

# 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

#### Political Guidelines for the next European Commission 2019-2024

With 383 votes in favour, the European Parliament elected Ursula von der Leyen President of the next European Commission in a secret ballot on 16 July. Ursula von der Leyen is set to take office on 1 November 2019 for a five-year term.

The new Commission will reflect the priorities and ambitions set out in the Political Guidelines [A Union that strives for more – My agenda for Europe](#), presented by Ursula von der Leyen. The Political Guidelines focus on six headline ambitions for Europe over the next five years and well beyond:

- A European Green Deal,
- An economy that works for people,
- A Europe fit for the digital age,
- Protecting our European way of life,
- A stronger Europe in the world,
- A new push for European democracy.

#### Activities of the Croatian Parliament in the Decision-Making Process

##### 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 [reports](#) on the European Council meetings in March, April, May and June 2019. The reports are presented at the session of Parliament on 18 September 2019. On 20 September 2019 reports are adopted.

###### Council

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

- 3712 General Affairs Council
- 3713 Transport, telecommunication and energy (*transport*)
- 3714 Transport, telecommunication and energy (*energy*)



## Application of EU law

In September, Croatian Parliament enacted 2 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 September 2019, EU institutions forwarded to the Croatian Parliament [60 documents](#): 28 draft laws, 32 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 September 2019 the Croatian Parliament representatives participated at the following meetings:

#### **4 – 6 September – Helsinki – Inter-parliamentary Conference for the CFSP / CSDP**

Croatian Parliament delegation headed by Foreign Policy and Defence Committees' Chairs, Miro Kovač and Igor Dragovan, respectively, as well as Deputy Chairs of the two Committees, Joško Klisović and Anđelko Stričak, participated at the EU Inter-parliamentary Conference on Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Common Security and Defence Policy (CFSP / CSDP) held in Helsinki, 4–6 September 2019 in the framework of the parliamentary dimension of the Finland's Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

Helsinki Conference on the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Common Security and Defence Policy covered topics related to security challenges in the Baltic Sea Region, priorities of the EU in the area of CFSP and CSDP, restoring Transatlantic Unity, EU defence, and climate change and security.

Conference held three simultaneous breakout workshops related to political developments in the Western Balkans, countering hybrid threats: assessing the EU's policies and instruments and Iran – options for the EU and the future of the nuclear deal.

In the context of the debate on restoring Transatlantic Unity, within a complex and globally polarized situation, Miro Kovač, Chair of the Foreign Policy Committee expressed the view that the existing challenges could be overcome by focusing on continuation of the dialogue which is crucial in establishing cooperation. On the subject of the Western Balkans, Kovač stressed the importance of further discussions on the European perspective of the countries of the area, stressing that disagreements on border issues should not affect the future of negotiations and the continuation of dialogue, since the accession to the Union membership would abolish borders as lines of demarcation.



As part of the debate on the priorities of the EU in the area of Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Common Security and Defence Policy, Chair of the Foreign Policy Committee of the Croatian Parliament Miro Kovač announced that the next CFSP and CSDP Inter-parliamentary Conference will be held, within the framework of the first Croatian Presidency of the EU Council, in Zagreb, 2–4 March 2020, outlining the Conference Agenda. Joško Klisović, Deputy Chair of the Foreign Policy Committee took the floor during the hybrid threats workshop, pointing to the problem of using control of companies that collect and process information on citizens by companies that are not owned by European citizens or under the jurisdiction of the European Union.

Zagreb Conference will introduce the newly elected High Representative of the European Union for Foreign and Security Policy and the Vice-President of the European Commission, and discuss the priorities of the new institutional mandate of the European Union.

### **23 – 24 September – Helsinki – Inter-parliamentary Conference on Asylum and Immigration Issues**

Chairman of the Domestic Policy and National Security Committee Ranko Ostojić participated at the Conference.

The participants discussed on the present state and the future of European migration and asylum policy. The Tampere agenda was approved twenty years ago during Finland's first presidency of the Council of the European Union. One of the goals was the establishment of the Common European Asylum system. Over the past years, legislative action towards this goal has taken the form of directives. There remain, however, many discrepancies in the standards and practices of the different Member States.

Since 2015, migratory pressure on Europe's external borders has increased in the form of migration from the Middle East and from Africa across the Mediterranean Sea. In response, the Commission has presented urgent legislative proposals to create a Common European Asylum System. However, in 2019, the proposals for Regulations are still under consideration.

The participants stressed out that developing a uniform European migration and asylum policy is essential not only for the Member States but also for the European Union and its future. At the same time, it is important to assess the migratory pressures of the upcoming decades and how to respond to them.

### **23 – 24 September – Brussels - 5th meeting of the Joint Parliamentary Scrutiny Group (JPSG) on the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol)**

Chairman and deputy Chairman of the Domestic Policy and National Security Committee Ranko Ostojić and Petar Škorić participated at the Meeting.

The agenda included interventions by Europol Executive Director, Ms Catherine De Bolle, Minister of Interior of Finland, Ms Maria Ohisalo, Chairperson of the Europol Management Board, Mr Andrei Linta, and assistant EDPS, Mr Wojciech Wiewiórowski. Additionally, high profile discussions are held on topics such as the findings by the Europol Cooperation Board, the Europol's information management priorities in 2019, review of the Rules of Procedure, as well as a keynote speech by the Commissioner for the Security Union, Sir Julian King.



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