

Summary

Croatian Foreign Minister Vesna Pusić remains optimistic that Slovenia will ratify the Croatian accession treaty. Ms Pusić stated that the messages from Slovenia point in the direction of wanting to reach an agreement for the first time and that a compromise is possible. She added that she will meet with Slovenian Foreign Minister Karl Erjavec this week, at the meeting of European and Latin American Foreign Ministers, Prime Ministers and Presidents in the Chilean capital Santiago de Chile (Vecer, SI, 23/1). Meanwhile widely reported were the remarks of the EU Enlargement Commissioner, Štefan Füle who said he expects Croatia to join the EU on 1 in July (dnevnik.si, SI, 22/1), adding that Croatia had made good progress in carrying out tasks (siol.net, SI, 22/1). Slovenian MEP Jelko Kacin suggested that Croatia's accession was in Slovenia's strategic interest (Zurnal24, SI, 23/1) and also that Slovenia will ratify Croatia's accession treaty as soon as the conditions are met (siol.net, SI, 23/1).

- Vecer, SI, 23/1, http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130123/mi/item_146495481.pdf
- dnevnik.si, SI, 22/1, <http://www.dnevnik.si/svet/fule-pricakuje-hrvasko-v-eu-1-julija-letos>
- siol.net, SI, 22/1, http://www.siol.net/novice/svet/2013/01/fule_hrvaska_dobro_napreduje_pri_izpolnjevanju_naloga.aspx
- Zurnal24, SI, 23/1, http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130123/mi/item_146510154.pdf
- siol.net, SI, 23/1, http://www.siol.net/novice/svet/2013/01/kacin_ratifikacija_hrvaske_pogodbe.aspx

Serbian President Tomislav Nikolić and Kosovar President Atifete Jahjaga will definitely meet, Serbian minister for European integration, Suzana Grubješić, told the EP Foreign Affairs Committee. *"I can't yet confirm a date, but the meeting will take place because the intentions are there. I don't know when it will take place, but I hope it will be soon,"* she said in reply to questions from MEPs, adding that *"there is no alternative to a dialogue between Serbia and Kosovo"*, which parliament has made *"permanent"*. Grubješić said that *"such a meeting would be a good contribution to the ongoing political dialogue"* between the two countries' premiers, Ivica Dačić and Hashim Thaçi. The next round, also to be facilitated by EU High Foreign Affairs Representative Catherine Ashton, is scheduled for February (ansamed.info, IT, 22/1). However Serbia has suggested that the EU is not a neutral mediator between Serbia and Kosovo, but sides with the latter, the Deputy Director of the Serbian government's Office for Kosovo, Krstimir Pantić told local media on Tuesday. *"Our negotiating team has a tough job to do in Brussels, since we have to deal not only with the Albanian Kosovars, but also with the EU, which is completely on their side,"* Pantić told Serbian public television RTS. *"The European mediators coach them on how to behave and what to do to best represent the interests of the Albanian side"* (ansamed.ansa.it, IT, 22/1).

- ansamed.info, IT, 22/1, http://www.ansamed.info/ansamed/en/news/nations/europe/2013/01/22/Serbia-Kosovo-presidents-meet-Serbian-minister-says_8120815.html
- ansamed.ansa.it, IT, 22/1, http://ansamed.ansa.it/ansamed/en/news/nations/kosovo/2013/01/22/Kosovo-Serbia-accuses-EU-being-biased-mediator_8118201.html

On enlargement more generally, Andrea Seibel, in an opinion piece in Die Welt, comments that Europe is at a crossroads and must make fundamental decisions on its future. Does Europe want to continue the enlargement process or does it eventually abandon the one size fits all approach trying to integrate all nations? Germany and France will need to find answers to Europe's future challenges, too. The question that then arises is whether the two countries are able to agree on a common point or not. Ms Seibel underlines that *"nothing is final"* and argues that the focus must be on the future and not on the past. Europe's future may lie in a German-British axis (Welt, DE, 23/1).

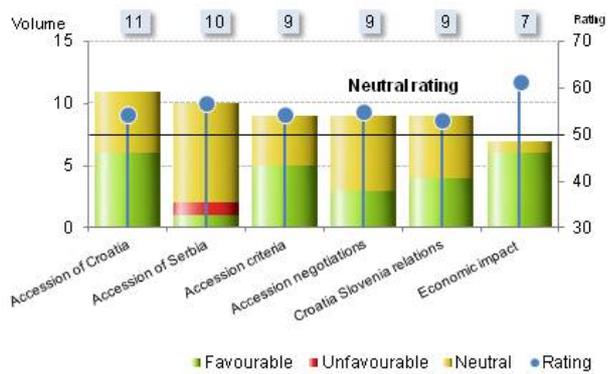
- Welt, DE, 23/1, http://194.250.231.110/delivery/20130123/mi/item_146456350.pdf

Key Quotes

Vecer: EU Commissioner makes surprising visit to Macedonia (Focus News, Bulgaria, 24/1) <http://www.focus-fen.net/?id=n297683>

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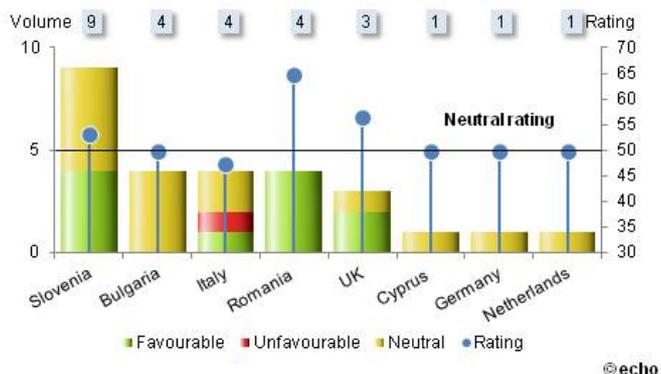
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ELARG: Stakeholders & Sources	Number of mentions
Štefan Füle (Enlargement Commissioner, EC)	10
Ivica Dačić (Prime Minister, Serbia)	5
Baroness Catherine Ashton, (High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, EU)	4
Lucinda Creighton (Minister of State for European Affairs, Ireland)	4
Jelko Kacin (Slovenian MEP)	4

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