

EU - CROATIA JOINT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE

**15th Meeting
2-3 May 2012, Zagreb**

JOINT RECOMMENDATIONS

The Joint Parliamentary Committee, in accordance with Rule 3 of its Rules of Procedure and Article 116 of the EU-Croatia Stabilisation and Association Agreement, addressed the following recommendations to the Stabilisation and Association Council and to the institutions of the Republic of Croatia and of the European Union:

1. Welcomed the signature of the EU-Croatia Accession Treaty on 9 December 2011 and the outcome of the referendum held on 22 January 2012, which demonstrates the clear support of Croatian citizens for European integration; stressed that Croatia's EU membership will open up new opportunities for Croatia and will benefit the EU as a whole; thanked the member states that have already ratified Croatia's Accession Treaty and looked forward to a timely completion of the ratification process by all other Parliaments of EU member states;
2. Underlined that the impressive amount of reforms carried out during almost six years of negotiations has greatly improved Croatia's democracy and its ability to provide well-being to its citizens; took note of the Commission's Monitoring report on Croatia's accession preparation of 24 April 2012 and stressed the necessity to continue reforms, in particular in the field of the judiciary and fundamental rights and the fight against corruption, in order to strengthen the rule of law; committed itself to closely follow the implementation of Croatia's commitments under the monitoring mechanism established by the Accession Treaty;
3. Reiterated the importance of the efficient use of the pre-accession instruments and of increasing Croatia's absorption capacity for the future use of Cohesion and Structural Funds; in the context of the negotiations for Multiannual Financial Framework (2014-2020), called for allocation of adequate budgetary resources for Croatia, which will contribute to the process of economic reforms in Croatia;
4. Stressed that Croatia's completion of accession negotiations demonstrates that EU accession is possible if the required reforms are implemented, and therefore sends a positive signal to other countries of the region; welcomed Croatia's efforts to enhance good neighbourly relations and especially the sharing of its own experience in EU accession oriented reforms, to promote European values and to further advocate regional reconciliation; emphasised that regional cooperation is essential to further develop peace, stability and prosperity and to further anchor South East Europe in its path towards EU integration;
5. Welcomed the arrival of Croatian observers in the European Parliament, and underlined the opportunity and crucial responsibility they have in preparing Croatia for its full participation in the EU's decision-making process.