



BULLETIN
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS IN THE CROATIAN PARLIAMENT

No. 68, May 2023

The *European Affairs in the Croatian Parliament Bulletin* is published monthly by the European Affairs Department. The Bulletin provides an overview of the Parliament's work related to European affairs and arising from the membership of the Republic of Croatia in the European Union.

The Croatian Parliament, as the national parliament of an EU member state, participates in the decision-making process at the European level by overseeing the activities of the Government in the European Union institutions and by exercising the powers conferred on national parliaments by the Lisbon Treaty.

***Debate on Government's Report on European Council meetings in
February and March 2023***

In accordance with the Law on the Cooperation of the Croatian Parliament and the Government of the Republic of Croatia in European affairs, the Prime Minister, after each meeting of the European Council, submits to the Parliament a written report on the meetings of the European Council.

At the beginning of the 16th session, on 12th April 2023, the Croatian Parliament held a debate on the Report of the Prime Minister on the European Council meetings held in February and March 2023.

After the debate, the Parliament accepted the submitted Report on 21st April 2023.

Activities of the European Affairs Committee

The Committee for European Affairs carries out European affairs in accordance with the Act on the Cooperation of the Croatian Parliament and the Government of the Republic of Croatia in European Affairs and the Rules of Procedure of the Croatian Parliament.

At its 62nd session, held on 11th April 2023, at which the Committee discussed the Report of the Prime Minister on the European Council meetings held in February and March 2023. The State Secretary for Europe at the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, Andreja Metelko-Zgombić presented the Report at the Committee session. After the discussion, the Committee accepted the Report.

Positions of the Republic of Croatia on EU documents

In accordance with the Work programme for consideration of the positions of the Republic of Croatia for 2022, the European Affairs Committee forwarded 3 positions of the Republic of Croatia on EU documents to the working bodies of the Parliament for their opinion.

Monitoring the work of the Government in the European Union institutions

In April 2023, the Croatian Government submitted to the Parliament its positions for 2 Council meetings:

- [3944](#) Foreign Affairs Council
- [3945](#) Agriculture and Fisheries Council

Political dialogue with the European Commission

At the 96th session held on 31st March 2023, members of the Agriculture Committee discussed the situation in the beekeeping sector at the thematic session, together with representatives of the Croatian Beekeepers Federation, Ministry of Agriculture, State Inspectorate of the Republic of Croatia, Croatian Chamber of Agriculture, and representatives of regional and local administration, as well as experts and interested public.

Following the debate, the Agriculture Committee adopted a conclusion on starting a political dialogue with the European Commission, with an initiative to introduce support for the bee colony, which would evaluate the pollination role of bees.

Pollination is crucial for agricultural production, and therefore food production, but the role of pollinators is not sufficiently valued within the framework of European policies, even though the beekeeping sector is of key importance for the EU, because from an economic aspect it contributes to society with around 14.2 billion euros per year. Pollinators are under constant pressure from climate change, loss of habitat, the trend of decreasing bee pastures, the emergence of dangerous diseases and pests, and the improper use of plant protection products, which results in a decline in their number.

Bad trends in the pollination sector have been recognized by Commission's Communication - Revision of the EU Pollinators Initiative - A new deal for pollinators. It indicates the trend of decline of pollinators and sets objectives to be achieved by 2030 and related measures within the Priority: improving knowledge of pollinator decline, its causes and consequences;

improving pollinator conservation and tackling the causes of their decline; mobilising society and promoting strategic planning and cooperation at all levels.

European Parliament adopted a Resolution of 1 March 2018 on prospects and challenges for the EU apiculture sector, calling the Commission to thoroughly consider the inclusion of a new support scheme for beekeepers for the CAP post-2020, in order to adequately reflect the ecological role of bees as pollinators; underlining in this regard that the specific needs of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, including those who pursue their activities in outermost and mountainous regions and on islands, must be taken into account.

European Parliament Resolution of 18 December 2019 on the EU Pollinators Initiative, which emphasizes that healthy pollinators are essential for agricultural activity in the Union, given that 84 % of crop species and 76 % of European food production depend on insect pollination, and it also emphasizes that pollination is crucial for agricultural production.

In addition, the European Court of Auditors, in its Report 15/2020 - "Protection of wild pollinators in the EU - Commission initiatives have not borne fruit" indicated needs to assess specific measures for wild pollinators in the follow-up actions and measures for the EU biodiversity strategy to 2030; better integrate actions to protect wild pollinators in EU policy instruments addressing biodiversity conservation and agriculture; improve the protection of wild pollinators in the pesticides risk assessment process.

The Committee reminds that there are different interpretations of Article 55 "Types of intervention in the apiculture sector and Union financial assistance" Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 2 December 2021 establishing rules on support for strategic plans to be drawn up by Member States under the common agricultural policy (CAP Strategic Plans) and financed by the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF) and by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and repealing Regulations (EU) No 1305/2013 and (EU) No. 1307/2013, on whether that Article also includes support for the bee colony, which would evaluate the pollination role of bees, and if so, under what conditions its use is possible.

Because of all of the above, and the discussion held at the Committee session, the Agriculture Committee of the Croatian Parliament unanimously decided that, within the framework of this political dialogue, it would request the European Commission to undertake activities at the European level in order to ensure the introduction of support for the bee colony. This would in an equitable manner guarantee support for all European beekeepers, most of whom live and work in rural areas, and by taking care of bees, they contribute to biological diversity, preservation of rural areas and stop their depopulation.

In addition, and in the light of the proposal to amend the Directive relating to honey, we consider it important to emphasize the need for clearer labelling and declaration of honey (country of origin and percentage of honey in the mixture). This would prevent fraud, reduce the presence of counterfeit honey on the internal European market and enable fair and competitive market

competition between honey producers who sell their products on the EU market. It would also ensure the availability of quality and healthy honey on the market and thus protect the interests of consumers.

EU documents forwarded directly to the Croatian Parliament

Pursuant to the Protocol (no. 1) on the Role of National Parliaments in the European Union, all draft legislative acts and communications are forwarded directly to national parliaments.

The Croatian Parliament publishes daily the received EU documents, along with information on the reference code assigned to each document, the applicable adoption procedure, its submission date and the timeframe for carrying out the subsidiarity check.

In April 2023, the EU institutions forwarded to the Croatian Parliament 44 documents: 23 draft legislative acts, and 21 communications and other non-binding documents.

Application of EU law

In April 2023, the Croatian Parliament enacted 2 laws in the process of harmonization with European Union law.