

REPORT ON BULGARIA'S PROGRESS ON ACCOMPANYING MEASURES FOLLOWING ACCESSION - JUNE 27, 2007

Source: [Portal Europe](#)



Gateway EUROPE presents the full final text of the first EC report since accession.

Bulgaria and Romania make progress but much remains to be done to tackle judicial reform and corruption

The European Commission today has issued its reports on progress by Bulgaria and Romania in meeting the accompanying measures decided by the Commission when both countries joined the EU. The Commission concludes that genuine efforts and some progress has been made following extensive legislative activity by the two Governments but that the focus should now be on implementation. The reports focus mainly on judicial reform and the fight against corruption and organised crime. They highlight the need for sustained political commitment and implementation on the ground if the benchmarks set at the time of accession are to be met in full. The reports put forward a series of concrete follow up measures. This includes action plans to be drawn up by these two Member States, a targeting of available funding and continued support for institution building from the Commission as well as assistance from other Member States.

President of the European Commission Jos  Manuel Barroso, said: "These reports are a reality check - they show how the Bulgarian and Romanian governments are tackling judicial reform, corruption and organised crime. Both governments recognise that they must show their own citizens and other EU member states that they are serious about making the judicial system work and tackling corruption. The reports show that progress is being made but that the focus now needs to move from adoption of laws to implementation. While safeguard clauses are not being proposed by the Commission at this stage, we will remain vigilant. The further changes which are necessary require a long term commitment. We will cooperate in partnership with Bulgaria and Romania and continue to report on a regular basis".

Vice President Franco Frattini, Commissioner responsible for Freedom, Security and Justice, said: "The Reports are facts-based and fair. They make clear that both governments have demonstrated good will and determination in their commitment to the judicial reform process and the cleansing of the system of corruption. Legislative acts are under way as are the required institutional and constitutional arrangements. However, these efforts need to be consolidated, particularly in the area of the fight against corruption. More concrete results, criminals brought to justice and convincing dissuasive judgements are needed".

On Bulgaria, the Commission also reviewed the situation with regard to agricultural funding, food safety and aviation safety - areas where the Commission considered that special attention was needed following accession. The reports also set out a detailed assessment of the progress made by Bulgaria on judicial reform and the fight against corruption and organised crime. In relation to the six benchmarks set by the

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Commission in December 2006 as part of its Co-operation and Verification Mechanism, the Commission concludes that Bulgaria has continued to make progress in remedying weaknesses but that determined implementation is needed in order to secure irreversible change. A more detailed summary of the report on Bulgaria can be found in MEMO/07/261.

On Romania, the Commission reviewed the situation with regard to agricultural funding and food safety where the Commission considered that special attention was needed following accession. The reports also set out and made a detailed an assessment of the progress made by Romania on the four benchmarks set by the Commission in December 2006 in the areas of judicial reform and corruption. The Commission concludes that Romania has continued to make progress in remedying weaknesses that could prevent an effective application of EU laws, policies and programmes but that determined implementation is needed in order to secure irreversible change.. A more detailed summary of the report on Romania can be found in MEMO/07/262.

The Commission has not proposed at this stage the use of safeguard clauses which are set out in the Treaty of Accession as sufficient progress has been made to suggest that, in time, the benchmarks can be met by the Bulgarian and Romanian Governments. At the same time, the Commission has made it clear that the different benchmarks are all interlinked and need to be seen together as part of a broad reform of all areas at stake for which a long term political commitment is needed.

[HERE IS THE TEXT ITSELF.](#)

Background

Accompanying measures for Bulgaria and Romania cover EU agricultural funding, food safety, air safety (only for Bulgaria), judicial reform, the fight against corruption (and organised crime for Bulgaria). The Commission reports make a brief assessment of the progress in all of these areas with particular attention on the areas of judicial reform, the fight against corruption and organised crime. The reports draw on information provided by the Bulgarian and Romanian Governments, the Commission and Member State offices in the two countries, civil society organisations, associations and expert reports. On 1 January 2007, the Commission established a Cooperation and Verification Mechanism to assess the commitments made by Bulgaria and Romania in the areas of judicial reform, fight against corruption and organised crime. The Commission was asked to report on the accompanying measures on a regular basis. In the case of the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism, reports have been requested on a six monthly basis, starting in June 2007.