

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 Commission Work Programme for 2019

The European Commission presented its [Work Programme for 2019](#), setting out three main priorities for the year ahead: reaching swift agreement on the legislative proposals already presented to deliver on its ten political priorities; adopting a limited number of new initiatives to address outstanding challenges; and presenting several initiatives with a future perspective for a Union at 27 reinforcing the foundations for a strong, united and sovereign Europe.

The 2019 Work Programme focuses on just **15 new initiatives**, and an additional **10 new RE-FIT evaluations**, to review existing legislation and ensure it is still fit for purpose. To ensure a **focus on delivery**, the Commission Work Programme also lists the **45 pending priority proposals under the Joint Declaration** on legislative priorities, for adoption by the Parliament and Council before the European elections. The Commission also suggests **to withdraw or repeal 17 pending proposals or existing laws**.

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

##### Activities of the parliamentary committees

Parliamentary committees discussed [European documents](#) in accordance with the [Work Programme for the Consideration of the Positions of the Republic of Croatia for 2018](#).

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

###### European Council

In October, Prime Minister of the Government of the Republic of Croatia submitted to the Parliament written [Report on the European Council meetings held in Brussels on 28 and 29 June 2018](#).

Additionally, on 15 October 2018 the Government submitted to the European Affairs Committee its positions for the European Council meeting on 17 and 18 October.



## Council

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

- 3638 Competition Council
- 3639 Economic and Financial Affairs Council
- 3640 Environment Council
- 3641 Justice and Home Affairs Council
- 3642 Agriculture and Fisheries Council
- 3643 Foreign Affairs Council (Defense)
- 3644 General Affairs Council
- 3645 General Affairs Council (Art. 50)

### **Application of EU law**

In October 2018, the Croatian Parliament enacted [9 laws](#) in the process of implementation 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 October 2018, EU institutions forwarded to the Croatian Parliament [58 documents](#): 26 draft laws, 32 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 October 2018, the Croatian Parliament representatives participated in the following meetings:

#### **10 – 11 October – Brussels – High–Level Conference on the ‘Future of international election observation’**

A Member of the Croatian Parliament Delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), Ante Babić, participated at the High-level Conference on the future of international election observation, co-organized by the European Parliament and the European Union External Action Service in the premises of the European Parliament in Brussels.



The Conference brought together representatives of Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation (DoP) partner countries as well as of Parliamentary Code of Conduct for Election Observation, civil society, international organizations, European Union institutions and representatives of National Parliaments of the European Union Member States participating in election observation missions led by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) in order to exchange views and reflect in depth on the new challenges facing observation missions, such as the use of new information and communication technologies, the role and impact of social media, spreading disinformation and "false news" and violence associated with the elections.

The focus of the Conference was the exchange of experiences and best practices among parliamentary observers, including on the Parliamentary Code of Conduct for Election Observation. During the debate, there was talk about the organization of elections and the advantages and disadvantages of using new technologies, conflict prevention after the elections, security, especially cybernetics, as well as strengthening the co-operation between the European Union, the African Union and the United Nations regarding electoral process and election observation, the application of credible election observation methodologies.

Babić participated in the debate on the organization of elections, conflict prevention, security and peaceful transition. He welcomed the role of observation missions in terms of strengthening democracy and advancing electoral processes in transition countries. He referred to the general elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina held on October 7, 2018 and underlined that the elections were not conducted in accordance with the constitutionally guaranteed representation of constituent peoples and the fundamental principles of the Dayton Agreement, which puts their legitimacy and constitutionality into question, since members of one constitutive people in the territory of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina have elected a representative for another, the Croatian people.

Babić underlined that such a situation "opens the door" to deeper instability in the country, concluding that unstable Bosnia and Herzegovina means unstable European Union. He warned that the Election Observation Mission of OSCE / OHIDR for General Elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina should take into account the unconstitutionality of the electoral legislation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and additionally underlined the need for members of the observation missions to familiarize themselves with the election system of the country in which they are observing the elections.

