

## SEPTEMBER IS THE DATE FOR DECISION ON BULGARIA/REUTERS

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BRUSSELS, May 15 (Reuters) - The European Commission is set to postpone until September a final recommendation on whether Bulgaria and Romania should join the European Union next year when it reviews their progress on reforms on Tuesday.

An internal note circulated among senior EU officials on Monday and seen by Reuters said: "The progress in all the fields and especially in areas of "serious concern" will be evaluated in September by the Commission.

"Based on the progress, the Commission will make the recommendation should Bulgaria and Romania be ready to join the EU as of 2007," the note added.

The accession treaty for the two Balkan states gives the EU the possibility of delaying their accession until 2008 if they are deemed manifestly unprepared.