



Summary

In Croatia, the first instance verdict in the case of Ivo Sanader, which his high-powered team of lawyers have already announced it will challenge, will only be confirmed - if at all - after Croatia's accession to the EU on July 1, 2013. Although a guilty verdict in the first of a number of trials levelled against the former political heavyweight was widely expected, Sanader's conviction, which is likely to be the subject of drawn-out judicial appeals at both home and abroad in the coming years, has naturally attracted widespread attention. Pro-EU enlargement advocates have drawn comfort from the fact that the authorities in the Croatian capital Zagreb have finally demonstrated a high-level success in the battle against graft in Croatia, while EU-sceptics will undoubtedly point to Sanader's conviction as further proof that the former Yugoslav state remains unprepared for membership of the EU next year. While Germany was a keen advocate of the EU membership of another ex-Yugoslav state Slovenia, which joined in the 2004, the country has become increasingly intolerant of EU-wannabes from the Western Balkans that it regards as either politically or economically not fit for purpose. Thus the authorities in Berlin have been increasingly vociferous in their opposition to Serbian membership of the EU as a result of its refusal to recognise the independence of its one-time province of Kosovo, while Croatia, a long-time satellite of German influence, has increasingly been berated for failing to live up to Germany's high standards of fiscal and legal rectitude. Clearly, Sander's conviction will do little to calm German politicians' anxieties about Croatia's readiness to join the EU next year (bne.eu, UK, 21/12). Peter Stano, spokesman on Enlargement for the European Commission, called on Croatia to continue its fight against corruption at all levels. Sanader is the highest statesman, convicted of corruption in the country, which will join the European Union next July. The conviction is a proof that Croatia is trying to limit crime and corruption (Zurnal24, NL, 21/11)

- bne.eu, UK, 21/12, http://www.bne.eu/storyf4266/The_rise_and_fall_of_Croatian_premier_Ivo_Sanader
- Zurnal24, NL, 21/11, http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20121121/mi/item_140592437.pdf

The government of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (fYRoM) has pointed out that "*It should be realised that consciously or unconsciously the name issue concerns not only the name of our country, but its identity*," and warned the European Commission that it has moved onto "dangerous grounds" (Duma-Daily, BG, 21/11). Greek newspaper Ta Nea reports that according to information, UN Special Envoy Matthew Nimetz has tabled a set of proposals about the name dispute between Greece and the fYRoM. Greek negotiator Adamandios Vasilakis has made it clear that for Greece the negotiation framework is still the UN procedure. He insisted on the Greek proposal for a memorandum to be signed between the two countries, to which FYROM has not responded positively. The newspaper underlines that the deliberations are expected to increase in the coming weeks, as fYRoM's EU accession will be tabled at the EU Council and EU Enlargement Commissioner Štefan Füle insists that the country should be given the green light to start entry talks (Ta-Nea, EL, 21/11).

- Duma-Daily, BG, 21/11 (no link available)
- Ta-Nea, EL, 21/11, http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20121121/mi/item_140590856.pdf

One economic cost of membership, widely reported in the UK, was that under a separate deal agreed at the time of EU enlargement, the contributions of wealthier states like Britain have also risen each year to help pay for the cost of absorbing poorer countries from the former Soviet bloc (express.co.uk, UK, 21/11).

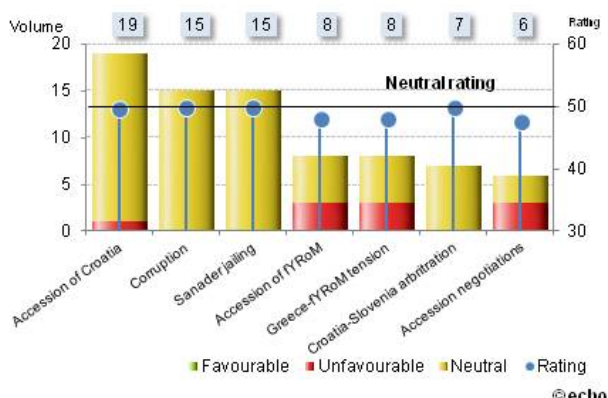
- express.co.uk, UK, 21/11, <http://www.express.co.uk/posts/view/359552/Cameron-in-no-win-EU-budget-dilemma/>

Key Quotes

Ms McKechn pointed out that it took Croatia a decade to enter the EU because of an objection from Slovenia (The Scotsman, UK, 22/11)
<http://www.scotsman.com/news/scottish-independence-westminster-cites-evidence-that-eu-would-bar-scotland-1-2650229>

Charts

ELARG: **Leading Daily Issues**
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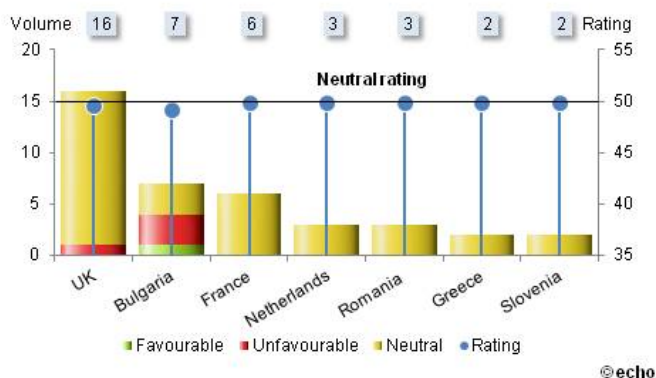


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Volume	42 items
Rating	49.8
Favourable %	2.4%
Unfavourable %	9.5%
Neutral %	88.1%

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

ELARG: Stakeholders & Sources	Number of mentions
Ivo Sanader (former Prime Minister, Croatia)	15
Herman van Rompuy (President, European Council)	10
David Cameron (Prime Minister, UK)	10
Matthew Nimitz (Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Greece-FYRoM talks, UN)	6
Aivo Orav (Head of the EU Delegation to the FYRoM)	3
Adamandios Vasilakis (negotiator Greece-FYRoM talks, Greece)	3

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