### **11 – 12 October – Vienna – Inter-Parliamentary Conference for the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Common Security and Defence Policy (CFSP/CSDP)**

Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee Mr. Miro Kovač, Chairman of the Defence Committee Mr. Igor Dragovan and Deputy Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee Mr. Joško Klisović participated at the two-day Conference for the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Common Security and Defence Policy (CFSP/CSDP), organized within the scope of the Austrian Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

The Conference was dedicated to EU's priorities in the field of CFSP and CSDP, the situation and control at EU borders, the issues of security and migration, the current state of affairs in the countries of the Middle East, the security situation in Syria and the European perspective of the Western Balkans countries. During the Conference workshops were held on the future of the nuclear deal, the military mobility within the Union and projects within the framework of the Permanent Structured Cooperation – PESCO, as well as on the contribution of the OSCE to the East-West dialogue. The participants exchanged views on the current state of the Union, its immediate neighbourhood and control of its borders and welcomed the efforts undertaken so far with regard to calming the situation in and stabilizing EU's neighbourhood, with particular emphasis on the importance of further strengthening the European defence.



The Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee Kovač spoke about security issues, migration and control of borders and stressed that total monitoring of migration is not possible, pointing out the necessity to define a common European approach to migration management. In this area, as well as in Southeast Europe, the European Union can and must demonstrate its efficiency and if it fails to do so, it is not eligible to claim the role of a world player, Kovač added.

### **30 October – Zagreb – Meeting with Vice-President of the European Commission and the Commissioner for Euro and Social Dialogue, Valdis Dombrovskis**

Members of the European Affairs Committee, Finance and Central Budget Committee, Committee on the Economy, Labour, Retirement System and the Social Partnership Committee and the Committee on Regional Development and European Union Funds held a meeting with the Vice-President of the European Commission and the Commissioner for Euro and Social Dialogue, Valdis Dombrovskis.

They discussed the economic, financial and social challenges and priorities facing the European Union.

Vice-President of the European Commission, Dombrovskis said that 2018 was a good year for Croatia and that economic and fiscal development was moving in the right direction. Talking about specific recommendations for Croatia, he outlined the taxation of capital, real estate and consumption and the implementation of further pension and healthcare reform as well as the labour market and the rationalization of public administration. He also mentioned the lack of major foreign investments in Croatia due to, as he said, a restrictive environment.

Talking about bringing Croatia closer to the introduction of the euro as a single currency, he stressed that the Commission supports Croatia on its path towards the euro and joining the Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM II) not only via political, but also technical and financial support. He pointed out that Structural Reform Support Programme (SRSP) provides both technical and significant financial support to the countries that work on the introduction of the euro.

In the course of discussion with Croatian parliamentarians, certain issues were opened such as Brexit's impact on the new Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) and thus related increase in national contributions to the EU budget and the reduction of funds for individual policies. Discussion were held on internal and external migration management in the Union, the idea of introducing a common tax scheme, the expected effects of EU membership on Croatia and the need to make greater use of European Union funds.



## Inter-parliamentary activities in November 2018

**8 November** – Paris - Interparliamentary meeting “European Citizens Faced with the European Union”

**12 – 13 November** – Bucharest – working visit of the Foreign Affairs Committee to the Parliament of Romania

**18 – 20 November** – Vienna – COSAC plenary meeting

**19 – 20 November** – Bruxelles – Interparliamentary Committee Meeting “European Cultural Heritage” hosted by Committee on Culture and Education of the European Parliament

**20 November** – Bruxelles - Interparliamentary Committee Meeting on 'Human rights and external actions of the EU and Member States' hosted by Subcommittee on Human Rights (DROI) of the European Parliament

**20 – 23 November** – Zagreb- Interparliamentary Conference “The Role of Parliaments in Shaping the Future of Food and Farming” hosted by Agriculture Committee of the Croatian Parliament

**22 – 23 November** – Tallinn – IPEX Correspondents meeting

**27 November** – Bruxelles - Interparliamentary Committee Meeting on the Empowering Parliaments and enforcing citizens’ rights in the implementation and application of Union law co-hosted by the European Parliament Legal Affairs Committee (JURI) and Petition Committee (PETI)

