



## Key Quotes

**"Serbia will continue to have in Romania a genuine partner and supporter of its European integration bid,"** Romania's Foreign Minister Bogdan Aurescu said Monday. **"Amidst Serbia's preparing its action plan for negotiation over Chapter 23 (Justice and fundamental rights) as well as its action plan to protect national minorities, Aurescu reiterated the importance of such instruments for the implementation in the entire Serbia of measures designed to promote the rights of national minorities, an essential criterion in the accession negotiations,"** says MAE in a press release (agerpres.ro, RO, 18/5). <http://www.agerpres.ro/english/2015/05/18/formin-aurescu-serbia-will-continue-to-have-in-romania-a-partner-and-supporter-of-its-european-journey-16-19-42>

Serbian Prime Minister Aleksandar Vučić said he fears that the crisis in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia could spark a new, wider conflict. **"I am a bit afraid, for the first time,"** he said during a visit to Brussels. **"I see and I feel something that is wrong in the western Balkans." "We don't need any single spark to ignite ... Bosnia or some other parts of the western Balkans, and we'll do our best just to keep an entire region very calm,"** Vučić said (dalje.com, HR, 19/5). <http://dalje.com/en-world/macedonian-politicians-fail-to-defuse-crisis/544356>

## Summary

### Demonstrators staying until the Prime Minister resigns

As the crisis in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia deepens, the two largest European political families - the centre-right European People's Party (EPP) and the Party of European Socialists (PES) - have added fuel to fire by stirring up antagonism between their parties. Tens of thousands of protesters took to the streets of Macedonia's capital Skopje on Sunday in a dramatic display of ethnic unity against a government on the ropes after months of damaging wiretap revelations. Against this background, the EU's largest political forces appeared to be largely out of sync with the EPP desperately supporting the discredited rule of Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski and the PES sending its leader to Skopje in an effort to derive score points in the standoff. Western diplomats appear to push toward forming national unity government in which the two political parties would keep a low profile until early elections are held. (EurActiv.com, BE, 18/5). *"We are just ordinary people who've had enough"* says retired architect Miryana Stoyanovska. Fears of escalating violence have come to nought. Protesters have pitched tents and say that they are staying until Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski resigns. However, no-one believes he will do so willingly (Dagens Nyheter, SE, 18/5).

- EurActiv.com, BE, 18/5, <http://www.euractiv.com/sections/elections/european-parties-add-fuel-fire-macedonia-314621>
- Dagens Nyheter, SE, 18/5, [http://193.178.140.110/delivery/20150518/mi/item\\_248847724.pdf](http://193.178.140.110/delivery/20150518/mi/item_248847724.pdf)

### The Balkans or the return of the sick man of Europe

In an opinion piece in Les Echos (FR, 18/5) Dominique Moïsi wonders about the current situation in the Balkans and its position vis a vis Europe. *"Despite all its problems, the European Union remains the only alternative to the worst forms of nationalism in the Balkans. Over twenty years following the implosion of Yugoslavia there must not be a Russian model"* he writes adding *"we need to Europeanise the Balkans, lest Europe be Balkanised."* He goes on to say that the crisis in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia only increases enlargement fatigue and the Greek model does not help. Who wants another Greece in the EU? he asks.

- Les Echos, FR, 18/5, [http://193.178.140.110/delivery/20150518/mi/item\\_248816161.pdf](http://193.178.140.110/delivery/20150518/mi/item_248816161.pdf)

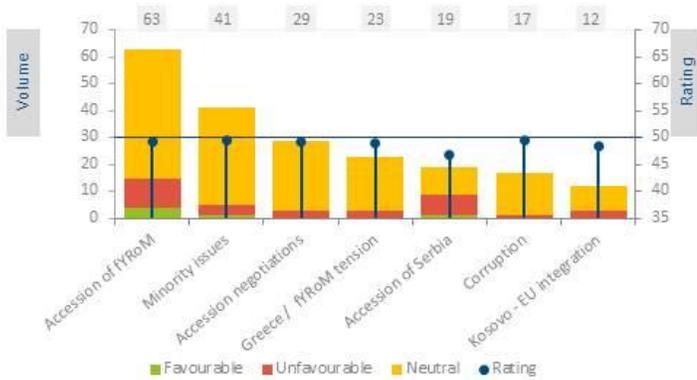
### Russia and the Balkans

Only few days away from the East Partnership Summit in Riga, Moscow emerges questioning the EU's primacy not only in the post-soviet space, but also in the Western Balkans. Over the weekend the Foreign Minister of Russia, Sergei Lavrov, issued statements in support of the government in Skopje and went on to praise Serbia's Presidency of the OSCE as *"committed to values"* and therefore impartial (New Europe, BE, 18/5).

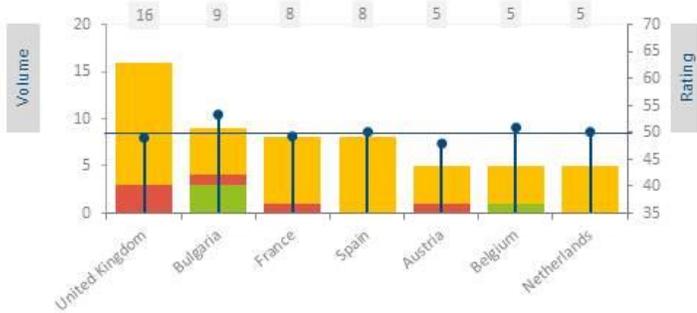
- New Europe, BE, 18/5, <http://www.neurope.eu/article/conflict-in-the-balkans-makes-moscow-a-player/>

# Charts

ELARG: **Leading Daily Issues**  
by volume, favourability & rating



ELARG: **Leading Daily Countries**  
by volume, favourability & rating



Copyright © Ebiquty plc 2015

ELARG: **Highlights**  
by volume, overall rating and percentage favourability

Volume	70 items
Rating	49.4
Favourable %	7.1%
Unfavourable %	15.8%
Neutral %	77.1%

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

ELARG: Stakeholders & Sources	Number of mentions
Nikola Gruevski - PM former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	49
Zoran Zaev - opposition leader former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	38
Sergei Lavrov - FM Russia	24
Ivica Dačić – FM Serbia	13
Tomislav Nikolić - Serbia President	12
Aleksandar Vučić - PM Serbia	7
Vladimir Putin - Russian President	6

**Disclaimer: The access to this press report is restricted to European Commission staff. It should not be forwarded or circulated.**