



**BULLETIN**  
**EUROPEAN AFFAIRS IN THE CROATIAN PARLIAMENT**

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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.

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***Address of the President of the European Parliament Roberta Metsola to  
the Croatian Parliament***

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During her visit to Zagreb, on 20 June 2023 the President of the European Parliament Roberta Metsola addressed the Croatian Parliament. In her speech, she referred to Croatia's journey as an EU Member State for the past 10 years as a success story.

*Mr Speaker,  
Distinguished Members of Parliament,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Dear Europeans,*

*Thank you for having me here with you today. It is truly an honour to be back in beautiful Zagreb, among friends. I have always known Croatia as a nation capable of beating the odds. Capable of overcoming any challenge.*

*You have shown that you have what it takes to succeed. To prosper. To lead.*

*A mere ten years ago - by becoming a Member State of the European Union - Croatia changed the course of history. Its own history and that of Europe. You formalised links with a project you always felt part of. This year, you changed history again by joining the Schengen Area and adopting the Euro. Achievements that came about because of your constant engagement and commitment.*

*The transformational effect of Europe, is evident everywhere in Croatia. From the enforceable rights that are afforded to its citizens, to the opportunities that EU membership offers to young and old alike, to tourism, the strength of your economy, to the investment in projects.*

*Croatia's journey as a Member State is a success story. Your distinct chequered red and white - whether it is worn by Luka Modric or waved by Andrej Plenkovic - has become a symbol for all Europeans. A symbol showing that Membership is a win-win situation - it was never one sided.*

*In the European Parliament your MEPs – many of whom are here today - have led on the issues that matter to all of us. They take a piece of Croatia to Brussels and Strasbourg ensuring your nation's mark on European legislation.*

*There is much to be proud of, 10 years of building bridges with Europe and beyond. 10 years of excellence. 10 years of proving every day that there is no old and no new Europe. That there are no big and no small powers in this project of ours.*

*Friends, Europe will need to call upon the resilience personified in the people of Croatia if we are to overcome the era of polycrises that we live in. The illegal, brutal, invasion of independent Ukraine has changed the world as we knew it.*

*We have lived through price hikes and energy shortages. Too many still struggle to make ends meet. Too many feel excluded. Inflation remains an impediment for growth. Post-pandemic economic recovery remains too fragile. All while have a climate crisis that we cannot neglect.*

*The challenges are many. And they are concurrent. But I know that we have the capacity, the resilience and the ability, to emerge stronger than before.*

*This is not blind optimism. It is a calm and sober assessment of our joint capabilities. It is the understanding that when we act together, when we stand for a common cause, there is nothing that we will be unable to overcome.*

*That demands political courage. That means putting aside short term interests. It means matching rhetoric with action.*

*Nowhere is this more evident than in Europe's reaction to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. We – parliamentarians - are being called upon to act. To lead. To support Ukraine. To defend the values that we have talked about for generations.*

*Ukraine needs us to remain steadfast. Ukraine is fighting for its life. For its right to exist. They are looking to us for military, humanitarian, political, financial and moral support. I am proud that in that moment of truth, Europe did not turn away. We stood tall and we stood fast.*

*We understood what is at stake. We remember what it is like to live unfree and under oppression. And while we will always push for peace, we know that it must be a real peace. A peace with justice. A peace with liberty. A peace with dignity.*

*There is one, quick, way we can achieve this - and that is by Russia returning to its territory, sooner rather than later. Until that day, we must be ready to do what is necessary to ensure the survival of Ukraine. And here let me thank Croatia for your leadership. For your solidarity. For your empathy with all those fleeing war.*

*The bottom line is that for there to be peace, there must be a Ukraine. And there will be. A Ukraine, that will soon, I hope, officially open EU accession negotiations.*

*And the European Union must be ready. And again that will take an act of political courage. It will take leadership and it will mean reform. An EU of 27 will have to reform itself in order to remain effective as a club of 30 or 33. Change is never easy but it is necessary.*

*We know it is not only Ukraine that is looking to Europe, but Moldova and the nations in the Western Balkans who have been promised progress for far too long. They will all look to this country as a blueprint on how best to move forward. And together, we must be able to regenerate our political project to ensure it is fit not only for the next wave of challenges but for the next generations of Europeans.*

*Reforming our economies, reinforcing our security and protecting our way, is what the twin digital and green transition is all about. It is how we return to growth and future-proof our economies. But we can only do that if we are able to keep people with us. If we listen more and listen harder. If we explain what we are doing better. And if we are able to cushion the social and economic impact that these decisions could lead to.*

