



Summary

Serbia says it is ready to loosen its control over Serb-populated areas of northern Kosovo in what could mark a major concession by Belgrade as it pushes for talks on joining the European Union. Serbian Prime Minister Ivica Dačić said that Serbs in northern Kosovo should be governed by their own autonomous institutions -- not directly by the Serbian state. He also said the negotiations needed "*Serb institutions that are recognised by all participants*" (rferl.org, CZ, 9/1) but did not give any details on how autonomous institutions for the Serb minority in Kosovo might operate (scotsman.com, UK, 10/1). Inside Kosovo it was suggested that Serbia's plan is an attempt to "*change borders*". Kosovo's envoy to the EU has said Serbia's proposal to give autonomy to Serbs in north Kosovo is an attempt to divide his country: "*One clearly has the impression they haven't abandoned the idea [of partition] ... We strongly reject the proposal and most of our neighbours reject it because it would have serious consequences not just for us but also for these other countries*" (dnevnik.bg, BG, 10/1).

- rferl.org, CZ, 9/1, <http://www.rferl.org/content/serbia-offers-to-loosen-hold-on-northern-kosovo/24819589.html>
- scotsman.com, UK, 10/1, <http://www.scotsman.com/the-scotsman/international/serbia-raises-possibility-of-change-for-kosovo-1-2727688>
- dnevnik.bg, BG, 10/1, http://www.dnevnik.bg/evropa/razshirivane/2013/01/10/1981653_kosovo_planut_na_surbiiia_e_opit_za_promiana_na/?ref=rss

Croatia is reportedly unhappy that Slovenia has not yet begun procedures to ratify Croatia's accession treaty, claims Delo. Though it add that it emphasises that the EU is intensifying pressure on Slovenia regarding the issue (SI, 10/1). The Slovenian Foreign Minister, Karl Erjavec, said it is good that accredited experts from the two countries agree on a solution for foreign exchange deposits under the auspices of the Bank for International Settlements, but "*it is impossible to negotiate if there are proceedings pending in the courts*" adding "*I think the position is very clear. This means that there is no ratification until legal action is withdrawn*" (Dnevnik, SI, 10/1).

- Delo, SI, 10/1, http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130110/mi/item_144811736.pdf
- Dnevnik, SI, 10/1, http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130110/mi/item_144817725.pdf

In other accession negotiations, the Irish Ambassador to Cyprus, Patrick Scullion, presented the priorities of the Irish EU Presidency at the EU House in Nicosia. He expressed the Irish Presidency's will to open a chapter in the negotiating process with Turkey if this is possible, as well as the Presidency's support for Turkish accession under the right circumstances (Simerini, CY, 10/1).

- Simerini, CY, 10/1, http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130110/mi/item_144810896.pdf

Key Quotes

Dr Ivan Grdešić, Croatia's Ambassador to the UK: "The process is going very well, and we believe that Croatia will be a full member of the EU by 1 July 2013" (Diplomat Magazine, UK, 11/1)

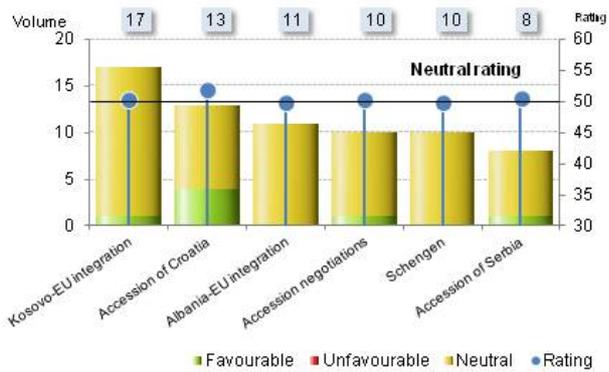
<http://www.diplomatmagazine.com/issues/2013/january/739-ambassador-of-croatia-his-excellency-dr-ivan-grdesic.html>

The SNP's political crisis deepened when José Manuel Barroso, the European Commission President, confirmed a separate Scotland would have to apply for EU membership from scratch (Telegraph, UK, 11/1)

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/scotland/9794365/Alex-Salmond-gave-muddled-answers-in-EU-interview.html>

Charts

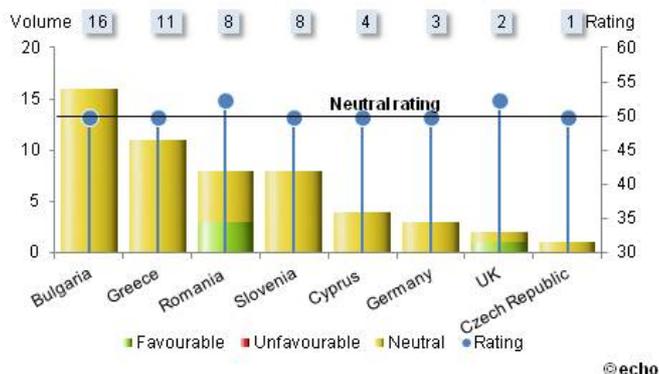
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ELARG: **Key Stakeholders & Sources**
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ELARG: Stakeholders & Sources	Number of mentions
Kreshnik Spahiu (Leader of the Red and Black Alliance, Albania)	11
Karl Erjavec (Foreign Minister, Slovenia)	6
France Arhar (Financial expert, Slovenia)	5
Zdravko Rogič (Financial expert, Croatia)	5
Ivica Dačić (Prime Minister, Serbia)	4
Borut Pahor (President, Slovenia)	4

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