

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

The Bulgarian presidency of the Council of the EU: 1 January - 30 June 2018

[The programme and priorities](#) of the Bulgarian presidency are driven by its motto: 'United we stand strong', which is also the motto of the coat of arms of the Republic of Bulgaria. The presidency will work with its partners on unity among the member states and the EU institutions to provide concrete solutions to build a stronger, more secure and solidary Europe.

This is the first time Bulgaria is holding the rotating presidency since it joined the EU in 2007. Bulgarian presidency is part of the Trio Presidency composed of Estonia, Bulgaria and Austria.

Taking into account the need for active dialogue with EU citizens, Bulgaria will strive to achieve progress in the field of security, employment, sustainable growth and ensuring a stronger EU presence on the world stage. In particular, it tasks itself with focusing on youth questions and security issues as horizontal priorities. The Bulgarian government has announced three broad messages for its programme: Consensus, Competitiveness and Cohesion.

During the next 6 months, the presidency will focus on four key areas: future of Europe and young people, Western Balkans, security and stability and digital economy.

Activities of the Croatian Parliament in the Decision-Making Process

Activities of the parliamentary committees

European Affairs Committee held its 25th session on 19th January 2018. The Committee discussed and suggested to the plenary the enactment of the following acts:

- [Draft Plan for harmonization of Croatian legislation with the EU acquis for the year 2018](#)
- [Draft Proposal for an Act on the Ratification of the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union between the EU Member States](#)

Four committees discussed [European documents](#) in accordance with the [Work Programme for the Consideration of the Positions of the Republic of Croatia for 2017](#).



European Affairs Committee held its 26th session on 31 January 2018.

Labour, Retirement System and Social Partnership Committee held its 26st session on 24 January 2018.

Finance and Central Budget Committee held its 37th session on 25 January 2018.

Environment and Nature Conservation Committee held its 22nd session on 24 January 2018.

Monitoring the work of the Government in the European Union institutions

European Council meetings

Prime Minister has submitted a [report](#) on European Council meetings in 2017 at the plenary session on 17 January 2018.

Council meetings

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

- 3594 General Affairs Council (art. 50);
- 3591 Foreign Affairs Council;
- 3592 Economic and Financial Affairs Council;
- 3593 Agriculture and Fisheries Council.

Application of EU law

In January 2018, the Croatian Parliament enacted [3 laws](#) in the process of harmonization with European Union law.

Ratification of the EU Treaty

On 26 January 2018, the Croatian Parliament has enacted the [Act on the Ratification of the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union between the EU Member States](#).

By adopting this Act, Croatia accedes to the Treaty while exercising its right of exemption from Titles III and IV. This implies that Croatia accepts the obligations laid down in Title V, which refer to the meeting of Heads of State or Government in Euro Summit meetings which take place at least twice a year, to discuss issues of competitiveness, changes to the existing and introducing new rules to be applied in the euro area, as well as some specific issues regarding the implementation of the Treaty.



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 January 2018, EU institutions forwarded to the Croatian Parliament [64 documents](#): 19 draft laws, 45 communications and other non-binding documents.

Interparliamentary Cooperation in the European Union

Interparliamentary 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 January 2018, the Croatian Parliament representatives participated in the following meetings:

21 – 22 January – Sofia – Meeting of the chairpersons of the Conference of the Parliamentary Committees for Union Affairs of Parliaments of the European Union (COSAC)

Bojan Glavašević, deputy chairperson of the European Affairs Committee, and Marijana Balić, Committee member, participated in the meeting.

The meeting started with a presentation of the priorities of the Bulgarian Presidency of the Council, which was followed by discussions on the future of the European Union and the European macro-regional strategies. The Bulgarian Presidency is focused on youth policies, enhancing stability and security, digital economy and the European perspective of the Western Balkans countries. Most of the participants particularly welcomed the fact that enlargement features again among the European Union's policy priorities.

In the course of the discussion on the future of Europe, the European Commission's Vice President Frans Timmermans underlined that convergence had always been in the focus of European integration and advocated for stronger European solidarity. The last debate of the meeting centred on macro-regional strategies as flagship European projects in terms of promoting convergence and solidarity. Since both the EU Member States and their neighbouring countries take part in macro-regional strategies, these strategies contribute to the spreading of European values.

The meeting was closed by announcing the next plenary meeting of COSAC, scheduled to take place from 17 to 19 June, in Sofia again. The meeting will be dedicated, among other things, to the European Charter of Social Rights, cohesion policy and inter-parliamentary cooperation in the context of discussing the application of the subsidiarity and proportionality principles.

30 January – Zagreb – Members of the competent committees meet with the European Commission Vice-President for Energy Union Maroš Šefčovič

A meeting of the members of the European Affairs Committee, Committee on the Economy, Environment and Nature Conservation Committee and Committee on Regional Development and European Union Funds with Commission Vice-President for Energy Union Maroš Šefčovič.



Vice-President Šefčovič pointed out that Croatia has already fulfilled and even exceeded the national targets set by 2020 for renewable energy and energy efficiency. However, it is necessary to continue the efforts and invest in national targets regarding the Croatian National Energy Plan and adaptation to climate change by 2030.

Last December, the European Union approved EUR 101.4 million for the LNG terminal project on the island of Krk, and recently another EUR 16 million for the pipeline connection. Šefčovič said that this is an important project not only for Croatia, but also for the region and for the energy security of the entire European Union.

The challenges faced by all member states regarding the reform of the electricity system, increasing energy efficiency, reducing harmful emissions and transition to low carbon society, agriculture and transport were also discussed during the meeting.

Against this background, Šefčovič announced the adoption of a new package of measures aimed at the consolidation of 27 national climate and energy policies by the end of the current mandate of the Commission.

Interparliamentary activities in February 2018

15 – 17 February – Sofia – Second Meeting of the Joint Parliamentary Scrutiny Group on Europol

19 – 20 February – Brussels – European Parliamentary Week including the European Semester Conference and the Interparliamentary Conference on Stability, Economic Coordination and Governance

27 February – Brussels – Interparliamentary Committee Meeting of the European Parliament's Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) with national Parliaments of the European Union's Member States on the subject "The UN Global Compacts on refugees and migrants: the role of Parliaments".