*We have to be able to convince people. 17,000 Croatians have experienced our flagship exchange programme Erasmus. They are the best ambassadors of the capacity of Europe to bring people together. To broaden horizons. To give to the younger generation, what joining the Eurozone and the Schengen Area will give to the entire country.*

*Croatia's economic transformation, will mirror that of the EU as a whole. We can - and we must - create the right framework for sustainable growth, for prosperity. That means balancing fiscal flexibility with prudence. That is how we can ensure that our economies are able to pay back our debts and return this project stronger than we found it. To do that, we need to reinforce the political centre and push back against the narrative that allows people to find false comfort in the political fringes.*

*Croatia's GDP has grown extraordinarily in the last years. That matters. That gives opportunities. Europe has helped.*

*And Europe is doing more. Last week in Strasbourg, the European Parliament voted on the world's most advanced Artificial Intelligence legislation. Our ground-breaking AI law will allow us to be world leaders in digital and tech innovation, based on EU democratic values. Europe has the ability to set the tone worldwide and to lead, responsibly. Our laws impact people's lives. We need to say that more.*

*Friends, I am here exactly one year from the European Parliament elections to listen to what Croatians want from their Union. To show that Brussels is not a far away entity. No decisions are taken without you - many are led by you. Our challenge is to burst through the so-called Brussels and Strasbourg bubbles and take Europe to every town and village in our Union. I am convinced that we can do that.*

*Next year's election will also take place in a new climate of disinformation and malign actors trying to undermine our democratic processes. There are many for whom the very existence of the European Union is a threat. Ours is superpower of values and we must protect that legacy, by countering the hybrid threats were we see them.*

*Ladies and gentlemen, I understand that Europe is not perfect. I share many of the frustrations with some of our processes - but I know that Europe is worth it. I know that we stand as a beacon for freedom, for equality, for rights, for prosperity and for solidarity among people.*

*I want people to believe again. As Croatia did 10 years ago. I want them to understand the potential of this project, to solve issues, to find solutions to inter-generational problems that face societies. To help pull people up and give nations hope. We know that a little hope can go a long way.*

*Croatia's investment in energy security will also mark your future.*

*Last summer, you opened the Pelješac Bridge - with the benefit of one of the largest ever EU investment in infrastructure. It linked the region of Southern Dalmatia with the rest of Croatia and with the rest of the European Union. It has tangibly improved the lives of so many, and symbolically it represents all that Croatia has been - a bridge builder between peoples and crystallises our joint commitment to bring people together.*

*That is Europe. A Europe that cares. A Europe that cannot be taken for granted.*

*Friends, we will not be remembered for the challenges, but for our collective response. I am proud of how Europe has stood up and continues to stand up in unity and I am confident of the project that we will return to voters in less than one year and ask them to judge.*

*The message that I want to bring to Croatians, to you, is that Europe matters. Your voice, your choice, matters. Your vote matters. Against the backdrop of Russia's invasion of Ukraine and global conflict between democracy and authoritarian regimes - more than ever - Croatian citizens must make their voice heard.*

*The European Parliament belongs to Croatians, as much as to anyone else. Europe is worth your time, your energy, your belief.*

*So thank you Croatia.*

*Thank you for 10 years of European membership.*

*Thank you for helping to build bridges.*

*Thank you for your commitment to Europe.*

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### *Activities of the European Affairs Committee*

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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 66<sup>th</sup> session**, held on 1 June, the Committee discussed European documents in accordance with the Work Programme for the Consideration of the Positions of the Republic of Croatia for 2021 and 2022.

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*Monitoring the work of the Government in the European Union  
institutions*

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In June 2023, the Croatian Government submitted to the Parliament its positions for nine Council meetings:

- [3954](#) and [3954-1](#) Transport, Telecommunication and Energy Council
- [3955](#) Justice and Home Council
- [3956](#) Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council
- [3957](#) Economic and Financial Affairs Council
- [3958](#) Transport, Telecommunication and Energy Council
- [3959](#) Environment Council
- [3960](#) Agriculture and Fisheries Council
- [3961](#) Foreign Affairs Council
- [3962](#) General Affairs Council

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*EU documents forwarded directly to the Croatian Parliament*

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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 June 2023, the EU institutions forwarded to the Croatian Parliament 91 document: 29 draft legislative acts, and 62 communications and other non-binding documents.**

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*Application of EU law*

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