

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. It provides the reader with an overview of parliamentary activities in the field of EU affairs and inter-parliamentary cooperation as well as with access to EU documents forwarded to national parliaments.

In Focus

Germany's presidency of the Council of the EU: 1 July - 31 December 2020

Germany has held the Council Presidency 12 times since becoming a founding member of the European Economic Community in 1957. The country last held the Presidency in 2008. Germany has taken the helm of the EU Council Presidency on 1 July 2020, starting the Trio Presidency composed of Germany, Portugal and Slovenia. The Trio has adopted a Declaration outlining the main areas of focus for their Trio, including democracy, human rights and the rule of law, as well as an economically strong EU based on growth and jobs and the social dimension. Likewise the three Member States have pledged to work on the challenges of digitalisation, climate change and energy transition.

The priorities of Germany's presidency are driven by its motto: "Together for Europe's recovery". The presidency programme focuses on six main areas:

- i) overcoming the consequences of the coronavirus crisis for the long-term as well as economic and social recovery,
- ii) a stronger and more innovative Europe,
- iii) a fair Europe,
- iv) a sustainable Europe,
- v) a Europe of security and common values,
- vi) a strong Europe in the world.

The German presidency of the Council of the EU will focus directly on overcoming the COVID-19 pandemic. Fighting the spread of the virus, supporting the European economy to recover and reinforcing social cohesion in Europe. In order to achieve this, Germany is committed to joint approved action, European solidarity and common values.

Meetings planned in the framework of the [Parliamentary dimension of the German Presidency of the Council of the EU](#)



Date	Conference
4 September 2020	Inter-parliamentary Conference for the Common Foreign and Security Policy and Common Security and Defence Policy
7 September 2020	Conference of the Chairpersons of committees on health, research and digital affairs "Europe in pandemic: research and innovation for a more resilient health system"
14 September 2020	Conference of Parliamentary Committees for Union Affairs of Parliaments of the European Union (COSAC)
28/29 September 2020	Joint Parliamentary Scrutiny Group of Europol (Brussels)
4/5 October 2020	Conference of the Chairpersons of committees on environment, energy, transport and agriculture "The European Green Deal and CAP: for a sustainable and climate-neutral Europe"
11 – 13 October 2020	Inter-parliamentary Conference on Stability, Economic Coordination and Governance in the European Union
8/9 November 2020	Conference of the Chairpersons of committees on employment and social affairs, as well as on economic cooperation and development "For a social and fair Europe"
29 November – 1 December 2020	COSAC plenary meeting
24/25 January 2021	Meeting of the Secretaries-General from the national parliaments of the EU member states and the European Parliament
29/30 March 2021	Conference of Speakers from the national parliaments of the EU member states and the European Parliament

Activities of the Croatian Parliament in the Decision-Making Process

Activities of the parliamentary committees

European Affairs Committee held 1st session on 28 July 2020.

[Report on the extraordinary meeting of the European Council](#)

In accordance with the Act on the Co-Operation of the Croatian Parliament and the Government of the Republic of Croatia in European Affairs, the Government of the Republic of Croatia submitted a written Report on the extraordinary meeting of the European Council held in Brussels from 17 to 21 July 2020. The Report was presented at the Committee's session by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Zdravko Marić.

The Deputy Prime Minister explained that an agreement had been reached on the European Commission's proposal of 27 May 2020, combining the revised Multiannual Financial Framework of EUR 1,100 billion and a specific Recovery effort under "Next Generation EU" up to the amount of EUR 750 billion which makes a total of € 1.850 billion for the EU's recovery and development.

In the next seven-year financial perspective, Croatia will have at its disposal around EUR 12.7 billion from the new MFF, and around EUR 9.395 billion from the Recovery Plan, or a total of just over EUR 22 billion. The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance mentioned as a special negotiating success - additional allocation provisions for Croatia in the amount of EUR 400 million within the framework of cohesion policy, through Annex item 65 of the adopted European Council Conclusions, which according to its wording refers to Croatia exclusively.



An additional EUR 100 million in Croatia's national envelope have been provided to support rural development. A special success is that the level of co-financing for projects in the ratio of 85:15 percent will be maintained as well as the N + 3 rule, which was especially important for Croatia. The Government is also satisfied with the ratio of grants and loans that will be available to Croatia under the Recovery Plan, especially under the Recovery and Resilience Mechanism, where the ratio is approximately 3 to 1 in favour of the grant. Croatia's contribution to the 2021-2027 EU multiannual budget will be at close to EUR 4.6 billion in annual instalments of about EUR 650 million a year, which is almost five times less than the amount of funds that will be available to Croatia in the same period.

