

## 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

### European Semester Autumn Package: Striving for sustainable and inclusive growth

Commission sets out EU's economic and social priorities for the year ahead, gives policy recommendation for the euro area and completes the assessment of euro area Member States' Draft Budgetary Plans.

The **2018 European Semester cycle of economic, fiscal and social policy coordination** started on 22 November against the backdrop of robust economic activity in the euro area and the EU, record high employment levels and unemployment rates declining towards pre-crisis levels. As all Member States contribute to this **strong growth momentum**, the priority now is to make sure that this lasts and brings benefits to all members of our societies. Alongside **responsible fiscal policies**, the pursuit of **structural reforms** should focus on creating the conditions to **boost investment** further and to increase real wage growth to support domestic demand. Today's package is based on the [Commission's Autumn 2017 Economic Forecast](#) and builds on the priorities of [President Juncker's 2017 State of the Union](#) address. It also reflects the recent proclamation of the European Pillar of Social Rights at the [Gothenburg Social Summit](#).

For More Information:

[Annual Growth Survey 2018](#)

[Alert Mechanism Report 2018](#)

[Euro area recommendation 2018](#)

[Draft Joint Employment Report 2018](#)

[Proposal for the Amendment of Employment Guidelines](#)

[Communication on the Draft Budgetary Plans of the euro area](#)



## **Activities of the Croatian Parliament in the decision making process**

### **Activities of the parliamentary committees**

Four committees have discussed European documents in accordance with Work Programme for the Consideration of the Positions of the Republic of Croatia for 2017.

European Affairs Committee had session No. 21 on 17 November and session No. 22 on 22 November 2017.

Finance and Central Budget Committee had session No. 33 on 28 November 2017.

Committee on Family, Youth and Sports had session No. 14 on 16 November 2017.

Environment and Nature Conservation Committee had session No. 20 on 8 November 2017.

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

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

- 3579 General Affairs Council;
- 3578 General Affairs Council (art. 50);
- 3575 General Affairs Council – Cohesion;
- 3574 Foreign Affairs Council;
- 3573 Foreign Affairs Council – Trade;
- 3572 Economic and Financial Affairs Council;
- 3576 Economic and Financial Affairs Council - Budget;
- 3571 Agriculture and Fisheries Council;
- 3577 Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council;

At the plenary session No. 6 on 8 November, in accordance with article 11 of the Act on the Co-Operation of the Croatian Parliament and the Government of the Republic of Croatia in European Affairs, Prime Minister presented report on the European Council meeting held in October 2017.

### **Application of EU law**

In November 2017 the Croatian Parliament has enacted 2 laws in the process of harmonization with European Union 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 forwarded EU documents with the information on: document number, adoption procedure, transmission date and subsidiarity deadline.

In November 2017 EU institutions forwarded to the Croatian Parliament [71 documents](#): 26 draft laws and 45 communications and other non-binding documents.

## **Interparliamentary cooperation in the European Union**

Interparliamentary cooperation in the European Union encompasses cooperation of the European Parliament and national parliaments and cooperation of the national parliaments in the frame of the parliamentary dimension of the Council Presidency.

Croatian Parliament representatives participated at the meetings in November 2017 as follows:

**21 November – Bruxelles** – Inter-parliamentary committee meeting of the European Parliament's Committee on Development (DEVE) with national Parliaments of the European Union's Member States on the subject of "The implementation of the Consensus on Development and the Sustainable Development Goals"

**21 November – Bruxelles** – Inter-parliamentary committee meeting of the European Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET) with national Parliaments of the European Union's Member States on the subject of "EU accession process of the Western Balkans"

Chairman of the Foreign Policy Committee Miro Kovač and Member of the Committee Romana Jerković took part in the interparliamentary meeting on the "Implementation of the European Consensus on Development and the Sustainable Development Goals", organized by the European Parliament's Committee on Development, and in the interparliamentary meeting on the "European integration process of the Western Balkans", organized by the European Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs.

