



Weekly Media Report

2 – 5 December

International Affairs

Albanian speaker of Parliament meets Bundestag President Lammert during his visit to Germany -GazetaShqip, (Albania), 3 December 2013

Albanian speaker of the Assembly Ilir Meta, during an official visit in Germany, met with the President of the Bundestag, Norbert Lammert. They discussed about the relations between the two countries, Albania's progress in terms of European integration and the developments in the region. Meta said that the approval of Albania's candidacy would be a positive message not only for Albanians, but for the entire European perspective of the Western Balkans. Lammert praised the 23 June elections and said he was convinced Albania belonged to Europe. He said a clear perspective for the country was needed. Meta stressed that Albania counted on Germany's support, adding that the consensual adoption of the European Integration Resolution by the Albanian Assembly last week demonstrated the unified stand of political parties in terms of integration. They also agreed to intensify the relations between the two parliaments in the future.

<http://gazeta-shqip.com/journal/gazeta.pdf>

Iranian Ambassador to Albania: Time to increase trade exchanges between two countries –Balkan Web, (Albania), 3 December 2013

The Iranian Ambassador to Albania, Abdolmajid Mozaffari, in an interview with *GazetaShqiptare* on Sunday, 1 December, said that the Islamic Republic of Iran believe they should maintain and strengthen the relations with all peoples, including Albania. According to him, although Albania and Iran are located in two different regions and pursue different priorities in their foreign policy, bilateral relations should not be ignored. Mozaffari said that the level of trade exchange between the two countries has been low. He said that both countries, as developing economies, need investments and infrastructural projects. According to him, Iranian investors could be present in various economic sectors. Co-operation between the two countries has the potential of being more intensive and more steps should be undertaken to promote the development of trade exchanges.

<http://www.balkanweb.com/indexi.php>

Russian Ambassador to Albania: Full potential of Albanian-Russian relations has not been used yet – GazetaShqiptare, (Albania), 4 December 2013

In an interview with *GazetaShqiptare* on 1 December 2013, Russian Ambassador in Albania Leonid Abramov said that Albania's decision to not accept the import of the Syrian chemical weapons was a sign of political maturity. He said that the civil peaceful protests which preceded the decision were also a sign of maturity. Abramov said that Albania was the only country left at the moment of decision-making. He said he personally welcomed the decision. With regards to the bilateral relations between Albania and Russia, Abramov said that the full potential has not been used yet. According to him, although Russia has been included in the list of top ten trade partners of Albania during the last ten years, there are in fact no joint investment projects. He said Russia is specialized on energy, but co-operation could also be extended to transportation and infrastructure sectors. Abramov said that although Russian investors are interested in Albania, the opportunities to resolve disputes in the shortest time possible in a warm and favourable climate are also necessary. With regards to the Friendship Treaty signed between the respective foreign ministers in 2004, but not signed by the respective Presidents yet, Abramov said that the delay was due to the

government changes in both countries. He said Russia's stand regarding the Kosovo independence should not affect the relations between Russia and Albania.

<http://www.balkanweb.com/indexi.php>

Israeli ambassador in Serbia avoids talks about Kosovo – *Balkans Web, (Kosovo), 5 December 2013*

The Chairman of Alliance for Future of Kosovo, Mr. RamushHaradinaj, has received the Israeli Ambassador Mr. Yossef Levy in Serbia. He asked Mr.Levy to recognize Kosovo but Yossef Levy avoided to answer. "It is not the first time that I have been asked, but I am here to inaugurate the opening of the film week that they will bring a part of Jewish art in order to achieve deepening of dialogue between two countries", he said during a press conference. He also added that the Kosovo – Serbia case is quite different from Palestine-Israeli conflict.

<http://www.balkanweb.com/kosova/2686/haradinaj-takim-me-ambasadorin-e-izraelit-levy-shmang-njohjen-e-kosoves-161994.html>

Milosevic had more than 700 agents in Kosovo – *Balkan Web(Serbia), 5 December 2013*

Former Serbian President, Slobodan Milosevic, during his regime had 2200 agents in Balkans. He has had 700 agents in Kosovo who have worked for the Serbian Secret State Service. He had less in Macedonia (only 150). During a debate held in Brussels, a representative of NGO "KUPI-KAPINIK", Mr.ZoranPetrovic, presented his data on Serbian Secret Service in Balkans where among them were journalists, businessmen, and politicians.

