

CRITERIA AND STRATEGIES OF ROMANIA'S ACCESSION TO THE EUROPEAN UNION

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Abstract: Every member state of the EU has to assume certain responsibilities and to apply certain measures within some specific fields. Romania is one of these states, which has to apply its politics at a national level. Even if there were made important efforts to accomplish this task, there are still some small chapters that require more work.

Key words: adhering, strategies, monitoring report

The European Union (EU) came into being in 1993 replacing the European Economic Community (EEC) settled in 1957.

The official accessing application of Romania to the EU was made in 1995 being the third of the ten countries that officially applied for adhering: Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Leetonia, Estonia, Lithuania, Bulgaria, Check Republic, and Slovenia. Together with this application, our country also handed in two documents able to sustain the application: *The National Strategy for the Preparation of Romania's Accession to the EU* and *The Snagov Declaration*, signed by the leaders of all the parliamentary parties.

Thus, on the 1st of February 1995, there came into operation the European Agreement, which stipulated an association between Romania, on the one hand, and the European Communities and the member states, on the other hand (agreement signed on the 7th of February, 1993). The provisions of this agreement stipulate that Romania became an associated member, a base for the future adhering; the final target of our country was the status of a full-right EU member and this association was meant to help Romania achieve this desideratum.

On the economic plan, the association of Romania to the EU means, the creation of a free change area, economic and financial cooperation for supporting the reorganization of the Romanian economy; *on the political level*, the creation of an institutional framework for achieving a permanent political dialogue between parts; *on the institutional plan*, the central organisms such as the National Bank, the Court of Justice etc. should hold the same attributions as the ones from the community countries, while, *on the legislative plan*, there should be adopted economic or other normative acts compulsory consulting the present legislation of the EU, each adopted law project having to comprise a specification according to which the law is in accordance with the community law.

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- The conditions the associated countries from Central and Eastern Europe should accomplish for accessing to the European Union are formulated as certain criteria:
 - *the establishment of the institutions guaranteeing democracy of the state, human rights, respect and protection of minorities.* According to the provisions of the Constitution, the national minorities can be represented in the Romanian Parliament and local organisms. The Romanian Parliament placed money at the national minorities' disposal for financing certain projects and programs within the framework of the European Campaign for Fight against Racism, Xenophobia, Antisemitism, and Intolerance. Starting with 1993, it has been functioning the National Minorities Council, a governmental organism the representatives of all the national minorities of Romania are members of and the purpose of which is the identification and finding solutions to the national minorities' specific problems.
 - *the presence and functioning of a market economy.* In a market economy, the balance between demand and offer is established through the free game of the market forces. A market economy functions when the juridical system, inclusively the regulation of the property right, is perfected and ready to be applied. Romania makes considerable efforts to achieve this goal. The prices have been liberalized, the main economic barriers have been removed, the privatization of the companies has started and the activities reorganized, but government involvement in the economic life is still important. The consolidation of the set up market mechanisms and their adequate functioning cannot be encouraged by the political instability in Romania.
 - *the capacity of coping with the concurrence pressures and the market forces.* In order to achieve this goal, it is necessary to have a national juridical framework where the economic agents can act in a similar way the Unique Internal Market functions. Foreign investments in the Romanian economy are considered to be modest due to many reasons: the insufficiently developed and instable juridical framework, increased fiscal pressures from one period to another, the present political and social instability.
 - *the capacity of assuming the obligations of a member state of the European Union.* The accession of a country to the European Union necessarily involves the assuming of certain obligations. Among these, we mention: the transition to a market economy and to democracy has to be similar to that of any other associate of the EU; the legislative and institutional reforms have to influence the deepest society structures as a condition of capitalizing the advantages of the European Agreement; the political collaboration with the EU has to be consolidated all the time through concrete actions of commercial, economic, and financial cooperation; the acceleration of the economic macrostabilization process.

- Romania's accession strategy to the EU comprises a series of objectives synthesized in the following policies: macroeconomic policy, economic restructuring policy, the policy regarding human rights, cults, and minorities, and the policy regarding the human capital.

In the currency-monetary field, the macroeconomic policies of the government aims at: inflation reduction, internal and external stability of the national currency, respectively the introduction of certain economic measures able to ensure the forecasting of the future evolution of the currency, regaining the trust in the national currency and increasing the money circulation speed, limitation of the budgetary deficit in order to diminish the state share in using the financial resources of the economy, ensuring a competitive and realistic level of the currency exchange, applying certain interests for bank deposits of the commercial banks at the National Bank of Romania below the interest level practiced on interbank market.

The economy restructuring policy first aims at consolidating the concurrency mechanisms able to allow Romania to achieve the necessary conditions for signing the European Agreement of conformity evaluation. Thus, the activity of the Concurrency Council will be encouraged in order to strengthen its capacity of applying the legislation of concurrency protection.

The established objectives referring to the policies of human rights, cults, and minorities are: the achievement of the radical reform of the children supervision system, as well as the insurance of adequate budgets; ensuring a financial and administrative support for implementing the government Strategy for improving the gypsies' situation; the creation and adequate functioning of an efficient system of inquiry for the complaints against the improper behavior of the Police; ensuring a financial and administrative support for the disabled; setting up and corresponding functioning of the institutions for preventing and controlling all forms of discrimination.

The consolidation of the set up market mechanisms and their adequate functioning cannot be encouraged by the political instability in Romania. With regard to the capacity of the national economy to cope with the concurrence made by the community economic agents, it is necessary to have a national juridical framework where the economic agents can act in a similar way to the ones from the Unique Internal Market. The foreign investments in the Romanian economy are quite poor due to many reasons: the insufficiently developed and instable juridical framework, increased fiscal pressures from one period to another, the present political and social instability. The present structure of the economy and property and the capacity of the economic agents show us that the economic integration level of Romania in the EU is relatively low. Consequently, a premature exposure of the Romanian economy to the exigencies and concurrency pressures of the unique market might represent a shock for the economic agents and population and might have extremely severe consequences for the economic situation of the country.

It can be appreciated that the process of accomplishing the accession criteria by the candidate countries to the EU will continuously occur for many years. Romania considers that the accomplishment of the criteria established by the EU

involves a strong and accelerated economic rehabilitation of the country through the mobilization of the internal factors that are strengthened by a closer cooperation with the community countries the financial and technical-economic support of which should be more substantial, as well as by a multilateral collaboration with the other accessing countries to the EU.

According to the Monitoring Report regarding the preparation of Romania for accession to the EU from September 2006, the Commission established that Romania has to continue its efforts and to show new results of the fight against corruption, where our country registered significant progress in the period following the report from May 2006 (both the legislative framework and the penal inquiries of the great corruption cases).

With regard to the funds of the EU for agriculture, Romania is not prepared to ensure the management and distribution of most of the EU funds. At the same time, animal protection is a chapter that has to be improved as it is a major preoccupation of the Union citizens. As for administration of the taxes, Romania will not face fiscal barriers.

Presently, the negotiation chapters have been closed but they can be reopened if it is noticed that one of the amendments is violated or not achieved. Starting with January 1, Romania accessed to the European Union.

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