## Basic information

| | |
|---|---|
| **2003/2203(INI)**<br>INI - Own-initiative procedure | Procedure completed |
| Romania's progress towards accession. Strategy paper and 2003 report<br>**Subject**<br>8.20.01 Candidate countries<br>**Geographical area**<br>Romania | |

## Key players

European Parliament

| Committee responsible | Rapporteur | Appointed |
|---|---|---|
| AFET Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security, Defense | NICHOLSON OF WINTERBOURNE Baroness null (ELDR) | 07/10/2003 |

| Committee for opinion | Rapporteur for opinion | Appointed |
|---|---|---|
| BUDG Budgets | BÖGE Reimer (PPE-DE) | 16/12/2003 |
| JURI Legal Affairs and Internal Market | The committee decided not to give an opinion. | |
| ITRE Industry, External Trade, Research, Energy | VAN VELZEN W.G. (PPE-DE) | 20/10/2003 |
| EMPL Employment and Social Affairs | SMET Miet (PPE-DE)<br>ETTL Harald (PSE) | 22/10/2003<br>22/10/2003 |
| ENVI Environment, Public Health, Consumer Policy | | |
| AGRI Agriculture and Rural Development | OLSSON Karl Erik (ELDR) | 04/11/2003 |
| RETT Regional Policy, Transport and Tourism | VAN DAM Rijk (EDD) | 25/11/2003 |
| FEMM Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities | SÖRENSEN Patsy (V/ALE) | 12/11/2003 |

| Council of the European Union | Council configuration | Meetings | Date |
|---|---|---|---|
| | General Affairs | 2540 | 2003-11-17 |

| European Commission | Commission DG | Commissioner |
|---|---|---|
| | Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations | |

## Key events

| Date | Event | Reference | Summary |
|---|---|---|---|
| 05/11/2003 | Non-legislative basic document published | COM(2003)0676 | Summary |
| 17/11/2003 | Resolution/conclusions adopted by Council | | |
| 28/01/2004 | Committee referral announced in Parliament | | |
| 19/02/2004 | Vote in committee | | Summary |
| 19/02/2004 | Committee report tabled for plenary | A5-0103/2004 | |
| 10/03/2004 | Debate in Parliament | | |
| 11/03/2004 | Decision by Parliament | T5-0182/2004 | Summary |
| 11/03/2004 | End of procedure in Parliament | | |

## Technical information

| | |
|---|---|
| **Procedure reference** | 2003/2203(INI) |
| **Procedure type** | INI - Own-initiative procedure |
| **Procedure subtype** | Strategic initiative |
| **Legal basis** | Rules of Procedure EP 55<br>Rules of Procedure EP 148-p2 |
| **Stage reached in procedure** | Procedure completed |
| **Committee dossier** | AFET/5/20305 |

## Documentation gateway

**European Parliament**

| Document type | Committee | Reference | Date | Summary |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading | | A5-0103/2004 | 19/02/2004 | |
| Text adopted by Parliament, single reading | | T5-0182/2004<br>OJ C 102 28.04.2004, p. 0652-0851 E | 11/03/2004 | Summary |

**European Commission**

| Document type | Reference | Date | Summary |
|---|---|---|---|
| Non-legislative basic document | COM(2003)0676 | 05/11/2003 | Summary |
| Document attached to the procedure | SEC(2003)1211 | 05/11/2003 | Summary |

