



Key Quotes

Simonida Kacarska, a research coordinator at the European Policy Institute in Skopje, writes about political crisis in former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: "**For Macedonia, which underwent an internal inter-ethnic conflict in 2001, the EU accession prospects were the common objective for all communities living in the country. Further delays in the country's path towards the Union are likely to widen the already visible gap between the ethnic Macedonian and Albanian citizens in the country, fuelling nationalistic tactics and a sense of transformation fatigue**" (opendemocracy.net, UK, 22/3).

<https://www.opendemocracy.net/can-europe-make-it/simonida-kacarska/and-where-do-we-go-from-here-macedonia-and-eu>

Summary

Rule of law in Albania

Commissioner Johannes Hahn, during a meeting that he held in Brussels with Albanian European Integration Minister, Klajda Gjoshaj, said that the process of Albania's accession in the European Union is not being influenced by external factors which could slow down or stop this objective. Hahn went on to say "*It is important to move forward with the implementation of legislation, because the process of integration for any country that aspires to become an EU member doesn't only relate to the harmonization of legislation with the EU, but with the implementation of this legislation in practice*" (balkaneu.com, GR, 20/3).

- balkaneu.com, GR, 20/3, <http://www.balkaneu.com/brussels-theres-influence-external-factors-integration-albania-eu/>

Economic migration and EU membership

Only a few years ago, politicians in the European Union, and in the poor and war-ravaged countries in the continent's south-east, felt that between them they were creating a virtuous circle. With EU help, poor Balkan lands would improve their governance and streamline their economies; in due course they would be rewarded with EU entry. Thanks to all that, people in poor places would have less reason to move to Europe's rich north; in various ways, the EU was coming to them. Now that virtuous circle, if it ever really existed, is badly frayed. People from the Balkans are once again heading north, legally or otherwise, because they have given up waiting for the situation in their own countries to improve. People no longer cherish the hope that EU membership, if it eventually comes, will transform life in their countries. Croatia joined the EU in 2013 but that has failed to lift the economic doldrums that have afflicted the country for five years and prompted well-qualified people, such as doctors and nurses, to leave (economist.com, UK, 20/3).

- economist.com, UK, 20/3, <http://www.economist.com/news/europe/21646790-many-people-europes-south-east-see-more-hope-leaving-staying-quitting-dreams-chasing>

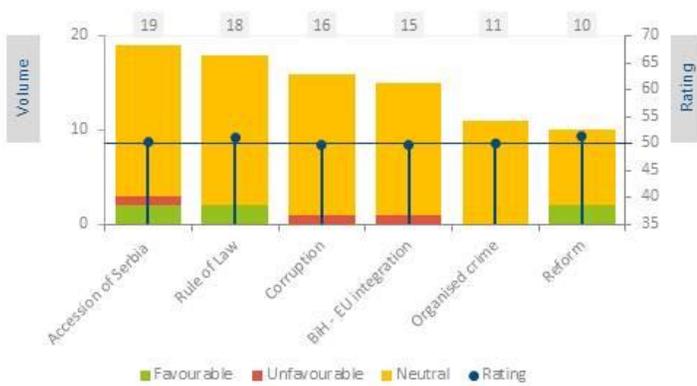
Aid for Eastern European states

Britain is launching a multimillion pound fund to help former communist countries resist Russian intimidation. Britain is initially setting aside £20million in aid for the fund in 2015-16 but Mr Cameron hopes it will continue in future years. Ukraine is set to receive £5million and the rest will go to Moldova, Georgia, Bosnia Herzegovina and Serbia - other countries at risk of Russian pressure. Mr Cameron argues it is in the UK and Europe's security interests for those states in close proximity to Russia to be strong and stable (Daily Express, UK, 20/3). Officials said it will be used to provide technical assistance across a wide range of fields to build the strong institutions that will discourage possible intimidation or other messages coming from other countries. (Dailymail.co.uk, UK, 20/3).

- Daily Express, UK, 20/3, [Link not available]
- Daily Mail, UK, 20/3, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/pa/article-3003409/PM-aid-Eastern-European-states.html>

Charts

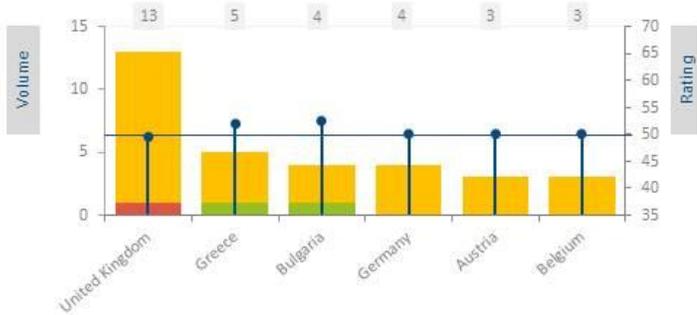
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ELARG: **Key Stakeholders & Sources**
by volume

ELARG: Stakeholders & Sources	Number of mentions
David Cameron - British Prime Minister	10
Rosen Plevneliev - President Bulgaria	7
Zoran Zaev - opposition leader former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	3
Nikola Gruevski – PM former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	2

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