In conclusion, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance said that Croatia could be satisfied, but stressed that a lot of work lies ahead, given that the withdrawal of funds would depend on the National Recovery Plan, related to the European Semester. He announced that he would present the National Recovery Plan in the Croatian Parliament, at a joint session of the European Affairs Committee and the Finance and the State Budget Committee.

[Report on the Activities and Results of EU2020HR](#)

The Report was presented by the Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, emphasizing the unprecedented circumstances in which the first Croatian Presidency of the Council of the European Union took place, given the Covid-19 pandemic, but also the challenges associated with the migration crisis. The Presidency was also marked by the beginning of the EU's new institutional cycle, the assumption of office of the new European Commission headed by President Ursula von der Leyen, and the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the EU membership.

The priorities of the Croatian Presidency were divided into four key elements: i) A Europe that develops; ii) A Europe that connects; iii) A Europe that protects, and iv) An influential Europe, representing also thematic areas of the Croatian Presidency. The Presidency's slogan was entitled 'A strong Europe in a world of challenges'. Hundreds of meetings and events were to be held in Croatia, mostly in Zagreb, as part of Croatia's Presidency of the EU Council. Meetings were held regularly until mid-March, when the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic caused the meetings to be phased out, and ultimately physical meetings were no longer held in Croatia.

However, the Croatian Presidency quickly adapted to the new situation, and the continuity of work was maintained through regular video conferences. In this sense, the Croatian Presidency was the first digital presidency in the history of the European Union. A video conference of the EU and Western Balkans leaders was held, at which a decision was made to open pre-accession negotiations with the Republic of Albania and the Republic of Northern Macedonia, which the Minister considers to be a great success of the Croatian Presidency.

The Minister of Foreign and European Affairs concluded by emphasizing the role of the Croatian Presidency in facilitating the repatriation of EU citizens at the beginning of the crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

[Rules of Procedure of the European Affairs Committee](#)

The Chairman of the Committee presented the Proposal of the Rules of Procedure of the Committee on European Affairs which regulates the work of the Committee in accordance with the Act on Cooperation between the Croatian Parliament and the Government of the Republic of Croatia in European Affairs and the Rules of Procedure of the Croatian Parliament.

Without discussion, the members of the Committee adopted the Rules of Procedure.



Monitoring the work of the Government in the European Union institutions

European Council

Prime Minister of the Government of the Republic of Croatia submitted to the Parliament [Report on the extraordinary meeting of the European Council on 17 – 21 July 2020](#). The report is presented at 1st session of Parliament on 29 July 2020. On 31 July 2020 report is adopted.

Presidency of the Council of the European Union

Prime Minister of the Government of the Republic of Croatia submitted to the Parliament [Report on the activities and results of the Croatian Presidency](#). The report is presented at 1st session of Parliament on 29 July 2020. On 31 July 2020 report is adopted.

EU documents Forwarded Directly to the Croatian Parliament

According to the Protocol (no 1) on the Role of the National Parliaments in the European Union, all draft laws and communications shall be forwarded directly to the national parliaments.

The Croatian Parliament publishes on a daily basis the EU documents received, along with the information on: document number, adoption procedure, transmission date and subsidiarity deadline.

In July 2020, EU institutions forwarded to the Croatian Parliament 53 documents: 24 draft laws and 29 communications and other non-binding documents.

Inter-parliamentary Cooperation in the European Union

Inter-parliamentary cooperation in the European Union encompasses the cooperation between the European Parliament and the national parliaments and the cooperation among the national parliaments in the frame of the parliamentary dimension of the Council Presidency.

All conferences, meetings and other activities that take place in the framework of inter-parliamentary cooperation in the European Union planned for May, June and July are not held until further notice due to the situation related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Parliamentary dimension of the Croatian presidency of the Council of the European Union

Activities of the Croatian Parliament in the Conference of Parliamentary Committees for Union Affairs of the European Union (COSAC)

On 13 July 2020, the Chairman of the Committee on European Affairs Domagoj Ivan Milošević took part in a videoconference meeting of the COSAC Troika. The Parliamentary Committee on European Affairs is participating in the work of the chair of the Troika until the end of 2020, as a representative of the previous presidency of the Council. During the German presidency, the Troika consists of the Croatian Parliament, the German Bundestag and Bundesrat, the Portuguese Parliament Assembleia da República, and the European Parliament.

The draft agenda of the meeting of the Chairpersons of the Committees for Union Affairs (COSAC) was presented, which will be held on Monday, September 14, 2020, in the form of a videoconference, from 10.00 to 13.00. Two sessions are planned, the first with the topic of presenting the priorities of the German presidency of the Council of the EU, and the second with the topic of managing the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic.

