



Key Quotes

The European Union announced Monday it was broadening its negotiations with Montenegro on future EU membership even though the 28-nation bloc has frozen expansion over the next five years. Both sides agreed to start talks on taxation and external affairs as part of the wide-ranging negotiations, the European Council, which represents the member states, said in a statement. The EU said that it would hold a conference on Montenegro's membership bid in June, in order to **"take the process forward"** (eubusiness.com, UK, 30/3).

<http://www.eubusiness.com/news-eu/enlargement.10k2>

Summary

Serbian meeting with Frederica Mogherini

Serbian Prime Minister Aleksandar Vučić said that he had spoken with EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini about all issues that are important for Serbia on its European path. Vučić told a press conference saying that all outstanding issues were discussed openly and in detail, such as the dialogue with the interim institutions in Pristina and reforms in the field of the rule of law. Vučić said that the High Representative had shown a willingness and desire for new chapters to be opened this year, in order to show that Serbia's efforts and European orientation be acknowledged. Mogherini said that one of the topics discussed was to put the formation of the *Association of Serbian municipalities* on the agenda of the next round of dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina, noting that the EU's role in dialogue is not to negotiate, but to mediate. (Balkans.com, UK, 30/3).

- Balkans.com, UK, 30/3, <http://www.balkans.com/open-news.php?uniquenumber=202330>

Crisis in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia hampers EU membership bid

Opposition leader Zoran Zaev accused the government of Nikola Gruevski of accepting a 20 million euro (\$22-million) bribe from Chinese firms to grant them concessions to build motorways. The opposition Social Democrats have been boycotting parliament for almost a year, alleging electoral fraud in April 2014 polls. He has called on the prime minister to resign from an interim government and organise fair and democratic early elections. The country has been governed in a delicate power-sharing deal between Macedonians and ethnic Albanians since the end of a seven-month conflict in 2001 between the country's armed forces and ethnic Albanian rebels. (eubusiness.com, UK, 30/3). According to EU diplomatic sources, Brussels at present has no magic formula to solve the political crisis. *"The situation in Macedonia has no precedent. There has been no such case before from which we could draw on for experience. It is expected there would be initiatives on the part of political parties"* unnamed diplomatic sources said (focus-news.net, BG, 30/3).

- EurActiv, BE, 30/3, <http://www.euractiv.com/sections/enlargement/macedonian-political-crisis-hampers-eu-membership-bid-313348>
- eubusiness.com, UK, 30/3, <http://www.eubusiness.com/news-eu/macedonia-politics.10ju/>
- focus-news.net, BG, 30/3, <http://www.focus-fen.net/news/2015/03/30/367939/deutsche-welle-brussels-has-no-magic-formula-to-solve-political-crisis-in-macedonia.html>

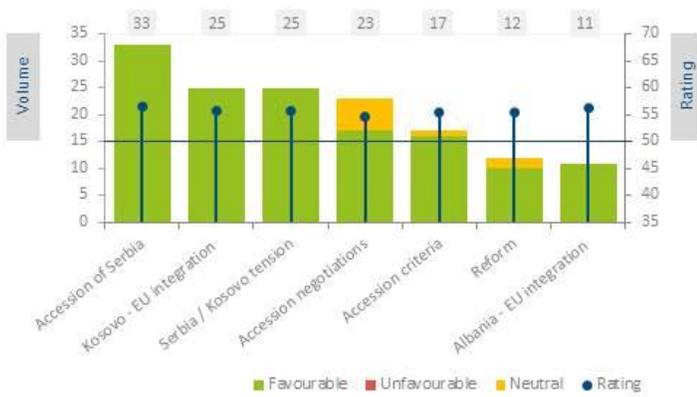
Unblocking of Chapter 17 for Turkey

The EU, Turkey and the UK are pursuing the opening of Turkish accession chapter 17 on Economic and Financial Policy. The report notes that there is a prospect for this to happen as France – the only state that has blocked the chapter – appears ready to lift its veto. However, the general reservations for the opening of further accession chapters set by Cyprus after the issuing of the NAVTEX by Turkey still need to be lifted (Phileleftheros, CY, 29/3).

- Phileleftheros, CY, 29/3, http://193.178.140.110/delivery/20150329/mi/item_241670712.pdf

Charts

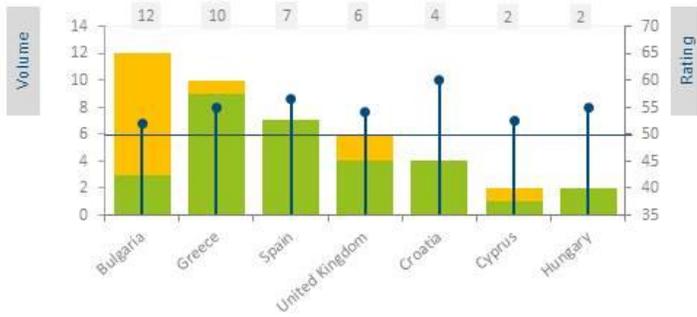
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ELARG: **Key Stakeholders & Sources**
by volume

ELARG: Stakeholders & Sources	Number of mentions
Federica Mogherini – HR Foreign Affairs	38
Aleksandar Vučić – PM Serbia	19
Ivica Dačić – FM Serbia	10
Tomislav Nikolić – Serbia President	7
Milo Đukanović – Montenegro PM	6
Boyko Borisov – Bulgaria President	6
Jean-Claude Juncker – President EC	5

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