



## Key Quotes

Albania is not a Muslim country, but a European one, declared Pope Francis on Sunday. Asked what had determined him to choose a small country, outside of the European Union as the first destination on the Old Continent, Pope Francis said: **"I wanted to send a message, a signal"** towards Europe. Islam is often cited as a reason that might prevent the entry of some countries in the EU, such as Turkey and Albania, because it is the symbol of too great cultural differences (sursazilei.ro, RO, 22/9).

<http://www.sursazilei.ro/pope-francis-historic-visit-albania/>

## Summary

### South Stream project

While Serbia appears one hundred percent committed to pursuing the South Stream project the EU continues to produce new ideas on how to block the proposed gas route. This is in the midst of a confused political situation regarding the pipeline's entry point in Bulgaria, a country about to enter a polarized early general election. Marlene Holzner, a Bulgarian who has an important role in Brussels as a DG Energy spokesperson, relayed that the country is an EU member, and therefore it should abide by common rules otherwise punitive measures could be taken against it. It is of interest to note that the EU has stated it is monitoring Bulgaria's stance and asks for re-confirmation of its posture vis-a-vis South Stream, effectively putting the country in 'quarantine' until further notice. This has already caused a reflex of nationalism across a wide spectrum of the Bulgarian media and political circles and may actually pave the way for the supporters of the gas pipeline to rise in the upcoming elections (naturalgaseurope.com, UK, 22/9).

- naturalgaseurope.com, UK, 22/9, <http://www.naturalgaseurope.com/serbia-south-stream-eu>

### Problems for new Commissioner for Home Affairs

Dimitris Avramopoulos – outgoing Greek National Defence Minister and incoming EU Commissioner for Migration and Home Affairs – was the focus of a recent article. Italian socialist MEP Gianni Pittelli states that every prospective European Commissioner is called upon to make particular commitments by the European Parliament and states that Mr. Avramopoulos will need to agree some points in advance. Mr. Avramopoulos will need to tackle Frontex and the application of asylum rules by all member states as well as a review of the Blue Card aimed at attracting particular immigrants as well as EU expansion to include Turkey and other member states. The bet is on as to whether he'll be successful in dealing with such complicated issues (Protothema.gr, GR, 22/9).

- Protothema.gr, GR, 22/9, <http://en.protothema.gr/deutsche-welle-assessing-eu-commissioner-d-avramopoulos/>

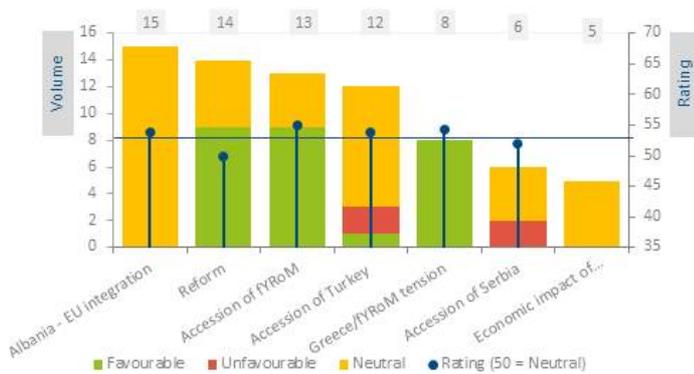
### Political deadlock in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Political dialogue in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continues to suffer a crisis, and there are no positive signs by either majority or opposition. This crisis is also being reflected ahead of the publication of the annual progress report of the European Commission. The reports issued up until now and the calls of European officials encouraged political dialogue in order to overcome the political crisis. The conflict and political disputes between the two large political parties has caused a deep political crisis and institutional and parliamentary blockade (balkaneu.com, GR, 22/9).

- balkaneu.com, GR, 22/9, <http://www.balkaneu.com/political-dialogue-fyrom-crisis/>

# Charts

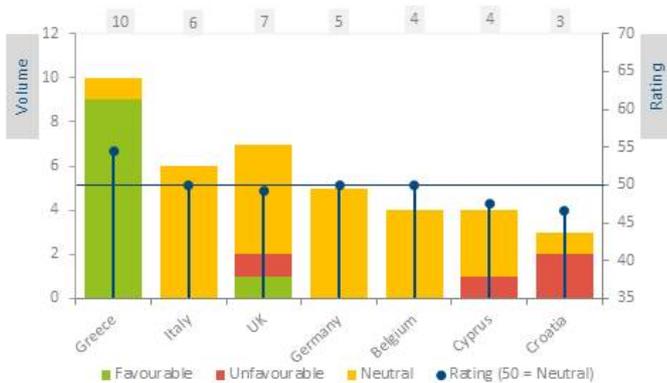
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Ozdil Nami – Minister of Foreign Affairs, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus	2

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