

Report on Roberta Metsola's Visit to Romania on March 6, 2024

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On March 6, 2024, Roberta Metsola, the President of the European Parliament, visited Romania to engage with local authorities and citizens on various pressing issues in the context of the conference “Voi întrebați. Roberta Metsola răspunde¹”. This visit was particularly focused on Romania’s proposal to join the Schengen Area and the importance of youth participation in elections. This report provides an overview of her visit, key statements, and the implications for Romania and the European Union.

Advocacy for Schengen Membership

Roberta Metsola reiterated her strong support for Romania’s inclusion in the Schengen Area. She emphasized that the Schengen Zone remains incomplete without Romania and Bulgaria and highlighted the significant efforts Romania has made since joining the EU in 2007.

Metsola pledged to work closely with both Romanian authorities and other EU member states to facilitate Romania’s full integration into the Schengen Area, stressing the importance of continued advocacy and dialogue.

Engagement with Romanian Youth

Roberta Metsola placed a strong emphasis on the importance of youth participation in elections. She encouraged everyone with the right to vote, especially first-time voters, to choose their leaders. She stressed that if young people do not vote, others will make decisions for them. She expressed concern about the lack of conviction among youth to vote and called for action to ensure their voices are heard in the electoral process. Moreover, considering the amount of elections Romania will have this year, she stressed that it is important for people to prioritize each election, as all of them are equally important.

Interactive Session with Young Participants

After a brief introduction, the floor was opened to young participants who shared their concerns and questions. The people in the room addressed critical topics for Romania's youth and future integration into the EU.

Metsola also addressed several broader issues, such as increasing the minimum age of consent, enhancing education in rural areas, combating online hostility and disinformation, investing in health and health equipment, and considering the reduction of the voting age to 16 years old. She emphasized the need for comprehensive initiatives to enrich education and promote civic engagement among young people.

Implications for Romania and the EU

Roberta Metsola’s visit to Romania underscores a renewed commitment from the European Parliament to support Romania's full integration into the Schengen Area. Her statements reflect a broader push within the EU to ensure that all member states, particularly those in Eastern Europe, feel included and supported. This visit is likely to boost Romania’s efforts to join Schengen, potentially accelerating discussions and negotiations at the EU level.

Furthermore, Metsola’s engagement with Romanian youth and her focus on addressing their concerns highlights the EU’s strategic focus on the next generation. This approach is critical for fostering a sense of belonging and participation among young Europeans, which is essential for the long-term stability and unity of the EU.

¹ Source: [LIVE: VOI ÎNTREBĂȚI. ROBERTA METSOLA RĂSPUNDE. un dialog cu Președintele Parlamentului European \(youtube.com\)](#)