



Summary

Iceland made substantial progress in its quest to join the European Union; six more negotiation chapters were opened touching on economic issues such as tax, monetary policy and free movement of goods, as well as foreign policy and environment but Iceland and the EU are at odds over fishing rights, with the so-called "mackerel war" heating up in late 2010 after Iceland unilaterally multiplied its catch quota. (stockwatch.com.cy, CY, 18/12). Speaking following the accession conference, EU Enlargement Commissioner Štefan Füle said that Cyprus had demonstrated great determination in promoting accession negotiations with Iceland. (Politis-Cyprus, CY, 19/12). The Icelandic government, however, is divided on entering the EU. A parliamentary committee on foreign relations has sought to push back further negotiations. Anti-EU sentiment has been growing in the island nation which has enjoyed a robust economic recovery after its financial collapse in 2008 according to telegraph.co.uk (UK, 18/12).

- stockwatch.com.cy, CY, 18/12, http://www.stockwatch.com.cy/nqcontent.cfm?a_name=news_view&ann_id=163719&lang=en
- Politis-Cyprus, CY, 19/12, http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20121219/mi/item_143201769.pdf
- telegraph.co.uk, UK, 18/12, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/debt-crisis-live/9751535/Debt-Crisis-as-it-happened-December-18-2012.html>

Turkey is hopeful that France will unblock talks over EU membership on at least two policy chapters in the coming months. Talks have also been blocked by the European Commission which says Turkey does not yet meet required standards on human rights, freedom of speech and religion (uk.reuters.com, UK, 18/12). For journalists, the military, Kurds and political Islam are highly-sensitive topics, coverage of which can lead to arrest and prosecution. Some of the most repressive sanctions however have been lifted as part of reforms intended to pave the way for EU entry. (bbc.co.uk, UK, 18/12).

- uk.reuters.com, UK, 18/12, <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2012/12/18/uk-eu-turkey-idUKBRE8BH0ON20121218?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews>
- bbc.co.uk, UK, 18/12, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-17992011>

The agreement Serbian Prime Minister Ivica Dačić and his Kosovan counterpart Hashim Thaci made on border checks is not easy to put into practice according to Nepzava (HU, 19/12); one great shortcoming is that it does not refer to duties: *"If the accord on joint border management is not applied as agreed, I am ready to leave the negotiations with Hashim Thaci and the EU High Commissioner for Foreign Affairs Catherine Ashton"*, Dačić was quoted as saying and also that Kosovo is not supposed to impose duties on goods entering its territory, or to create problems for Serbians entering Kosovo without local ID or license plates. His comments follow a recent protest by Serbian entrepreneurs against Kosovo-imposed duties at the Jarinje border crossing. *"Our aim is not to avoid paying import duties, but first we must agree in our post-January 10 talks on who pays what, how and to whom"* Dačić said (ansamed.ansa.it, IT, 18/12).

- Nepzava, HU, 19/12, http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20121219/mi/item_143195289.pdf
- ansamed.ansa.it, IT, 18/12, http://ansamed.ansa.it/ansamed/en/news/nations/serbia/2012/12/18/Kosovo-Dacic-threatens-quit-dialogue-Thacic_7974399.html

In Kosovo the Prime Minister Hashim Thaci has done little in the last few days to hide his displeasure with the conclusions adopted at the latest EU Summit. Mr. Thaci openly and publicly said to the EU special representative in Kosovo, Samuel Žbogar, that his Government is frustrated by the behaviour of the Heads of State at the Summit, which was quite contrary to their view on the Serbian-Kosovo problem of two months ago. He warned that the Government may take up for consideration the fate of the EULEX mission in Kosovo, which could further complicate relations between Kosovo and the EU (Dnevnik, BG, 19/12).

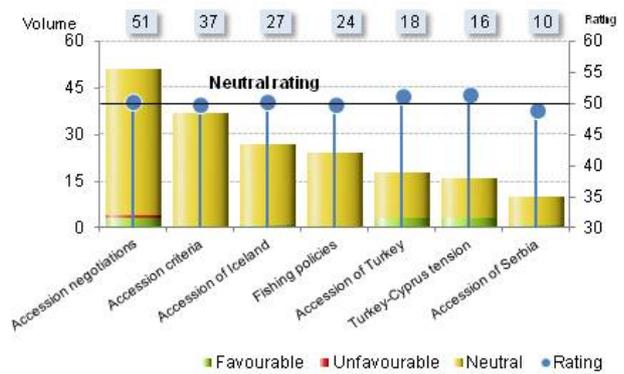
- Dnevnik, BG, 19/12, http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20121219/mi/item_143198815.pdf

Key Quotes

Nikola Poposki: "Macedonia's membership in NATO and the EU is vital for us. We aspire towards establishing good neighbourly relations. This has to happen based on particular facts and not suggestions" (Focus News, Bulgaria, 20/12) <http://www.focus-fen.net/?id=n295036>

Charts

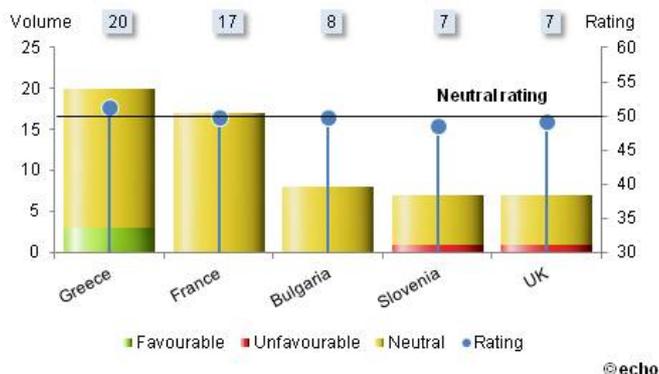
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ELARG: **Key Stakeholders & Sources**
by volume, favourability & rating

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ELARG: Stakeholders & Sources	Number of mentions
Össur Skarphéðinsson (Foreign Minister, Iceland)	25
Egemen Bağış (Minister for EU Affairs, Turkey)	13
François Hollande (President, France)	13
Štefan Füle (Commissioner for Enlargement, EC)	10
Hashim Thaçi (Prime Minister, Kosovo)	5
Baroness Catherine Ashton, (High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, EU)	4
Ivica Dačić (Prime Minister, Serbia)	4
Erato Kozakou-Marcoullis (Foreign Minister, Cyprus)	4

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