



## Commission reports on progress in Romania under the Co-operation and Verification Mechanism

Brussels, 27 January 2016

**The Commission issued today its latest report on steps taken by Romania on judicial reform and the fight against corruption, in the context of the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism (CVM).**

The [report](#) shows continued progress towards the goals of the CVM and indicates where further steps are needed.

First Vice-President **Timmermans** said, *"Over the last year Romania and Romanians have shown their willingness to fight corruption and to protect the independence of the judiciary. The mass demonstrations against corruption have shown how these issues matter to Romanian citizens. Over the last year we have seen the professionalism, commitment and good track record of the judiciary and the anti-corruption prosecution and reforms being internalised. I am encouraged to see that Romania continues to make reforms and the positive trend continued in 2015. These efforts must be stepped up in 2016, in particular to prevent corruption and ensure that judges can continue to do their job properly."*

The Romanian judicial system as a whole has continued to demonstrate professionalism, including a capacity to adapt to significant changes in the civil and criminal codes, efforts to unify jurisprudence and a willingness to defend the independence of the judiciary. The track record of the key judicial and integrity institutions in addressing high-level corruption has remained impressive. This continued trend is a sign that Romania is developing sustainability in progressing towards the CVM objectives.

At the same time, the fact that several recommendations of the 2015 CVM report remain valid shows that reform does not enjoy the full consensus necessary to assure sustainable progress. Judicial independence and respect for court decisions continue to be challenged. The Criminal Codes reform is put into question in Parliament. and decisions in Parliament on whether to allow the anti-corruption prosecution to treat parliamentarians like other citizens still lack objective criteria. There have been improved steps to tackle general corruption, but not on the scale and with the political will required to address it as a systemic problem.

Judicial reform and the fight against corruption remain important issues for Romanian society, able to inspire large-scale public demonstrations. Further support to the consolidation of reform is needed to ensure the irreversibility of progress. The Commission welcomes the government's political commitment to pursue reform and fight corruption.

2016 will be a test year in many respects. The extent to which integrity issues prevail in appointments to senior positions in the judiciary and the scrutiny of candidates for forthcoming elections will be key signs of the extent to which reform is taking root. The continuation of a positive trend of reform and track record will also be a signal of sustainability.

The Commission believes that the monitoring process of the CVM, the opportunities provided by EU funds and the constructive engagement of the Commission and many Member States continue to provide valuable support for consolidation of reforms in Romania. The Commission looks forward to continuing to work closely with Romania to secure the CVM's objectives and ensure the follow up to the recommendations included in the report adopted today.

### Background

On 1 January 2007, the Commission established the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism to assess progress against the commitments made by Romania in the areas of judicial reform and the fight against corruption. The Commission reports on progress in these areas on a regular basis. The Commission issued its first report on 27 June 2007. The reports contain the Commission's assessment and recommendations to the Romanian authorities, and are complemented by a staff working document which sets out the Commission's detailed analysis against each of the benchmarks of the CVM.

The Commission analyses measures taken by the Romanian authorities, drawing on continuous

dialogue between the Romanian authorities and the Commission services. The reports have also benefitted from contacts with Member States, civil society, international organisations, independent experts and a variety of other sources. The Commission's conclusions and the methodology of the CVM have consistently enjoyed the strong support of the Council of Ministers.

The previous CVM report was published on 28 January 2015. This new report concerns the period since then. The next formal report is likely to come in around one year's time.

**All CVM Reports are available on the following website:**

[http://ec.europa.eu/cvm/progress\\_reports\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/cvm/progress_reports_en.htm)

IP/16/152

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