

READY FOR SCHENGEN? *An indulgent pass*

Conclusions of the report

The Romanian Centre for European Policies monitored for a period of 6 months (April - September 2010) the activity of the relevant Romanian national authorities with regard to the preparations for Romania's accession to the Schengen zone in March 2011.

CRPE published the results of its independent research on the measures taken by the Romanian authorities in order to enter the Schengen area in March 2011.

We hereby present some of the conclusions of the report:

- There are delays related to the adoption of the legislation. Although the adoption of the legislation required for the accession to the Schengen area can be easily motivated and justified, because of the bureaucracy, the legislation (already developed and completed) is in the bureaucratic circuit of inter-ministerial approvals. **However, Romania can complete on time, by the end of the year, the adoption of all normative acts which are still due.**
- Romania has reached an advanced state in relation to the implementation of the Schengen acquis and is largely prepared to join the Schengen area. The only report recommending the re-evaluation of our country is that on air borders.
- The operationalization of the Schengen Information System will not be completed on the originally assumed deadline and in the original form. Romania proposes as alternative solution SISone4ALL for the connection to the central system SIS. Currently, there are no confirmations whether the alternative proposed by Romania would be accepted.
- There have been delays, the deadlines assumed under various action plans have often been redefined and pushed ever closer to the expected date of accession. However, the process itself went well and Romania benefited from the experience and administrative skills developed in the (previous) process of joining the European Union.
- In the current political context (problems with the judiciary/problems related to its Roma population), it is likely that Brussels (European Council) will pay great attention to the chapters that were not fulfilled and will be more demanding towards Romania than in the EU accession period.
- **For the most part, Romania has done its homework, but is not worthy of a distinction. If, in this particular case, a pass equals a distinction, Romania will fail the Schengen exam. Romania placed its stakes on the indulgence of the European actors, as it had done before in the case of its EU accession. Then, the political context was favourable to its accession; today, the political context can act detrimentally for Romania's interests.**

The technical and political problems which are challenging our country and other detailed information on the Schengen accession process are covered in the full version of the report available online at www.crpe.ro

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