

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

State of the Union 2018

European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker delivered a [speech](#) on the State of the Union on 12 September 2018 during the plenary session of the European Parliament in Strasbourg.

In his speech on the situation in the Union, President Juncker presented an overview of the European Commission past achievements over the past four years in the 10 priority areas and announced the initiatives that the Commission will undertake in the coming months and set a tonality for a new five-year period.

President Juncker highlighted the good economic situation in the Union, stressing that the EU has been growing for 21 quarters in a row. Almost 12 million new jobs have been created since 2014, and currently 239 million European citizens are employed, while 14.8% of young people are unemployed, the lowest since 2000. Thanks to the European Strategic Investment Fund, progress has been made, and the fund has generated over € 335 billion in public and private investment.

During the presentation, Juncker has repeatedly stressed the need for unity within the Union, both in terms of countering nationalism and populism.

The European Commission presented the [Letter of Intent](#) as a part of the speech stating the main ideas for guiding the Commission's work program for the next year. The priority of all three institutions will be to reach a speedy agreement on the existing legislative proposals before the EP elections in May 2019.



Activities of the Croatian Parliament in the Decision-Making Process

Monitoring the work of the Government in the European Union institutions

Council

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

- 3636 General Affairs Council;
- 3637 General Affairs Council (art. 50);
- 3638 Competitiveness Council.

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 September 2018, EU institutions forwarded to the Croatian Parliament [37 documents](#): 20 draft laws and 17 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 September 2018, the Croatian Parliament representatives participated in the following meetings:

27 – 28 September – Bruxelles – Deputy Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee Joško Klisović attended the 10th Asia-Europe Parliamentary Partnership Meeting

In his capacity as envoy of the Speaker of the Croatian Parliament, the Deputy Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee Joško Klisović attended the 10th Asia-Europe Parliamentary Partnership Meeting (ASEP 10) hosted by the European Parliament. ASEP's meetings precede the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) and are held every two years, alternately in Europe and in Asia.

ASEP 10 brought together around three hundred participants from 43 countries and the European Parliament to exchange opinions on climate change and the related challenges facing Asia and Europe. The three simultaneous panels discussed the impact of climate change on migrations, security and economy. Other topics included the relationship between climate change and sustainable development and circular economy, urban area management, cooperation in water resources management, waste treatment, plastic reduction, food safety and clean technologies.

Klisović took part in the work of the Preparatory and drafting committee tasked with finalizing the draft ASEP 10 Declaration and in the panel discussing the impact of climate change on migration. Bearing in mind the interconnectedness of climate change and migration he emphasized the role and responsibility of parliamentarians in raising awareness of the long-term threats to climate change and noted the need to motivate governments more vigorously with the aim of generating sufficient political will to implement the right measures to address this issue.



In this respect, it is of utmost importance to strengthen international cooperation since no single country can solve these global problems alone nor can it offer its citizens the necessary level of security. He stressed that Croatia, as a country on the external border of the European Union, should use its Presidency of the Council of the European Union to raise awareness of this issue and intensify European activities and debate to prepare the EU's appropriate response to the crisis we are facing.

The meeting was concluded by adopting the Declaration of the 10th Asia-Europe Parliamentary Partnership Meeting which, following the ASEP Rules of procedure, will be submitted to the 12th ASEM Summit (ASEM 12) to be held in Brussels on 18 and 19 October 2018.

24 – 25 September – Bruxelles – Deputy Chair of the Domestic Policy and National Security Committee, Petar Škorić participated at the 3rd Meeting of the Joint Parliamentary Scrutiny Group on Europol

Deputy Chair of the Domestic Policy and National Security Committee Petar Škorić participated at the 3rd Meeting of the Joint Parliamentary Scrutiny Group on the European Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol) which was established pursuant to the Conclusions of the Conference of Speakers of the EU Parliaments in April 2017.

The meeting presented JPSG priorities by Presidential Troika 2018 - 2019 and the Chairperson of Europol Management Board Priit Pärkna reported on the Europol Management Board activities March - September 2018. Meeting enabled exchange of opinions on the Europol Draft Multiannual Programming Document 2019 - 2021 and a debate on Europol's contribution to the fight against financial crime, asset recovery and money laundering. Discussion was also held on the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms of natural persons, and in particular the protection of personal data, with regard to Europol's activities.

Next meeting of the Europol Joint Parliamentary Scrutiny Group will be held in Bucharest in February 2019. In accordance with the Conclusions of the Conference of the Speakers of the EU Parliaments from April 2017, the Europol Joint Parliamentary Scrutiny Group meets twice a year in the first half of the year in the MS holding the rotating Council Presidency and in the second half of the year in the European Parliament. Since the Republic of Croatia will be holding the Presidency in the first half of 2020 the Croatian Parliament, ie the relevant Domestic Policy and National Security Committee will host a meeting of the Europol Joint Parliamentary Scrutiny Group.

Interparliamentary activities in October 2018

4 – 5 October – Budapest – 5 Danube Parliamentary Conference

5 October – Sofia – Interparliamentary Conference "Transforming the Western Balkans region – a parliamentary perspective on the role and the future of EU accession process"

9 October – Brussels/European Parliament – Exchange of views with national Parliaments on the Country Specific Recommendations (ECON)

10 October – Brussels/European Parliament – The debate on the Future of Europe (AFCO)

10 – 11 October – Brussels – High-Level Conference on the 'Future of international election observation'

10 – 11 October – Lisbon – Meeting of the Committee on Women's Rights of the Parliamentary Assembly Union for the Mediterranean

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

18 October – Brussels/European Parliament – Interparliamentary meeting "Fundamental rights aspects of Roma inclusion and fighting anti-Gypsyism" (LIBE)

