



## Summary

Accession criteria were in the news across several countries following Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan's suggestion to reinstate the death penalty a decade after it was abolished, in a move threatening to further inflame Turkey's tense relationship with Europe. The proposal would violate the terms of Ankara's EU membership bid, dealing a further blow to its stalled effort to join the bloc. *"We are crystal clear to all candidate countries that abolition [of the death penalty] is a precondition for entry into the Union,"* said Richard Howitt, MEP, the Labour spokesman on foreign affairs, EU enlargement and human rights in the European Parliament (Times, UK, 13/11). Turkey's progress towards membership has ground to halt in recent years amid opposition from France and Germany and Erdogan has become increasingly dismissive of the EU, focusing instead on Turkey's role as a regional power (Guardian, UK, 13/11). The EU has followed the statements of Erdogan to return the death penalty with concern. Peter Stano pointed out that abolition of the death penalty is one of the main elements in the standards of EU fundamental rights. *"Our position on this issue is very clear. In a country that wants to join the EU there can be no death penalty"*. Turkish Foreign Minister, Ahmet Davutoglu, said *"We are loyal to our commitments, but we expect the same from the EU"* (dnevnik.bg, BG, 13/11).

- Times, UK, 13/11, [http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20121113/mi/item\\_139814222.pdf](http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20121113/mi/item_139814222.pdf)
- Guardian, UK, 13/11 [http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20121113/mi/item\\_139814259.pdf](http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20121113/mi/item_139814259.pdf)
- dnevnik.bg, BG, 13/11, [http://www.dnevnik.bg/evropa/novini\\_ot\\_es/2012/11/13/1945655\\_es\\_sledi\\_s\\_bezpokoistvo\\_izkazvaniyata\\_na\\_erdogan\\_za/?ref=ss](http://www.dnevnik.bg/evropa/novini_ot_es/2012/11/13/1945655_es_sledi_s_bezpokoistvo_izkazvaniyata_na_erdogan_za/?ref=ss)

Also concerning Turkey when Prime Minister Erdogan acknowledged the existence of a "Kurdish problem" to a rally in the south-eastern city of Diyarbakir, Mayor Osman Baydemir was among thousands who stood to applaud what was considered a momentous declaration. For decades, Turkey had refused even to recognise Kurds as a separate ethnic group. As part of efforts to meet EU membership criteria, Erdogan allowed Kurdish television broadcasts and, most recently, elective Kurdish language courses at state schools (uk.reuters.com, UK, 13/11).

- uk.reuters.com, UK, 13/11, <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2012/11/13/uk-turkey-kurds-baydemir-idUKBRE8ACOFK20121113>

The foreign ministers of Greece and Romania supported Sofia's stance on the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia's (fYRoM) EU accession and Bulgarian Foreign Minister Nikolay Mladenov's call for conditional support for Skopje. This means that all Balkan EU member states are now united in the opinion that the fYRoM should enter the EU, but only if it strictly complies with EU accession criteria (Trud-Daily-Bulgaria, BG, 13/11).

- Trud-Daily-Bulgaria, BG, 13/11, [http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20121113/mi/item\\_139820459.pdf](http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20121113/mi/item_139820459.pdf)

The EC has announced that it will invest 81 million euros to support Albania's reform efforts including key priorities such as the judiciary, the fight against organised crime and the reform of the public administration system. The funds will also help improve Albania's transport infrastructure, modernise water and sanitation systems, and set up a range of services for social inclusiveness. The Enlargement Commissioner, Stefan Fule commented *"For several years now, Albanian citizens have shown strong support for their country's accession to the EU. They know their daily lives will improve while their country moves forward on the path towards the EU"* (kerdos.gr, EL, 12/11, ABC.es, ES, 13/11).

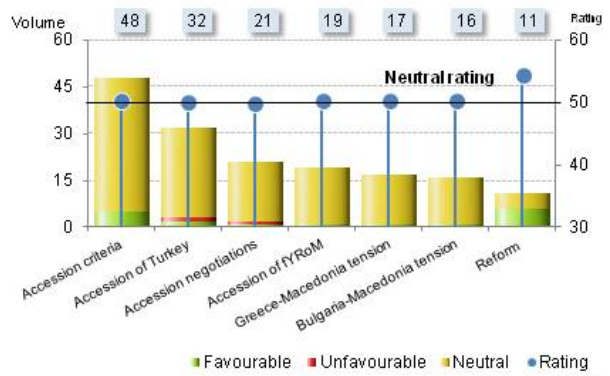
- kerdos.gr, EL, 12/11, <http://www.kerdos.gr/default.aspx?id=1831238&nt=103>
- ABC.es, ES, 13/11, <http://www.abc.es/qaencias/noticia.asp?noticia=1291492>

## Key Quotes

**Is Croatia ready for the EU? The Balkan country is about to join the EU, but the conditions for this have still not been met - six months remain** (Die Zeit, Germany, 14/11) <http://www.zeit.de/politik/ausland/2012-11/EU-Beitritt-Kroatien/seite-1>

## Charts

ELARG: **Leading Daily Issues**  
by volume, favourability & rating

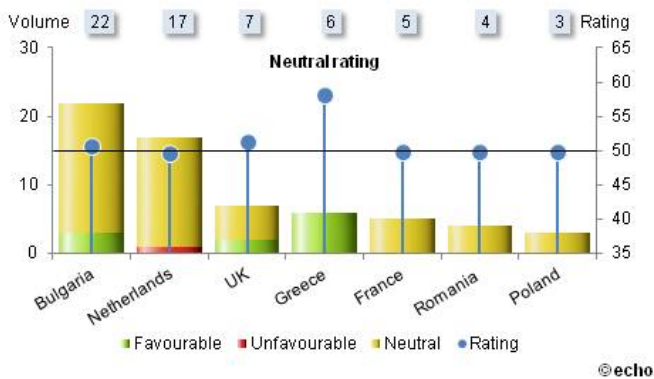


ELARG: **Highlights**  
by volume, favourability & rating

Volume	69 items
Rating	51
Favourable %	15.9%
Unfavourable %	1.5%
Neutral %	82.6%

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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
Recep Tayip Erdoğan (Prime Minister, Turkey)	31
Dimitris Avramopoulos (Foreign Minister, Greece)	23
Nikolay Mladenov (Foreign Minister, Bulgaria)	21
Titus Corlățean (Foreign Minister, Romania)	18
Štefan Füle (Commissioner for Enlargement, EC)	8
Nikola Poposki (Foreign Minister, Macedonia)	4
Rosen Plevneliev (President of Bulgaria)	4