



Summary

The relations of Bulgaria and Greece with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (fYRoM) and the Euro-Atlantic prospects of the Western Balkans were among the key topics during the talks between Bulgarian PM Boyko Borisov and his Greek counterpart Antonis Samaras. The two confirmed their support for the EU prospects of Western Balkan states, emphasising good neighbourly relations as the vital condition that must be met before accession. *"We fully back the accession of all Balkan countries to NATO and the EU. This is the only way to achieve peace, integration and cooperation"* PM Borisov was quoted as saying (focus-fen.net, BG, 18/12). This was echoed by the Greek Prime Minister, Antonis Samaras, who suggested that the failure of good neighbourly relations will slow integration of the countries of the Western Balkans (Sega-Daily, BG, 18/12)

- focus-fen.net, BG, 18/12, <http://www.focus-fen.net/index.php?id=n294908>
- Sega-Daily, BG, 18/12, http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20121218/mi/item_143093164.pdf

It was reported that Hungary has decided to recognize the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia under its constitutional name instead of the name former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia which has been used by the UN because of the name dispute with Greece. *"The decision to recognise Macedonia under the name Republic of Macedonia was made a while back"* Hungarian Foreign Ministry spokesman Gabor Kaleta said (dnevnik.bg, BG, 18/12). Focus-fen (BG, 17/12) reported that since Skopje proclaimed its independence from the former Yugoslavia in 1991, Greece has alleged that its use of the name Macedonia could imply a territorial claim to the northern Greek province of the same name which has led Athens to block the country's attempts to enter NATO and the European Union.

- dnevnik.bg, BG, 18/12, http://www.dnevnik.bg/evropa/razshirivane/2012/12/18/1971413_unqariia_se_namesi_v_spora_za_imeto_na_makedonija_shte/?ref=rss
- focus-fen.net, BG, 17/12, <http://www.focus-fen.net/?id=n294890>

In Serbia during the one-day visit of Czech Prime Minister Petr Nečas, where he met with his counterpart Ivica Dačić he said he supported Serbia's EU accession. Mr Nečas added that the Czech Republic was ready to assist the country and offer it its experience. Both politicians also talked about mutual economic cooperation and the issue of Kosovo (Pravo, CZ, 18/12).

- Pravo, CZ, 18/12, http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20121218/mi/item_143092519.pdf

The enlargement of the Schengen area is not among the priorities named by Ireland's upcoming EU presidency but Ireland's Minister of State for European Affairs Lucinda Creighton has declared that the country backs the bloc's current enlargement policy, saying she hopes that Serbia would receive a EU negotiations date by June 2013 (gandul.info, RO, 17/12). The next EU presidency hopes to open negotiations for the Association Agreement with Kosovo and Serbia's accession by June. The message comes on the occasion of the presentation of the priorities of the next semester (ansamed.ansa.it, IT, 17/12). Ireland also believes the ratification process of Croatia's EU accession treaty will run smoothly and that bilateral issues must not hinder Croatia's accession, Ms Creighton said in Brussels on Monday as she presented Irish presidency priorities (sta.si, SI,17/12).

- gandul.info, RO, 17/12, http://www.gandul.info/international/presa-bulgara-avertizeaza-extinderea-schengen-nu-se-afla-printre-prioritatile-presedintiei-irlandeze-a-ue-10397608?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+GandulInternational+%28Gandul%29
- ansamed.ansa.it, IT, 17/12, http://ansamed.ansa.it/ansamed/it/notizie/rubriche/politica/2012/12/17/Ue-presidenza-speriamo-aprire-negoziati-Kosovo-Serbia_7968726.html
- sta.si, SI,17/12, <http://www.sta.si/en/vest.php?s=a&id=1833804>

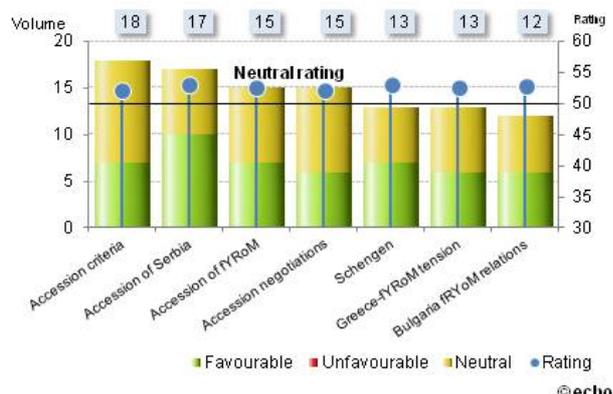
Key Quotes

Nikola Poposki: "Macedonia's key goal is NATO and EU accession and establishment of good neighborly environment. We should not base on notions but on facts only." (Focus News, Bulgaria, 19/12)
<http://www.focus-fen.net/?id=n294979>

Utrinski Vesnik, Macedonia: We are disappointed by the EU's decision, but our policy remains pro-European, the president said (Focus News, Bulgaria, 19/12)
<http://www.focus-fen.net/?id=n294980>

Charts

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



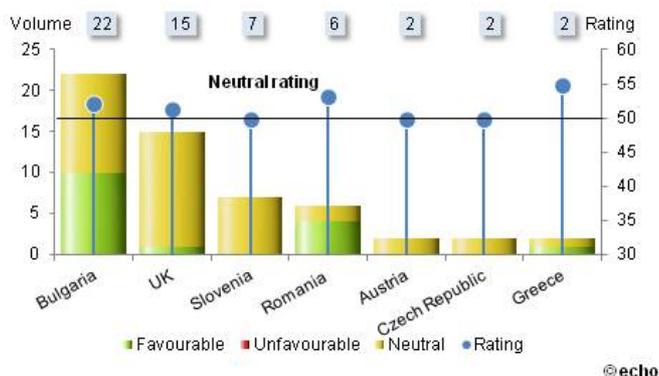
ELARG: **Highlights**
by volume, favourability & rating

Volume	61 items
Rating	51.7
Favourable %	27.9%
Unfavourable %	0%
Neutral %	72.1%

ELARG: **Key Stakeholders & Sources**
by volume, favourability & rating

©echo

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



©echo

ELARG: Stakeholders & Sources	Number of mentions
Boyko Borisov (Prime Minister, Bulgaria)	19
Antonis Samaras (Prime Minister, Greece)	18
Lucinda Creighton (EU Affairs Minister, Ireland)	12
Sir David Edward (Former Judge of the Court of Justice of the European Union)	9
José Manuel Barroso (President, European Commission)	7
Nicola Sturgeon (Deputy First Minister, Scotland)	7
Ruth Davidson (Conservative leader, Scotland)	7

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