Macedonia, Croatia and Montenegro amongst the priorities of Hungary's EU presidency

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Hungary will present on Wednesday its priorities during country's incoming EU presidency, which starts on 1 January 2011, EurActiv reports on Tuesday citing Hungarian top officials.

Hungary's priorities include the accession of Croatia to EU as well as the membership issue of Macedonia and Montenegro and their efforts in meeting the goal.

The official start of membership negotiations between Macedonia and EU is postponed due to the name dispute with Greece, it is reported.

It is assumed that Montenegro will become a candidate country in early 2011.

Hungary, as future EU presidency holder, lists Croatia's accession amongst its priorities. Croatia has closed most of the 35 chapters. Budapest hopes that by mid-2011 the Council of EU will decide when Croatia will join EU, which most likely will happen in 2013.

EurActiv says that Budapest needs to show skillfulness in reaching consensus on various issues.

Bulgaria and Romania's membership to the Schengen zone is also one of the priorities of Hungary during its six-month EU presidency, EurActive reports.

March 2011 was set as a deadline for Sofia and Bucharest to join the Schengen zone, but this could be delayed because of recent issues with Roma people.

"The two Balkan countries have met technical conditions to join the Schengen zone. Budapest considers that the crisis with Roma people should be reviewed separately from the issue of Scengen zone enlargement," says EurActiv.

Hungary is particularly interested on the issue of Roma, who make up two to five percents of its population. Budapest will focus on adopting EU's policy to advance social conditions for Roma integration.