
MONITORING FOR BULGARIA UNDER CVM MAY BE CONCLUDED BEFORE THE END OF EC MANDATE

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Monitoring for Bulgaria under the Co-operation and Verification Mechanism may be concluded before the end of this Commission's mandate. This is stated in the most recent report of the European Commission, presented on 13th of November in Brussels and in Strasbourg. However, Bulgaria is expected to continue to report specific results. For the first time, the report noted a significant deterioration of the media environment in Bulgaria, reports BNT.

The European Commission report states that some of the recommendations were implemented by Bulgaria and others are close to implementation. In three of the monitored areas - the independence of the judicial system, the legislative framework and fight against organized crime, the monitoring is provisionally closed. In others, such as judicial reform, high-level corruption, local and border surveillance, monitoring remains in place. According to Frans Timmermans, Bulgaria is moving in a positive direction.

Frans Timmermans, Deputy President of the European Commission: Three of the six benchmarks set for Bulgaria at the time of its adoption can be considered temporarily closed. If this positive trend continues and Bulgaria succeeds in keeping the pace of reforms in a sustainable and irreversible manner, the Commission is convinced that the Co-operation and Verification Mechanism for Bulgaria can be concluded before the end of the mandate of this Commission. We are talking about a goal, something we would like to do, but without a deadline if Bulgaria continues at that pace and with this intensity to fulfill the benchmarks.

For the first time, the report seriously criticises the deteriorated media environment in Bulgaria. It talks about personal attacks against judges in some of the media and it is noted that limiting access to information for citizens can have a negative impact on judicial independence. Brussels also criticized opaque media ownership and poor implementation of journalistic standards.

The European Commission will prepare its latest report on Bulgaria before the end of the mandate of the current European Commission, which expires at the end of October next year. Bulgaria and Romania are expected to be divided in the monitoring because of criticism and 8 new recommendations to Bucharest by the European Commission.

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