.reuters.com, UK, 19/2, <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2014/02/19/us-turkey-internet-idUKBREA11P920140219>

European attitudes towards Bosnia and Herzegovina

In a letter to the Guardian (UK, 20/2), the Rev Donald Reeves, Director, the Soul of Europe comments that the international community, particularly the European Union, has lost interest in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The high representative's influence has considerably diminished in recent years; the international community has failed to contain Republika Srpska as it inches its way towards some sort of independence. Mostar remains a bitterly divided city – in spite of the symbolism of the restored bridge, there has been no local government since 1995 (theguardian.com, UK, 19/2). The current developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina, on the streets and in plenums, present a totally new challenge which could lead to ending the long-term political and economic stagnation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and which surely require a fresh international approach. Yet Commissioner Füle appeared to be stuck in a familiar groove, devoting hours to negotiation with politicians whose interests are best served by maintaining the status quo (opendemocracy.net, UK, 20/2).

- theguardian.com, UK, 19/2, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/feb/19/eu-help-refashion-bosnia-future>
- opendemocracy.net, UK, 20/2, <http://www.opendemocracy.net/can-europe-make-it/carole-hodge/bosnia-another-eu-communication-chasm>

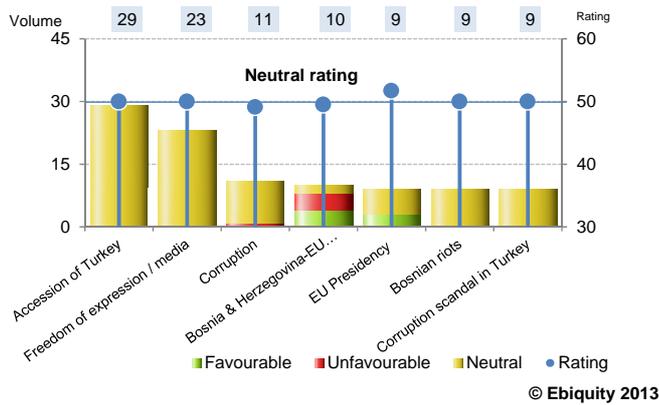
Serbian elections in Kosovo

While Serbia has announced early parliamentary elections, which *"also include Kosovo"*, the government of Kosovo has declared that it will not allow Belgrade to hold early parliamentary elections on the territory of Kosovo. Nevertheless, the government of Kosovo may allow Serbs of Kosovo to vote in the Serbian elections. Besim Collaku, adviser to the Prime Minister of Kosovo, Hashim Thaçi, declared that Serbia cannot hold elections in Kosovo. *"There will not be ballot centres, but only gathering points. We will establish the technicalities here in Kosovo and we will decide if we need OSCE assistance."* On the other hand Serb officials are insisting on the elections being held like those held in 2012 (balkaneu.com, GR, 19/2).

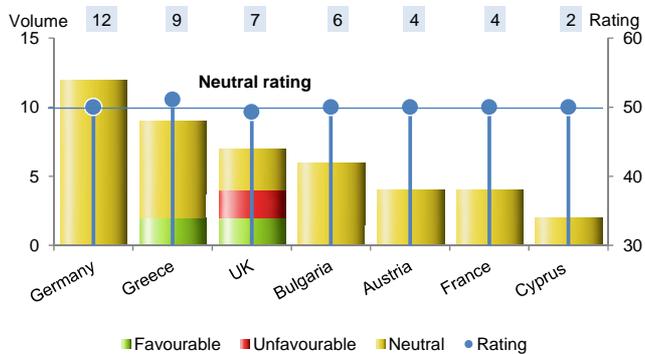
- balkaneu.com, GR, 19/2, <http://www.balkaneu.com/government-serbia-hold-elections-kosovo/>

Charts

ELARG: Leading Daily Issues
by volume, favourability & rating



ELARG: Leading Daily Countries
by volume, favourability & rating



ELARG: Highlights
by volume, favourability & rating

Volume	48 items
Rating	50.0
Favourable %	10.4%
Unfavourable %	8.3%
Neutral %	81.3%

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

ELARG: Stakeholders & Sources	Number of mentions
Abdullah Gül (President of Turkey)	24
Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (Prime Minister, Turkey)	22
Evangelos Venizelos (Foreign Minister, Greece)	10
Michael Stübgen (Politician, Germany)	7
Štefan Füle (Enlargement Commissioner, EC)	5
Hashim Thaçi (Prime Minister, Kosovo)	5
Nikola Poposki (Foreign Minister, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia)	5

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