

Key Quotes

A mutual embrace will protect Turkey and Europe amid extremism. Sinan Ulgen, chairman of Istanbul-based think-tank Edam, writes: "**Modern history, including Turkey's, shows the futility of imposing a state-led vision on a large, heterogeneous society. It can only lead to more social discontent and tension. Turkey can build a more peaceful, prosperous future for all citizens only if its body politic is willing to create the foundations of an inclusive and more democratic state. A re-engagement with Europe is the only way**" ([ft.com](http://www.ft.com), UK, 22/2).

<http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/c582b03c-aadf-11e4-81bc-00144feab7de.html#axzz3SXfk4pQ2>

Summary

EU poised to sign stabilisation and association agreement with Kosovo in May

The European Union is to sign an agreement on stabilisation and association with Kosovo by May 2015, European Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, Johannes Hahn said in Pristina. According to Mr Hahn, the EU will also continue to support reforms in the region, including through the allocation of €600 million from the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance in 2014-2020. (Presa, BG, 20/2). However many Kosovars are sacrificing everything trying to find a better life in Germany says Roland Preuss writing in Süddeutsche Zeitung (DE, 20/2). He notes that the number of deportations has risen and most refugees return poorer than they were before. He argues that their plight could be alleviated by improving the political situation in Kosovo. European support could include help for investors, as well as a warning against pointless applications for asylum.

- Presa, BG, 20/2, http://193.178.140.110/delivery/20150220/mi/item_236060316.pdf
- Süddeutsche Zeitung, DE, 20/2, http://193.178.140.110/delivery/20150220/mi/item_236057866.pdf

Praise and warnings for Albania

The European Council President Donald Tusk gave a press statement after his meeting with Prime Minister of Albania, Edi Rama in which he said "Let me start by saying that enlargement remains a strong priority for the European Union. However, as I just conveyed to Prime Minister Rama, every step on the road ahead will bring new responsibilities and more hard work. Albania is now a candidate for membership of the Union. So we hope and expect that it will intensify its reform efforts. The focus should be on the priorities identified last December. A great deal has already been achieved, including on the fight against drug-related crime. However, what is looked for and what is needed, is implementation across the board" (Balkans.com, UK, 20/2).

- Balkans.com, UK, 20/2, <http://www.balkans.com/open-news.php?uniquenumber=201355>

Good Neighbour Agreement moves towards signature

Working groups from the Foreign Affairs ministries of Bulgaria and ministries from the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia have held meetings to discuss the final text of the Good Neighbour agreement between the two countries. Unnamed diplomatic sources said that the new Bulgarian line-up would have a more positive approach towards the negotiations and the content of the agreement, since Bulgarian Prime Minister Boyko Borisov declared that he wanted the document signed and that it should be a precondition for Bulgaria's support for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia's EU accession (focus-news.net, BG, 20/2). Serbia's Foreign Minister Ivica Dačić said at a press conference after a meeting with the Prime Minister of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Nikola Gruevski, that there were major problems hindering EU integration and these should be settled soon (Balkans.com, UK, 20/2).

- focus-news.net, BG, 20/2, <http://www.focus-fen.net/news/2015/02/20/363799/vecer-macedonia-bulgarias-position-on-joint-holidays-celebration-softens.html>
- Balkans.com, UK, 20/2, <http://www.balkans.com/open-news.php?uniquenumber=201346>

Charts

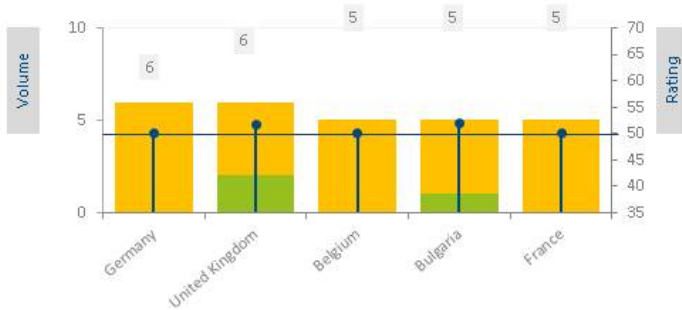
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ELARG: **Key Stakeholders & Sources**
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ELARG: Stakeholders & Sources	Number of mentions
Aleksandar Vučić - PM Serbia	17
Tony Blair - former UK PM	13
Recep Tayyip Erdoğan - Turkey President	2
Johannes Hahn - Neighbourhood Policy & Enlarg	2

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