# Romania's progress towards accession. Strategy paper and 2003 report

2003/2203(INI) - 11/03/2004 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution based on the own-initiative report drafted by Baroness Emma NICHOLSON (ELDR, UK) on Romania's progress towards accession by 374 votes in favour, 10 against and 29 abstentions. Although pleased with the replacement of the Romanian justice minister and other changes in the Romanian government in a bid to intensify reforms necessary for joining the EU, the European Parliament nevertheless warned Bucharest that accession in 2007 would not be possible unless it met a number of essential conditions. Parliament said Romania will have to deal with the high level of corruption, ensure the independence and proper functioning of the judiciary, guarantee freedom of the media and stop ill-treatment at police stations. MEPs recommended that the Commission and Council "reorient (...) the accession strategy with Romania" while still aiming for accession in 2007. They reminded Romania that Parliament has to decide whether to approve Romania's accession. Parliament called on the Romanian government to adhere strictly to human rights. It said the EU should give full priority to the establishment of the rule of law. The Commission should monitor closely the implementation of EU legislation which has already been adopted by Romania, particularly in the field of justice and home affairs. This should be accompanied by clear benchmarks, regular review periods and assistance in the fight against corruption. MEPs voiced grave concern over the apparent passivity of services responsible for investigating corruption cases. They also pointed out that corruption can only be rooted out if there is a political will to do so. As regards the independence of the media, MEPs called on the Romanian government to track down those responsible for physical attacks on journalists and asked the Commission to make a study of the working conditions of journalists. The setting up of an effective child protection system that only has the interests of children at heart was seen as paramount. Parliament called for the recognition of the rights of families affected by the moratorium on adoptions. The Romanian government was urged to publish two reports by the Council of Europe on children detained by public authorities and on police stations, in prisons and in mental hospitals. MEPs also condemned child marriages, particularly among Roma, and called on the Romanian authorities to actively fight organised crime, particularly the trafficking of women and children for sexual exploitation. Another problem evoked by the Parliament was the treatment of minorities. Although it supported the government in its Roma strategy, Parliament asked for regular monitoring of the results and referred to the lack of integration of Roma into society and the mostly appalling conditions in which they live. MEPs also called for steps to allow the Hungarian minority to use its own language in schools and at university and to solve the questions of property rights of churches. Lack of progress was also noted in the transposition of EU environmental legislation. MEPs specifically mentioned the planned gold-mining project in Rosia Montana and demanded an environmental impact assessment.

# Romania's progress towards accession. Strategy paper and 2003 report

2003/2203(INI) - 05/11/2003 - Document attached to the procedure

PURPOSE : to present the Commission's Regular Report on the progress towards accession made by Romania in 2003. CONTENT : this report on the progress made by Romania in 2003 in meeting the membership criteria can be summarised as follows : 1) Political Criteria : Romania continues to fulfil the political criteria. The political will to address administrative and judicial reform exists and a number of positive initiatives have been launched over the last year to reform the public administration and the judiciary. Romania still needs to develop a strategy to address reform of the policy and legislative process. Progress was made with the restriction of the use of emergency ordinances. Laws on the freedom of information and transparency in the legislative process are also positive developments but have only been partially implemented. Corruption in Romania continues to be widespread and affects all aspects of society. A number of high-profile measures were launched over the reporting period - but the implementation of anti-corruption policy as a whole has been limited. Romania continues to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, and has made good progress in a number of important areas. Further initiatives have been taken to enhance the rights of national minorities. The implementation of the Roma Strategy has continued although a lack of resources has meant that the results have been somewhat limited. Reforms have been launched in a number of other areas: modernisation of the police, improving care for the disabled, reducing social exclusion, improving the social dialogue. To date, the main work in these fields has consisted of developing strategies and preparing framework legislation. The challenge for the future will be the effective implementation of these initiatives. 2) Economic Criteria : Romania can be considered as a functioning market economy once the good progress made has continued decisively. In addition, a vigorous and sustained implementation of its structural reform programme is required in order for Romania to be able to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union in the near term. Further progress towards macroeconomic stability was made as inflation continued to decline from a relatively high level despite further adaptations of regulated prices. Administrative improvements of market entry and exit mechanisms were undertaken along with various initiatives to improve the business environment. The authorities should now consolidate the progress achieved in these areas while addressing more decisively those issues where advances were insufficient. In order to preserve the momentum towards greater macroeconomic stability, the recent tightening in monetary policy should be accompanied by prudent fiscal and wage policies as well as by a continued reduction in the quasi-fiscal deficit. Medium-term fiscal prospects also need to be strengthened by advancing expenditure reform and improving tax compliance. Efforts to improve the workings of the market mechanism must be completed by a greater willingness to liquidate loss-making enterprises and establish natural gas prices that appropriately reflect short and long-term costs. Having moved beyond the initial phases, restructuring and privatisation in key sectors,such as energy, mining and transport, must be brought forward. 3) Romania has made steady progress with the adoption of the acquis: it is now on track to transpose the required legislation before the planned date of accession in