<http://www.balkanweb.com/serbi/2797/milloshevic-kishte-700-agjente-ne-kosove-161639.html>

National Affairs

Thailand's Prime Minister dismisses calls to step down – *CNN (US), 2 December 2013*

Thai Prime Minister YingluckShinawatra dismissed calls by protesters for her to step down by Tuesday, 3 December, saying she was open to talks to resolve demonstrations against her government that turned violent over the weekend.

http://edition.cnn.com/2013/12/02/world/asia/thailand-protests/index.html?hpt=hp_t1

Ukraine unrest: Protesters blockade government sites – *BBC (UK), 2 December 2013*

Demonstrators are blockading government buildings in the Ukrainian capital Kiev, as they step up their campaign for the resignation of the government. The unrest was triggered in November by President Viktor Yanukovich's refusal to sign a deal on closer EU ties.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-25180502>

Intense rain cause serious problems in Italy – *Repubblica (IT), 2 December 2013*

The centre and south of Italy continue to be affected by bad weather conditions. Among the others, this has caused the death of a woman who remained stuck with her car in a flooded underpass. Moreover, in the Abruzzo region more than 1500 people evacuated from their houses, and in the Puglia region the train circulation is particularly at risk.

http://www.repubblica.it/cronaca/2013/12/02/news/maltempo_sud_italia-72473507/?ref=HREA-1

Supporters and opponents of the mayor of Riga meet in pickets at the Town Hall– *www.delfi.lv (Latvia), 3 December 2013*

After the Latvian Prime Ministerresigned in order to take his political responsibility for the tragic collapse of the market building, part of the society demands for the resignation of the



mayor of Riga, Nil Ushakov. Unsatisfied people have announced a picket at the Town Hall on Tuesday at midday. But as an answer, also the supporters of the mayor of Riga have announced a picket at the same time and same place in order to support Mr. Ushakov.

<http://www.delfi.lv/news/national/politics/usakova-pretinieki-un-atbalstitaji-satiekas-piketospie-ratsnama-video-tiesraide.d?id=43866548>

OSCE praises elections in Kosovo – *Balkan Web(Kosovo)*, 2 December 2013

According to local press in Kosovo, the General Secretary of Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Mr. Lamberto Zannier the local elections were held in peaceful and regular manner. The local elections were obliged to be conducted for another round and it was the first time that national institutions were able to organize themselves an electoral campaign for all 25 communes in Kosovo. "I am satisfied with participation of people eligible to vote", said the President of Kosovo, Madam Ahtifete Jahjaga.

<http://www.balkanweb.com/kosova/2686/jahjaga-vleresoj-pozitivisht-raundin-e-dyte-te-zgjedhjeve-161452.htm>

Croatians Vote in Favor of Banning Same-Sex Marriage – *(Time World)*, Croatia, 2 December 2013

Initial poll results on 1 December 2013 showed Croatia has backed amendments to its constitution that would ban same-sex marriage and strictly define the union along traditional lines. Almost 65% of voters agreed to defining marriage as a "matrimony between a man and a woman," according to the partial results from about one-third of polling stations that were released by the electoral commission. Liberal groups opposed, saying it infringes on basic human rights, and both the government and public figures spoke out against the referendum. Croatian President Ivo Josipovic planned to vote against amending the constitution: "We don't need this kind of a referendum," he said. "Defining marriage between a man and a woman doesn't belong to the constitution. A nation is judged by its attitude toward minorities." But groups backed by the Catholic Church garnered 750,000 signatures in support of the measure. The vote, a major victory for Croatia's conservatives, has divided the newest E.U. nation. About 90% of its 4.4 million people are Roman Catholic. Still, experts say the country's attitude toward gay rights has shifted gradually since the first pride parade was held in Zagreb in 2002.

