



Key Quotes

Serbia and Albania should put aside their differences over Kosovo and forge closer economic ties to help both countries fulfil their ambitions to join the European Union, Serbian Prime Minister Aleksandar Vučić said. **"I wish to extend the hand of friendship to the Albanian people ... We think differently (over Kosovo) and will keep thinking differently, but this will not change our strategic relations for the future on economic ties,"** he said. **"Peace is brittle and a big burden on our shoulders so we need ... concrete help from the European Union and the European Commission,"** Albanian Prime Minister, Edi Rama added. **"We can get more support together than on our own, to maximise the gains for our peoples."** (uk.reuters.com, UK, 27/5)

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/2015/05/27/albania-serbia-idUKL5N0Y13JQ20150527>

Summary

Slow growth in the Balkans

An editorial article in the *Wirtschaftsblatt* (AT, 27/5) discusses the gap between the rich and the poor in eastern EU Member States. While the European Commission has provided hundreds of billions for the modernisation of entire regions in the new Member States in the years since their EU accession, development is proceeding more slowly than expected. The weakened band of land along the eastern EU border harms the success story of EU enlargement and prevents additional enlargement ideas. In turn, immigration from the east makes it difficult to gain social support for such an enlargement from the old EU Member States.

- *Wirtschaftsblatt*, AT, 27/5, http://193.178.140.110/delivery/20150527/mi/item_250193536.pdf

Fear of ethnic tension in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Former Foreign Minister Kristian Vigenin has argued that it is essential for Bulgaria that the conflict in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia does not escalate into ethnic tensions. *"The opposition in Macedonia believes that if elections are prepared by the same government in the same way, then the results will be the same. It is essential to us that the tensions there do not escalate into ethnic tensions."* Vigenin said in an interview for Bulgarian National Radio. He claimed that the wiser the attitude of the countries in the region to such crises, the harder it would be to provoke external intervention. Vigenin reminded in the interview that the Bulgarian Socialist Party backed the calls for the resignation of Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski (Novinite.com, BG, 27/5). Sweden's former Foreign Minister, Carl Bildt, will be probably appointed special representative of the European Union to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, online news edition MKD reported. *"Now is the time to start actively working on a strategy for prevention of conflicts and a resolution on Macedonia"* is what Carl Bildt posted in his Twitter profile. According to MKD, this can be considered a sign that Federica Mogherini has found her representative for the country (focus-news.net, BG, 27/5).

- Novinite.com, BG, 27/5, <http://www.novinite.com/articles/168824/Preventing+Ethnic+Tensions+in+Macedonia+Essential+to+Bulgaria+%E2%80%93+93+%D0%95x+Foreign+Minister>
- focus-news.net, BG, 27/5, <http://focus-fen.net/news/2015/05/27/373485/mkd-carl-bildt-to-be-eus-special-representative-to-macedonia.html>

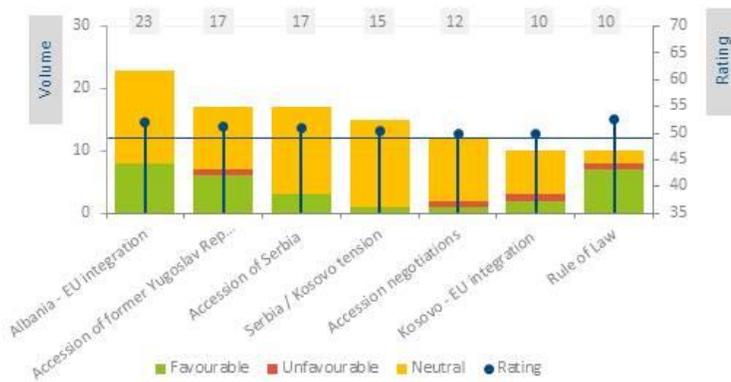
UN urges establishment of courts in Kosovo

The U.N. envoy for Kosovo urged the government on Tuesday to move swiftly to establish a court to investigate crimes committed by ethnic Albanian rebels during the country's 1998-99 war of independence from Serbia. Farid Zarif told the U.N. Security Council that he underlined the expectations of the international community and possible victims of crimes that there are no delays in the steps required from Kosovo toward the establishment of the court (Yahoo!, UK, 27/5).

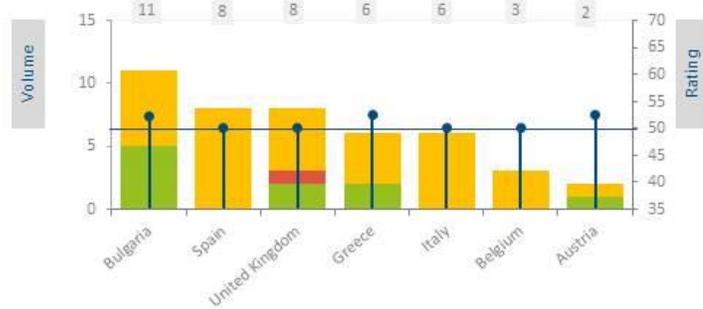
- Yahoo!, UK, 27/5, <https://uk.news.yahoo.com/un-envoy-urges-kosovo-establish-war-crime-court-232325767.html#bCgPTOf>

Charts

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



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



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

| | |
|----------------|----------|
| Volume | 47 items |
| Rating | 51 |
| Favourable % | 21.3% |
| Unfavourable % | 2.1% |
| Neutral % | 76.6% |

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

| ELARG: Stakeholders & Sources | Number of mentions |
|--|--------------------|
| Aleksandar Vučić - PM Serbia | 13 |
| Edi Rama - PM Albania | 12 |
| Rosen Plevneliev - President Bulgaria | 10 |
| Nikola Gruevski - PM former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia | 9 |
| Sergio Mattarella - President Italy | 6 |
| Bujar Nishani - President Albania | 5 |
| Victor Ponta - PM Romania | 4 |

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