



Key Quotes

The European Commission's latest progress report on enlargement shows growing frustration at Montenegro's sclerotic progress and what can only be interpreted as window-dressing to receive a good scorecard, writes Dr Matthias Menke. In reaction to the progress report on Montenegro, Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy Commissioner Stefan Füle himself said that **"the degree to which [...] rule of law related reforms produce results will determine the overall pace of the accession negotiations. If no tangible progress is made, negotiations would have to slow down"**. This is pretty strong language from the European Commissioner – the strongest we've seen in relation to Montenegro's EU accession in a long time – and for the first time opening the prospect of putting the brake on Montenegrin accession (euractiv.com, BE, 9/10). <http://www.euractiv.com/sections/enlargement/montenegro-not-eu-poster-child-it-claims-be-309068>

Summary

Füle on enlargement

In a set of annual reports adopted on Wednesday, the European Commission has assessed the progress made over the past year by the countries wishing to join the EU in the Western Balkans and by Turkey, and the challenges ahead. Presenting the annual Enlargement Package, Commissioner Štefan Füle said *"five years ago, we set out to strengthen the credibility and the transformative power of enlargement policy. We put a particular emphasis on three pillars: rule of law in 2012, economic governance in 2013 and this year we're setting out new ideas to support public administration reform and strengthening of democratic institutions. Today, this approach is bearing fruit. The process is credible and is bringing concrete results through reforms that gradually transform the countries concerned, improving stability in our immediate neighbourhood. It also makes the countries better prepared for the EU entry and for the responsibilities of the membership"* (Famagusta-gazette.com, UK, 9/10). However 24 Chasa (BG, 9/10) notes that the European Commission is not recommending any steps on Western Balkan enlargement in the next 12 months.

- Famagusta-gazette.com, UK, 9/10, <http://famagusta-gazette.com/eu-enlargement-in-and-beyond-progress-and-challenges-p25979-69.htm>
- 24 Chasa, BG, 9/10, http://193.178.140.110/delivery/20141009/mi/item_217423410.pdf

Progress report for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

The 2014 progress report for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia contains a number of criticisms on the progress of the country. The lack of trust on the part of the public, an unclear distinction line between the state and political parties, a lack of respect for the freedom of expression, the lack of quality in the judicial system, a huge state administration, weak fiscal discipline and a lack of transparency on the part of the government are among the main points. The European Commission also issues serious warnings as regards the trust between the ethnic communities and recommends the launching of initiatives for inclusive development of the multi-ethnic society (focus-news.net, BG, 9/10). The opposition said that the European Commission report is not a progress report, but a regress report saying *"The report is more critical and dramatic than last year"* (balkaneu.com, GR, 9/10).

- focus-news.net, BG, 9/10, <http://www.focus-fen.net/news/2014/10/09/350948/deutsche-welle-brussels-issues-serious-remarks-for-macedonia.html>
- balkaneu.com, GR, 9/10, <http://www.balkaneu.com/progress-report-sparks-debates-criticism-skopje/>

Serbian Progress report

Out of the countries of the region, Serbia got the best EU progress report, Serbian Prime Minister Aleksandar Vučić said with delight on Wednesday. On his visit to Belgrade, Austrian Foreign Minister Sebastian Kurz agreed with him. Even though the report is generally positive, the EU is sceptical on one decisive issue - the judiciary. Regarding the rule of law, the European Commission highlighted freedom of speech and the urgently needed reform of the public administration as critical issues (Wirtschaftsblatt, AT, 9/10)

- Wirtschaftsblatt, AT, 9/10, http://193.178.140.110/delivery/20141009/mi/item_217431425.pdf

Charts

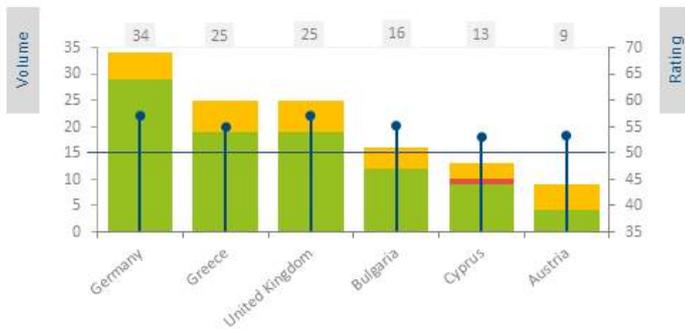
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ELARG: Stakeholders & Sources	Number of mentions
Štefan Füle - Enlargement	80
Jean-Claude Juncker - President-elect EC	35
Recep Tayyip Erdoğan - Turkey President	33
Andreas Scheuer .- German Politician	14
Renate Sommer - MEP	14
Johannes Hahn - Neighbourhood Policy & Enlarg	12
Aleksandar Vučić - PM Serbia	11

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