

# 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 French Presidency of the Council of the European Union

France will hold the presidency of the Council of the European Union for the six months, from 1 January 2022 to 30 June 2022. The Czech Republic will then take up the presidency in the second half of 2022, followed by Sweden in the first half of 2023. These three countries form a trio of presidencies.

The thematic priorities of the trio [programme](#) are:

- To protect citizens and freedoms, by focusing on respecting and protecting European values – democracy, rule of law, gender equality, etc. – and on strengthening both the Schengen area and our common asylum and migration policy;
- To promote a new growth and investment model for Europe, based on sustainable green growth and on strengthening the EU’s industrial and digital sovereignty;
- To build a greener and more socially equitable Europe that better protects the health of Europeans;
- A global Europe that promotes multilateralism and renewed international partnerships, while adopting a shared vision among the 27 Member States regarding strategic threats.

The programme also reiterates the European Union's commitment in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic and its economic and social consequences.

### Priorities of the French Presidency

In 2017, with the Sorbonne speech, the President of the French Republic Emmanuel macron put forward the notion of a [“sovereignty agenda”](#) to our European partners, meaning Europe’s ability to exist in the world to defend our values and interests.

This agenda for a sovereign Europe has been deployed for the past four years:

- With regard to the ecological transition, Europe aims to be carbon neutral by 2050, now devotes one third of its budget to combating global warming, and has established the Climate Bank;
- With regard to digital issues, copyright reform and the removal of terrorist content online have been passed, and platform regulation and accountability will soon be a reality;
- With regard to social issues, the first decision was to revise the posting of workers directive on the basis of the principle of “equal pay for equal work at the same workplace”;
- With regard to defense, Europe has put in place its first joint military budget and the European Intervention Initiative, and France and Germany have joined forces to develop a future tank and fighter jet.
- With regard to economic issues, a historic recovery plan funded by joint European borrowing has helped Europe overcome the crisis. And Europe is progressively acquiring commercial protection instruments to no longer be naive when it comes to globalization.



Proposed by France in 2019 and launched on 9 May 2021 in Strasbourg by the President of the Republic, alongside the President of the European Parliament, President of the Council and President of the European Commission, the Conference on the Future of Europe provides European citizens with a new forum for debate so that they can contribute to defining Europe's future policy for the years and decades to come. Citizens can express their wishes and expectations on the [futureu.europa.eu](https://futureu.europa.eu) platform, in transnational panels and at numerous events organized in the Member States.

Recommendations made by citizens, in France and in Europe, have helped determine the priorities of the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The work of the Conference on the Future of Europe will conclude in spring 2022, under the French Presidency. Citizens will be informed of consequent action taken.

#### Calendar of the parliamentary dimension

**13 – 14 January** – Meeting of the Chairpersons of COSAC

**6 – 7 February** – Conference on digital and space issues

**24 – 25 February** – Conference on Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP)

**28 February** – Europol Joint Parliamentary Scrutiny Group

**3 – 5 March** – Plenary meeting of COSAC

**13 – 14 March** – Conference on the economic strategic autonomy

**15 –16 March** – Conference on Stability, Economic Coordination and Governance in the EU / European semester conference / European week Format to be confirmed (European Parliament) (tbc)

**20 – 21 March** – Conference on European policies for the citizens: green deal, CAP and regional funds

**15 – 16 May** - - Conference on migrations

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

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

#### European Affairs Committee

29<sup>th</sup> session held on 9 December 2021

On the occasion of marking the 10th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Accession of the Republic of Croatia to the European Union, members of the Committee were addressed by the signatories of the Treaty on behalf of the Republic of Croatia Ivo Josipović and Jadranka Kosor.

At the same session the Committee discussed [European documents](#) in accordance with the Work Programme for the Consideration of the Positions of the Republic of Croatia for [2021](#).

In December 2021, the European Affairs Committee has forwarded 3 [European documents](#) in the procedure for the consideration of the Positions of the Republic of Croatia for [2020](#) and [2021](#).

#### Other committees

Other parliamentary committees discussed [European documents](#) in accordance with the Work Programme for the Consideration of the Positions of the Republic of Croatia for [2021](#).



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

### Council

The Croatian Government submitted to the relevant parliamentary committees its positions for 10 Council meetings held in December 2021.

### Application of EU law

In December 2021, the Croatian Parliament enacted [6 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 the EU documents received, along with the information on: document number, adoption procedure, transmission date and subsidiarity deadline.