[In Referendum, Croatia Votes 'No' on Same-Sex Marriage | TIME.com](http://world.time.com/2013/12/01/croatians-vote-in-favor-of-banning-same-sex-marriage/#ixzz2mJnOYPdY)

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Head of Albanian PACE delegation urges lifting of monitoring regime for Albania – *Balkan Web (Albania)*, 4 December 2013

On Monday, the head of the Albanian parliamentary delegation to the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly (PACE), Valentina Leskaj, urged PACE to end the monitoring of Albania and its state institutions and place the country under the post-monitoring regime. She said that this was needed in view of the significant progress made by Albania in its European Union accession process, and also in view of the 23 June parliamentary elections that were assessed positively by PACE in their related reporting. She made these remarks while attending a conference organized by the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Attending the conference were the Foreign Minister Ditmir Bushati, the PACE Rapporteur for Albania Jonathan Evans (United Kingdom, EDG), and the CoE official Verena Taylord.

<http://www.balkanweb.com/indexi.php>

Greek – Albanian joint investigation into disappearance of over 500 Roma children in Greece – *(GazetaShqip)*, Albania, 3 November 2013

The Albanian Interior Minister Saimir Tahiri announced on 2 December 2013 that a joint investigation has been launched with the Greek law enforcement institutions in order to shed light on the disappearance of 502 Roma children hosted by a temporary shelter operated by the Greek authorities. He made these remarks in a roundtable with students of the University

of Tirana's Faculty of Social Sciences over the observance of human rights for human trafficking's victims.

<http://gazeta-shqip.com/journal/gazeta.pdf>

Milosevic had more than 700 agents in Kosovo – *Balkan Web(Serbia), 5 December 2013*
Former Serbian President, Slobodan Milosevic had, during his regime, 2200 agents in the Balkans. He had 700 agents in Kosovo working for the Serbian Secret State Service. He had fewer in Macedonia (only 150). During a debate held in Brussels, a representative of the "KUPI-KAPINIK" NGO, Mr.Zoran Petrovic, presented his data on the Serbian Secret Service in the Balkans.

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Economy

Amazon testing drones for deliveries –*BBC (UK), 2 December 2013*

Amazon, the world's largest online retailer, is testing unmanned drones to deliver goods to customers, Chief Executive Jeff Bezos says. The drones, called Octocopters, could deliver packages weighing up to 2.3kg to customers within 30 minutes of them placing the order, he said. However, he added that it could take up to five years for the service to start. The US Federal Aviation Administration is yet to approve the use of unmanned drones for civilian purposes.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-25180906>

Prime Minister Rama promises support to Italian entrepreneurs –*Balkans Web (Albania), 5 December 2013*

Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama met with some representatives of the Italian business community in Tirana. Rama said the Albanian government is committed to create a favourable climate for Italian investments in the country and that they are working to make Albania the first choice for all Italian entrepreneurs who want to invest abroad. According to Rama, a working group of MPs has been established to work on promoting Albania in Italy. He added that although big industries are welcome, the focus of the government is on small and medium enterprises because they are faster, simpler and more feasible. Rama invited the entrepreneurs to inform him about the issues they have faced during the past years. According to Rama, Albania could benefit from the current not-so-positive situation of manufacturing in Italy, as it offers more favourable conditions and advantages for the entrepreneurs.

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Director of EUROSTAT visits Albania – *Ministry of Agriculture(Albania), 5 December 2013*

The Albanian Minister of Agriculture, Development and Administration of Waters, Mr. Edmond Panariti, received today the Director of EUROSTAT (Office of Statistics in EU), Mr. Pieter Everaers, and his delegation. Minister Panariti explained the general priorities of his Ministry for the next four years and presented some of the problems concerning the purpose of statistical systems. Director of EUROSTAT Mr. Everaers provided some suggestions on how INSTAT and the Ministry of Agriculture can enhance their collaboration in order to be compiled better and how to be used effectively.

<http://www.bujqesia.gov.al/al/lajme/njoftime-per-shtyp/ministri-i-bujqesise-z-panariti-pritejtorin-e-eurostat-z-pieter-everaers>