

Resolution on the 2012 comprehensive monitoring report on Croatia

2012/2871(RSP) - 18/04/2013 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 529 to 36 with 39 abstentions a resolution tabled by the Committee on Foreign Affairs on Croatia.

It looks forward to welcoming **Croatia as the 28th Member State of the EU on 1 July 2013**, expressing its confidence in the strength of Croatia's democracy and social market economy, its adherence to European values, and capacity to fulfil the obligations of membership. Noting that **some Member States have not yet completed ratification** of the Accession Treaty, Parliament invites them to do so in a timely manner. Parliament gave its consent to Croatia's accession on 1 December 2011.

Welcoming the significant progress achieved by Croatia, Members reiterate that accession should not be construed as the end of a process, but rather as a step along the path towards economic, administrative and judicial modernization.

Parliament calls on Croatia to do the following:

- make efficient use of IPA (Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance) funds in preparation for EU membership and the utilisation of structural funds and the cohesion fund;
- carry out further structural reforms to stimulate economic growth and revive the labour market;
- continue improving the independence, accountability, and efficiency of its judicial system and the members of its judiciary;
- step up the fight against corruption, and mismanagement of funds and improve implementation of the legal framework for the seizure and confiscation of assets;
- combat all forms of discrimination against national minorities, the Roma community, migrants, LGBT people and other minority groups;
- continue to cooperate with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and to intensify domestic efforts to investigate and prosecute war crimes;
- continue to pay special attention to the rights and social conditions of returning refugees and displaced persons.

With regard to Croatia's **role in the Western Balkans**, Parliament considers that Croatia's experience, accumulated in the course of its transformation and accession, are of significant value to other applicant and aspirant states. It encourages Croatia to **play an active role in the process of stabilisation and European integration of the Western Balkan countries**. It further asks Croatia to engage actively in the resolution of **outstanding bilateral issues**. Members note instances of improved relations with Serbia and with Slovenia with respect to the Ljubljanska Banka case. They recall that issues of a bilateral nature must not be used to impede the integration processes of current or future applicant countries. Furthermore, the

Commission is asked to help countries in the region resolve their bilateral disputes in a manner that does not interfere with the accession process through establishing facilitation and arbitration mechanisms within the existing EU institutional framework

Lastly Parliament asks Member States to make use of the transitional measures restricting the free movement of persons exclusively on the basis of factual information and only in cases of serious labour market disturbance. Members point out that previous rounds of enlargement have proved that restricting access to labour markets during transitional periods is detrimental to the welfare of those Member States enacting the restrictions.