In December 2021, EU institutions forwarded to the Croatian Parliament [76 documents](#): 31 draft laws and 45 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.

#### **3 – 4 December – Bruxelles, videoconference – 7th Summit of Speakers of the PA-UfM and Plenary Session of the PA-UfM**

The 7th Summit of Speakers and 16th plenary session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean (PA-UfM) gathered MEPs and Parliamentary Speakers from the UfM's 42 member countries.

The Summit, opened by David Sassoli, President of the European Parliament, focused on the fight against climate change in the Mediterranean region, the priority topic defined by the EP's presidency of the PA-UfM.

Member of the Delegation of the Croatian Parliament to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean and envoy of the Speaker of Parliament Marko Pavić participated at the Summit.

At its conclusion, a joint declaration taking stock of some of the most pressing consequences of global warming and a changing environment on both shores of the Mediterranean was adopted.

The plenary session was kicked off on 4 December with opening remarks from EU Foreign Policy Chief Josep Borrell.

Members of the Delegation of the Croatian Parliament to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean Marko Pavić and Sanja Radolović participated in the 16th plenary session of the PS UzM.



## **7 December – Ljubljana, videoconference – Conference on Digital Transformation in Education**

The National Assembly hosted the Conference on Digital Transformation in Education on the sidelines of the parliamentary dimension of the Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the EU. During the event, members of EU parliaments and the parliaments of associate members discussed ways of solving the challenges of the digital transition in education and training with invited guests.

The speakers at the conference presented the state of digital transformation in education in individual countries and the challenges they face. Participants in the debate agreed that those involved in the education process need digital competences if the EU is to maintain its competitive edge. They also emphasised the need to maintain a balance between digital and traditional education, as children must also develop social and artistic skills, and the need to respect fundamental values, the well-being of students, their welfare and cyber security.

Vesna Bedeković, Chairperson of the Education, Science and Culture Committee participated at the Conference.

## **9 December – Bruxelles, videoconference – Interparliamentary Committee Meeting on 'The situation of the rule of law in the EU'**

The meeting was organised by the European Parliament's Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE). The representatives from national parliaments and the European Parliament, who participated in the meeting, exchanged their views on the European Commission's 2021 Rule of Law Report and the topic The Way Forward on the Mechanism on Democracy, Rule of Law and Fundamental Rights.

Mišel Jakšič and Krunoslav Katičić, chairman and deputy chairman of the Judiciary Committee participated at the meeting.

## **10 December – Bruxelles, videoconference - third High-level Interparliamentary Conference on Migration and Asylum**

The parliamentary dimension of the Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the EU, in collaboration with the European Parliament, held the High-level Interparliamentary Conference on Migration and Asylum in Europe, which was co-chaired by the President of the National Assembly, Igor Zorčič, and the Vice-President of the European Parliament, Fabio Massimo Castaldo. Participants included representatives from national parliaments, the European parliament, the European Commission, and other invited guests, who talked about solving current migration and asylum challenges. A number of those present repeated the Pope's recent call for solidarity and trust among EU member states, made during his recent visit to Lesbos.

The keynote speaker of the interparliamentary conference, Margaritis Schinas, the European Commissioner for Promoting our European Way of Life, strongly condemned attempts to destabilise the EU by abusing refugees and creating a crisis, and welcomed the EU's united and resolute response to the humanitarian crisis at the border and swift action to punish those responsible. He described the EU's unified response as a great success in migration management and called for the adoption of the New Pact on Migration and Asylum as soon as possible, which would give member states a firmer legal framework on which to base a common migration policy, a crucial tool for strengthening the EU's external borders.

The conference included two panel discussions. The first panel on Multi-dimensional Cooperation in Forging Tailored Migration Partnerships with Third Countries was co-chaired by Monika Gregorčič, Chair of the Foreign Policy Committee, and Pierrette Herzberger Fofana, the 1st Vice-Chair of the European Parliament's DEVE Committee.

Croatian MPs Josip Šarić and Davor Ivo Stier participated at the Conference.



### **Inter-parliamentary activities in January 2022**

13 – 14 January – Paris, videoconference – Conference of the Parliamentary Committees for Union Affairs of Parliaments of the European Union (COSAC) Chairpersons Meeting

24 January ---- Ljubljana, videoconference – Meeting of the Secretaries General of the National Parliaments of EU Member States and the European Parliament (EUSG)