At the meeting organized by the Committee on Development, MPs from the Member States of the European Union, the European Parliament and Norway exchanged views on the implementation of the new European Consensus on Development, a comprehensive common framework for European Development Cooperation in the decade ahead, fully applicable to all the institutions of the European Union and all the Member States. Also, MPs discussed the steps taken by the national parliaments of the Member States in managing the implementation of sustainable development goals.

The discussion on the European integration process of the Western Balkan countries brought together MPs from the EU Member States, the European Parliament, candidate countries and potential candidates for EU membership and Norway to exchange views on the progress of reforms in the countries of Southeast Europe and on the EU enlargement policy. The accession of Western Balkan countries to the European Union remains a key policy priority and in that sense the discussion underscored the importance of continuing the joint parliamentary work on the European future of the South East European partners.

Miro Kovač urged for a stronger involvement of the European Union and the Member States in the process of enlargement to the countries of South East Europe in order to preserve peace and stability in the region as well as in the entire European Union. He warned about the influence of foreign powers on Croatia's neighbouring countries and stressed that we should be aware that these states were at the centre of our continent and required our greater presence and assistance on their path to EU membership.



**21 November – Bruxelles** – Inter-parliamentary committee meeting of the European Parliament's Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM) with national Parliaments of the European Union's Member States on the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women 2017 on the subject "The Istanbul Convention: combating violence against women at national and EU level"“

Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson and Member of the Gender Equality Committee Ivan Vilibor Sinčić, Irena Petrijević Vuksanović and Silvano Hrelja participated on Tuesday at the Inter-parliamentary meeting around the theme: "The Istanbul Convention: combating violence against women at national and EU level". The meeting was organized by the EP Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality following the tradition to celebrate the International Day for the elimination of Violence against Women.

This event brought together parliamentarians from 15 EU Member States, European Parliament and Norway in order to assess what is the state of the gender based violence with a special emphasis on the state of the ratification and implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention).

During the meeting, three panel discussions were held with talks about ratification of the Istanbul Convention in the signatory states and the difficulties observed based on the evaluation conducted by the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO). Opinions on experiences and best practices of the Istanbul Convention were exchanged as well as the ways in which Member States are combating gender based violence and domestic violence in practice, while the issue of the European Union accession to the Istanbul Convention was considered.

Istanbul Convention was signed by 44 Council of Europe member states, out of 47, and the European Union. It has been ratified by 27 Council of Europe member states, 17 of them being EU Member States.

**26 – 28 November – Tallinn** – 58 Conference of Parliamentary Committees for Union Affairs of Parliaments of the European Union (COSAC)

Bojan Glavašević, Deputy Chairman of the European Affairs Committee, took part in the meeting of the Conference of Parliamentary Committees for Union Affairs of Parliaments of the European Union (COSAC).

The COSAC meeting is the last and the largest conference held within the framework of the parliamentary dimension of the Estonian Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The topics discussed include the future of the EU, bringing the European Union closer to its citizens, the Single Digital Market and the development of e-services, the Security Union and migration.

Some of the keynote speakers were President of the Republic of Estonia Kersti Kaljulaid, President of the Riigikogu Eiki Nestor, the EU Chief Negotiator for Brexit Michel Barnier and European Commissioner for Security Union Julian King.

The participants of the meeting welcomed the increase in public support to the European Union, stressing nevertheless the necessity of taking further steps to consolidate the Union as successfully as possible following the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from membership. They discussed the new Multi-Annual Financial Framework for the period after 2020, in view of Brexit and the fact that the share of the UK's contribution to the EU budget is 17 percent. The participants agree that the success of the European Union as a whole depends on the success of the Member States' governments in implementing European policies and called for closer cooperation with citizens.



The COSAC meeting was concluded with the announcement of the Bulgarian Presidency of the Council of the European Union during the first half of 2018. Among other things, the priorities of the Presidency will include security policies and migration, enlargement policy and the relationship with the countries of the so-called Western Balkans, and the future of Europe with an emphasis on youth-oriented policies.

