

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

Priorities of the Croatian Presidency of the Council of the European Union

From 1 January to 30 June 2020, Croatia will take over the presidency of the Council of the European Union for the first time. During this six-month period, Croatia will lead the activities of the Council, building cooperation and agreement among Member States in a spirit of consensus and mutual respect.

The Croatian Presidency comes at a time of great changes for the European Union, at the beginning of a new institutional and legislative cycle following the new composition of the European institutions, as well as at a time of challenges resulting from the process of the United Kingdom’s withdrawal from the European Union.

Uneven economic development, climate change, increased migration, dissemination of disinformation and growing populism are some of the challenges of today’s world to which citizens are expecting answers, and with good reason. Those answers can be given only by a strong Europe. Here, our unity is our greatest strength.

In order to bring the Union and the benefits it provides even closer to its citizens we aim to enhance dialogue, including through the Conference on the Future of Europe.

The four [priorities](#) are united in the motto “A strong Europe in a world of challenges”, which encapsulates the vision of a European Union acting for the benefit of its Member States and citizens.

In its work, the Croatian Presidency will also take into account the strategic documents that will be agreed between the EU institutions and the work programme of the new European Commission for 2020.

An ambitious, balanced and sustainable EU Multiannual Financial Framework for 2021–2027 is a prerequisite for achieving our goals. The Croatian Presidency will work towards achieving a comprehensive agreement as swiftly as possible, in order to enable the timely implementation of all the Union’s policies and programmes, in the service of further building a Europe that is as strong as possible in an ever-changing and challenging world.

Priorities:

- **A Europe that develops**

For Croatia, holding the Presidency of the Council of the European Union means that we have an opportunity to contribute to ensuring better conditions and prospects for all European citizens through balanced and sustainable growth. This includes fostering balanced regional development, cultivating a more satisfied and vibrant society, enhancing the competitiveness and skills of our citizens and protecting the environment by fighting climate change.

- **A Europe that connects**

Only a strong Europe can respond to the challenges of the 21st century world. A Europe that connects is one that has a network economy and uses its full potential. The keys to achieving that kind of Europe are a European transport area, high-quality and secure data infrastructure, and an integrated energy market. All this will result in stronger cohesion and cooperation among the citizens of the Union.



- **A Europe that protects**

However, in order to achieve these goals, it is first and foremost necessary to protect our citizens. A safer Europe guarantees the freedom of every citizen as a pillar of democratic society and internal security. Croatia will also advocate a comprehensive and sustainable migration policy. The European Union must show its strength and respond to current threats to the rule of law and democratic values, from intolerance and terrorism to cyber threats and “fake news” (disinformation) on digital platforms.

- **An influential Europe**

Croatia will stand for the Union taking a leading role on the international stage. The European Union is a global leader and trading power, and the top trading partner of the United States, China, Russia and many other countries and organisations. We need to use this position to expand the European Union’s influence, to shape the global order, to eradicate poverty and to stimulate global development. Croatia has a special responsibility to its south-eastern neighbourhood to encourage reform and be a factor of stability. Europe must be able to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

Activities of the Croatian Parliament in the Decision-Making Process

Activities of the parliamentary committees

Parliamentary committees discussed European documents in accordance with the [Work Programme for the Consideration of the Positions of the Republic of Croatia for 2019](#).

Monitoring the work of the Government in the European Union institutions

Council

The Croatian Government submitted to the relevant parliamentary committees its positions for the October Council meetings:

- 3715 Competitiveness
- 3716 Environment
- 3717 Justice and home affairs
- 3718 Economic and financial affairs
- 3719 Agriculture and Fisheries
- 3720 Foreign affairs Council
- 3721 General Affairs Council
- 3721-1 General Affairs Council (Art 50)
- 3723 Employment, social policy, health and consumer affairs

Application of EU law

In October, Croatian Parliament enacted 3 laws in the process of implementation of European law.



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 October 2019, EU institutions forwarded to the Croatian Parliament [65 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.

In October 2019 the Croatian Parliament representatives participated at the following meetings:

6 – 7 October – Helsinki – Inter-parliamentary Conference on climate change

Member of the Environment and Nature Conservation Committee Domagoj Mikulić participated at the Conference.

The participants discussed the climate strategies and targets of the European Union and the action that should be taken. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) described in its report, *Global Warming of 1.5 °C*, why it is necessary and even vital to maintain the global temperature increase below 1.5 °C. It seems obvious that the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) will not be enough to limit warming to 1.5 °C.

The Conference focused on political discussion on the need to increase the emission reduction targets of the EU from 40% to 55% by 2030, and thereby hopefully promote future European action.

Based on keynote introductions from European investors and representatives of the finance world, participants discussed the feasibility of mitigation and adaptation options, and the enabling conditions for strengthening and implementing the systemic changes needed. Such systemic change could simultaneously form the basis for a new era of sustainable economic progress in Europe.

27 – 28 October – Helsinki – Meeting of the Agriculture Committees of EU parliaments

Chairman of the Agriculture Committee Tomislav Panenić participated at the Meeting.

The participants discussed on the reform of Common Agricultural Policy after 2020 as well as on the role of climate change in agricultural policy.

The conference had two main topics. The first topic was the European Commission's proposals on the common agricultural policy (CAP) beyond 2020. These proposals aim to make the CAP more responsive to current and future challenges such as climate change and generational renewal, while continuing to support European farmers and a sustainable and competitive agricultural sector. The second topic was climate change as an element of agricultural policy.



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