



Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

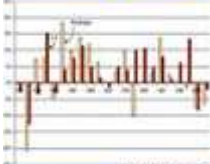
GENERAL AFFAIRS

Sectoral Committee
Weekly Update
30.07.10

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COM (2010) 401 - REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL On Progress in Romania under the Co-operation and Verification Mechanism

COM (2010) 400 - REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL On Progress in Bulgaria under the Co-operation and Verification Mechanism

The purpose of the Co-operation and Verification Mechanism (CVM), established on the accession of Romania and Bulgaria to the EU, is to help put in place an impartial, independent and effective judicial and administrative system properly equipped inter alia to fight corruption. This involves making certain fundamental changes, which takes time and also requires broad political support across the political spectrum as well as in society at large. Making these changes is an indispensable investment in the future of both states - an effective administrative and judicial system is necessary for sound public finances and well rooted socio-economic development. It is also necessary to enable them to play their full role as members of the EU in areas such as justice and home affairs.

These two reports - one on Romania, and one on Bulgaria - are the fourth annual reports since the CVM was set up. They set out the Commission's assessment of the state of the reform process and make recommendations on what needs to be done next to continue with the necessary reforms. In this year's reports the Commission points to important shortcomings in Romania's efforts to achieve progress under the CVM, whilst with Bulgaria it points out the strong reform momentum which has been established in Bulgaria since the Commission's last annual report in July 2009.

Both reports conclude that the Commission, with the help of other Member States, will continue to support both countries to ensure that they endeavour to progress under the CVM.

<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/10/st12/st12558.en10.pdf>

<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/10/st12/st12562.en10.pdf>



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Council Conclusions

The Council of the EU on General Affairs met on 26th July in Brussels and reached agreement on a number of issues. A decision was taken on the European External Action Service, which aims at making the EU's external effort more coherent and efficient. The Council also approved a framework for negotiations with Iceland, preparing for the opening of negotiations on the 27th July.

The items debated include:

- The Belgian Presidency Programme
- Enlargement
- Follow up from June European Council
- European External Action Service
- Use of Information Technology in the Council
- Situation of Roma people
- Statistical data - Excessive deficit procedure
- Euro-Mediterranean agreements - Originating status
- Euro-Mediterranean ministerial conference on employment and labour
- Weapons of mass destruction - Implementation of EU strategy

The Council adopted its position at first reading on a draft regulation aimed at extending the application of Regulation 883/2004 on the coordination of social security systems and its implementing Regulation 987/2009 to nationals of third countries. The draft regulation is intended to ensure that third country nationals who are legally resident in the EU and in a cross-border situation are subject to the same rules for coordinating social security entitlements as European citizens.

The Maltese delegation was composed of the Hon. Dr. Tonio Borg, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs.