Comprehensive monitoring report on the state of preparedness for Union membership of Romania

2005/2205(INI) - 15/12/2005 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution based on the own-initiative report drafted by Pierre **MOSCOVICI** (PES, FR) on the extent of Romania's readiness for accession to the European Union. (Please see the summary of 23/11/2005.) Parliament recalled its previous position on invoking the safeguard clauses and stated that it would take a position on these issues and especially the timing of accession, in the light of the state of implementation of the necessary reforms, in particular of the requirements of membership regarding the judiciary system and the fight against corruption, on the basis of the Commission's detailed assessment of the situation in spring 2006.

Parliament recognised Romania's significant contribution to the stability of the wider south-east European region, but was concerned at persistent delays in a number of areas, such as improving administrative capacity, combating corruption and implementing the 'acquis communautaire' in certain areas of agriculture, public procurement and the environment. It also expressed concern at persistent reports of ill-treatment by law-enforcement personnel, including excessive use of force and use of lethal force, where many of the victims are Roma, and called on Romania to improve the judicial review of such cases.

One of the highest priorities is to combat corruption, particularly high-level corruption, corruption at every level of the judiciary, law-enforcement agencies and the public administration, as well as large-scale corruption. This must be pursued with rigorous enforcement of the law and successful prosecutions as well as a proper understanding of the gravity of this problem and its consequences.

Parliament also raised the following issues:

-Romania should adopt the revised Penal Code, which aims at removing criminal defamation provisions and at bringing the code into line with the legislation of all EU Member States;

-human and material resources must be strengthened with a view to substantially improving the management and security of frontiers, in order to combat illegal trafficking, organised crime and illegal immigration;

-further efforts are needed in the implementation of legislation on the environment, with special attention being paid to large-scale mining projects having substantial environmental implications as in the case of Rosia Montana;

-the implementation of the law on the restitution of property must be speeded up, as must the implemention of the law on intellectual property, so as to prevent piracy and counterfeiting;

-there is urgent need to protect people with a learning disability whose living and care conditions still are not satisfactory, in particular disabled persons with intellectual disabilities and mental health problems living in residential care. Parliament called for immediate action by the Romanian Government to dismantle the large residential institutions for disabled persons in favour of smaller, community-based residential services with substantial earmarked funding support from the Commission.

Parliament went on to note that implementation of the anti-discriminatory measures adopted on behalf of the Roma is a step forward, but considered that the effort to achieve integration, particularly through applying a policy of zero-tolerance on racism against Roma as well as ensuring better access to quality

education and the employment market, must be continued while making sure that the media are fully involved. Parliament was disappointed over the continued delay in the adoption of the law on minorities. Discriminatory measures are still contained in the electoral laws and repeated in the draft law on minorities. The law on minorities must be approved as soon as possible, respecting the Copenhagen political criteria. Additional measures need to be taken to ensure the protection of the Hungarian minority.

Parliament reaffirmed its wish, supported by a strong political will, to see Romania join the Union on 1 January 2007, but pointed out that fulfilment of this aim depends first on the Romanian authorities" ability to fulfil the commitments made in the Accession Treaty, failing which the safeguard clauses will be activated. It called on the Romanian authorities to make good in a satisfactory manner the shortcomings identified, so as to enable Romania to accede in accordance with the intended timetable.