

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

Meeting of the Chairpersons of the Committees for Union Affairs (COSAC), Zagreb, 19 – 20 January 2020

The Meeting of the Chairpersons of the Committees for Union Affairs is the first meeting to be held during the Parliamentary dimension of the Croatian Presidency of the Council.

Conference of Parliamentary Committees for Union Affairs of Parliaments of the European Union (COSAC – acronym in French for *Conférence des organes spécialisés en affaires communautaires*) facilitates the regular exchange of views between the committees of the national Parliaments of the European Union Member States dealing with European Union affairs, and according to the Treaty of Lisbon it may submit any contribution it deems appropriate for the attention of the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission. In addition, it promotes the exchange of information and best practice between national Parliaments and the European Parliament. COSAC was established in 1989 at the Conference of the Speakers of EU Parliaments in Madrid. The first meeting of COSAC took place on 16-17 November 1989 in Paris.

According to the Rules of Procedure, COSAC is organised biannually by the national Parliament of the Member State holding the Presidency of the Council – once in the form of a meeting of the Chairpersons of the Committees for Union Affairs and once in the form of a plenary meeting. The European Parliament as well as observers from candidate countries’ relevant committees dealing with European Union affairs contributes in the work of COSAC.

During the meeting, Croatia will present its priorities for the Presidency of the Council and topics of common interest to the European Union and national Parliaments in the new institutional cycle will be discussed. The Meeting of the Chairpersons is a preparatory meeting held prior to the COSAC plenary meeting, which will take place 24 – 26 May 2020.

The [meeting](#) is open to public through a web-streaming.

Activities of the Croatian Parliament in the Decision-Making Process

Application of EU law

In December 2019, Croatian Parliament enacted 11 laws in the process of implementation of European law.

In 2019, Croatian Parliament passed 241 laws, and 47 of them have been aligned with EU 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 December 2019, EU institutions forwarded to the Croatian Parliament [21 documents](#): 6 draft laws, 15 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 December 2019 the Croatian Parliament representatives participated at the following meetings:

1 – 3 December – Helsinki – Plenary Meeting of the LXII COSAC

Chair of the European Affairs Committee Domagoj Ivan Milošević, Deputy Chair Domagoj Hajduković and Committee members Ines Strenja and Ivan Čelić participated at the meeting of the Conference of Parliamentary Committees for Union Affairs of Parliaments of the European Union (COSAC). It was the last inter-parliamentary event in the framework of Finland's Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

Domagoj Ivan Milošević announced Croatia's upcoming Council Presidency and its parliamentary dimension and informed about the dates for the two COSAC meetings to be held in Zagreb. The Meeting of the Chairpersons of COSAC is scheduled for 19 – 20 January 2020, and the LXIII COSAC meeting will be held on 24 – 26 May 2020.

In the opening part of the LXII COSAC, chaired by the Grand Committee of the Eduskunta, Members of national parliaments and the European Parliament discussed the inclusion of national parliaments in the Conference on the Future of Europe, the coordination of which will be the responsibility of European Commission Vice-President for Democracy and Demography Dubravka Šuica.

European Affairs Committee's Deputy Chair Hajduković said that the role of national Parliaments in the Conference is crucial, given their role as linkage between the public and the European policies. He also highlighted that the discussions on the future of Europe should focus especially on reducing regional inequalities within the EU and on EU enlargement policy.

Milošević stressed that the continuation of the enlargement policy was a matter of EU's credibility and expressed hope that the pre-accession negotiations with North Macedonia and Albania would start soon. He also said that neither the adoption of a new Multiannual Financial Framework should be the cause for division within the EU. Milošević stressed the positive effects the cohesion policy has on all Member States, independent of the amount of their national contribution to the European budget.

European Commission Vice-President for Interinstitutional Relations Maroš Šefčovič introduced the roadmap of the new Commission under Ursula von der Leyen and referred in particular to the role of national parliaments.



The LXII Conference of Parliamentary Committees for Union Affairs of Parliaments of the European Union (COSAC) closed with a debate on the Climate Strategy for Europe and with the intervention by Michel Barnier, Head of the Task Force for Relations with the United Kingdom.

The Croatian Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee will take over the COSAC on 1 January 2020. The next COSAC meeting will take place on 19 – 20 January 2020 in Zagreb in the format of committees' chairpersons.

4 December – Brussels – Inter-parliamentary committee meeting on “EU foreign policy priorities for the new institutional cycle”

Foreign Affairs Committee's Chairman Miro Kovač participated in the inter-parliamentary meeting organised by European Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET).

The meeting brought together representatives from 20 EU Member States, Norway, and the European Parliament, among other things to exchange views on EU's foreign policy priorities for the new institutional cycle with the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the Commission Josep Borrell. The annual report on the Implementation of the Common Foreign and Security Policy was presented during the meeting.

The participants discussed current affairs in Union's neighbourhood, the future of the enlargement policy, and modalities for addressing the lack of credibility and encouraging reforms. Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Olivér Várhelyi participated in the discussion.

Concerning the opening of negotiations with North Macedonia and Albania, Miro Kovač said that Croatia supports enlargement and expressed hope that the negotiations would be opened during the Croatian presidency. He stressed that Croatia is continuously committed to ensuring peace and stability in the region of Southeast Europe.

On the side-lines of the meeting, Miro Kovač met, in separate meetings, High Representative and Vice-President of the Commission Josep Borrell and Chairman of EP Committee on Foreign Affairs David McAllister. Preparations for the Croatian presidency of the EU Council and its parliamentary dimension were discussed.

5 December – Zagreb – Meeting with EP Conference of Presidents

President of the European Parliament David Sassoli and the leaders of all political groups in the European Parliament were on an official visit to Zagreb to discuss with the Croatian leadership the priorities of the Croatian presidency of the EU in the first half of next year.

EP Conference of Presidents had meeting with Speaker of the Croatian Parliament Gordan Jandroković and Croatian MP's – members of committees dealing with European Union law.

"What is important to us is to emphasize through the parliamentary dimension the priorities of the Croatian presidency – a Europe that develops and connects, that cares about security and that is influential in the world. But of particular importance to us are the membership prospects of our neighbours that aspire to become EU members," Jandrokovic told the press ahead of a meeting with Sassoli and representatives of the political groups in the European Parliament.

Jandroković expressed hope that the Western Balkans summit, which will be held in Zagreb in May, would send positive messages to all the countries aspiring to join the EU. "We on our part as Parliament will try to give an added value to it," he said. The Croatian Parliament will emphasize through its activities the priorities of the Croatian presidency of the European Union and special emphasis will be placed on the membership prospects of Western Balkan countries that wish to join the EU, Parliament Speaker Gordan Jandroković said.