2007 provided the current pace of progress is maintained. Weaknesses in the legislative process mean that the quality of legislation transposed is uneven and in some cases revisions will be needed before laws can be implemented. In the area of the internal market, Romania has continued to make progress with the transposition of sector specific legislation on the free movement of goods and public procurement. Particular attention must be paid to developing the ability to administer the public procurement, the foodstuffs and food safety acquis. Romania should also continue the screening for measures that may be incompatible with the principle of free movement of goods. Progress on the free movement of persons has been limited and additional efforts should now be focused on preparations for implementing the acquis on mutual recognition of professional qualifications. Work to identify barriers to the free movement of services has continued - although only a few restrictions have been removed. While alignment with the acquis on free movement of capital is steadily improving greater efforts are needed to improve payments systems and the fight against money laundering. Romania has made progress in the field of company law as such. While the Romanian competition legislation is broadly in line with EC anti-trust rules, in the area of state aid there is not yet sufficient control. Further progress has been made in transposing the agricultural acquis and in the restructuring of the agricultural sector. Enforcement of legislation is hampered by limited management and administrative capacity. Particular attention should therefore be paid to reinforcing the administrative capacity to implement and enforce the acquis, in particular in the veterinary and phytosanitary fields. Romania has continued to make good progress with the transposition of the transport acquis and with the establishment of the required administrative structures but maritime safety remains a concern. Priority should be given to developing institutions to enforce the new legislation and securing the funding needed to make the heavy investments required. The adoption of the Labour Code was a major step forward in the transposition of the acquis on social policy and employment. The building blocks for a modern industrial policy are now in place, but the key challenge is its implementation. In the area of the environment, although Romania has transposed a considerable amount of legislation, administrative capacity and financial resources dedicated to the sector remain inadequate. Legislative progress has been made in most areas of justice and home affairs and especially so in migration, organised crime, money laundering, and judicial co-operation in civil matters. However, implementation capacity remains weak in almost all areas and Romania should increase its efforts to develop administrative capacity and inter-agency co-operation. To conclude, in a number of important sectors, there has been a continued gap between progress in legal transposition and the limited overall capacity of the public administration to implement and enforce the newly adopted legislation. This represents a major constraint on Romania's accession preparationsand to address this issue will require a comprehensive, structural reform of both the public administration and the judicial system. These concerns extend beyond adoption of the acquis and also apply to the management of EU financial assistance.

# Romania's progress towards accession. Strategy paper and 2003 report

2003/2203(INI) - 05/11/2003 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE : to present the strategy paper on the progress towards accession by Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey. CONTENT : the Commission has adopted the Regular Reports on the efforts made by Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey in view of satisfying the accession criteria by 2007. This year's Regular Reports show that the Bulgaria and Romania have continued to make significant progress over the last year in implementing the accession criteria. They continue to fulfil the political criteria and are closer to fulfilling the economic and acquis criteria. Accession negotiations with Bulgaria and Romania will continue on the same basis and principles that applied to the ten acceding states, in particular the own merits principle. As in the past, the pace of the negotiations will be determined principally by progress made by the negotiating countries in incorporating the acquis into their legislation and in building the capacity to implement and enforce it effectively. The Commission will continue to monitor the fulfilment of the negotiating countries' commitments. The Union's stated objective is to welcome Bulgaria and Romania as members in 2007, depending on further progress in complying with the membership criteria. This objective must remain the firm focus of these two countries' preparations and the Commission will support them in achieving this goal. In order for accession to take place in 2007, a common Accession Treaty for Bulgaria and Romania should be signed at the latest towards the end of 2005, which would require that the negotiations be finalised in due time before that. This is to be preceded by the Commission's final recommendation on the readiness of Bulgaria and Romania for accession. The Thessaloniki European Council supported Bulgaria and Romania in their efforts to achieve the objective of concluding negotiations in 2004, inviting them to step up their preparations on the ground. Meeting this objective will depend on the real progress made on the ground and in the negotiating process on the basis of each country's own merits. The Commission will present to the Council, at the beginning of 2004, a three-year common financial framework for the accession of Bulgaria and Romania in order to prepare the ground for the completion of negotiations. In line with the conclusions of the Thessaloniki European Council, discussions or agreement on future policy reforms, or the new financial perspective, shall neither impede the pursuit and conclusion of accession negotiations nor be prejudged by the outcome of these negotiations. The Commission considers that in order to ensure fairness vis-à-vis both present and future acceding countries and to simplify the negotiations, this financial framework should be based on the principles and methodology developed for the negotiations with the ten acceding countries. On this basis, the Commission will then propose to the Council common negotiation positions dealing with the financial implications in the fields of agriculture, regional policy and budgetary issues.