



The **EESC's** activities during the **Croatian Presidency**

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H R Hrvatsko predsjedanje
Croatian Presidency of the
Vijećem Europske unije
Council of the European Union

January – June 2020



European Economic
and Social Committee



A word from the President

Luca Jahier, EESC President

In the first half of 2020, Croatia will hold the Presidency of the Council of the European Union for the first time since it joined the EU. The Croatian Presidency comes at a time when Europe faces some of its most pressing challenges, as the increasing effects of climate change loom on the horizon and solidarity among Member States is once again under threat. Croatia finds itself with the unique responsibility and opportunity to help the EU chart a new ambitious course within the first months of its new institutional cycle and a new “geopolitical” Commission led by Ursula von der Leyen.

It is encouraging to see that Croatian civil society actors are demanding a seat at the table for these discussions. Indeed, issues such as strengthening the rule of law, creating a green economy and reinventing democracy cannot remain the exclusive prerogative of politicians and policy makers. By continuing to produce and promote its opinions, the EESC will ensure that the voice of European civil society will be heard during this Presidency. We remain firmly committed to contributing to the work of the Croatian Presidency, leading together towards a Europe that strives for more.

The EESC's activities during the Croatian Presidency



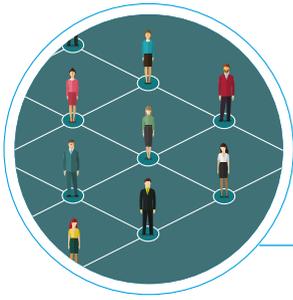
I Economic and Monetary Union, Economic and Social Cohesion – ECO

- The 2020 Annual Growth Survey
- Economic and Monetary Union: review of the economic policy of the euro area for 2020
- A Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027 that credibly delivers on the political agenda of the EU
- The EU's cohesion policy – what civil society is thinking
- The completion of the Capital Markets Union and the Banking Union – where are we with the establishment of the European Deposit Insurance Scheme?

II Single Market, Production and Consumption – INT

- Social economy as an important component of entrepreneurship
- Consumer policy
- R&I with a special focus on Artificial Intelligence
- Circular Economy





I Transport, Energy, Infrastructure and the Information Society – TEN

- Europe's digital sovereignty based on safe, secure and human-centred digital solutions
- Assessing the social and societal dimension of the Energy Union
- Monitoring the ongoing "Europe on the Move" initiatives
- TEN-T corridors and projects
- The right of access to good quality and affordable services of general interest: 20th principle of the European Pillar of Social Rights

I External Relations – REX

- Civil society's contribution to the EU-Western Balkans Summit
- Enhancing the civil society monitoring mechanisms in free trade agreements
- Engaging in the reform of the World Trade Organisation
- Establishing a civil society platform under the EU-Armenia Agreement
- Setting up of a Domestic Advisory Group under the EU – Japan Economic and Partnership Agreement



I Agriculture, Rural Development and the Environment – NAT

- A modern and simplified Common Agricultural Policy
- "Farm to Fork Strategy"
- European Green Deal, European Climate Law, European Climate Pact, climate justice and climate ambition towards COP26
- SDGs and the EU strategy on sustainable development

I Employment, Social Affairs and Citizenship – SOC

- Implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights
- Greater participation of people in the labour market and development of human capital in the context of the demographic challenge
- Lifelong learning and training at the workplace
- Socio-economic inclusion of migrants and refugees
- Strengthening the rule of law and fundamental rights in the EU



I Consultative Commission on Industrial Change – CCMI

- EU industrial policy
- Coal-mining regions in transition
- The steel industry
- The strategic value chain of raw materials
- The industrial impact of the transition towards the emerging society 5.0



A word from the Croatian Presidency

Andreja Metelko-Zgombić, State Secretary for European Affairs

As of 1 January 2020 Croatia will hold the Presidency of the Council of the European Union for the first time. The Croatian Presidency programme will rest on four pillars that will promote a strong and prosperous Europe based on common values and the principles of equality, inclusiveness, cohesion and convergence.

The first pillar is “A Europe that develops”, where we will promote sustainable and inclusive growth of the Union that takes into consideration the specificities and needs of all Member States, their regions and citizens, including establishing measures to stop negative demographic trends as an important cross-cutting theme. The Croatian Presidency will advocate a strong single market and a highly competitive EU, which is also ambitious in tackling climate change and other global challenges.

The second pillar is “A Europe that connects”, where we will promote initiatives contributing to transport, energy and digital connectivity while addressing the challenges

that the new technologies and digitalisation are posing to our societies.

“A Europe that protects” by strengthening security, both internal and external, is at the heart of the third pillar. This entails, among other things, working on a comprehensive and holistic approach to migration issues.

Our final pillar, “An influential Europe”, will include the hosting of an EU-Western Balkans Summit during our Presidency. Conscious of the transformational power of the enlargement process, we will strive for a continued credible and effective enlargement policy, as a pledge towards stability, security and further economic development and mutual connection on the European continent.

Croatia values highly the EESC’s contribution to the consolidation of the EU’s democratic legitimacy and socio-economic development and is looking forward to close cooperation during the Croatian Presidency of the Council.

EESC Agenda

January 2020

Public hearing on Taxation of the collaborative economy – Estonia

12 February 2020

Joint EESC-European Environmental Agency event on the State and Outlook of the Environment Report 2020 – Brussels

13 February 2020

Public hearing on Financing the Transition to a Low-Carbon Economy and the Challenges in Financing Climate Change Adaptation (NAT/778), exploratory opinion at the request of the Croatian EU Presidency

19-20 March 2020

Your Europe, Your Say – Brussels

24-25 March 2020

Extraordinary meeting of the Diversity Europe Group (Group III) – Zagreb or Rijeka

27 March 2020

2nd Artificial Intelligence Summit

March-April 2020 (tbc)

Sustainable Development Goals - A Framework for Economic Progress and Prosperity of EU Member States

21 April 2020

Conference on social innovation for refugee inclusion – Brussels

1st quarter 2020

Round Table on Coal Mining Regions in Transition – Slovakia

April-May 2020 (tbc)

Conference “From farm to fork”, co-organized with the World Sustainable Urban Food Centre (WSFC) – Valencia, Spain – (NAT/555, Temporary study group on sustainable food systems)

9 May 2020

Europe day

May-June 2020 (tbc)

Extraordinary meeting of the Workers’ Group (Group II) – Zagreb

May-June 2020 (tbc)

SMEs are the backbone of the Single Market – Zagreb

2-3 June 2020

Annual meeting of the European Migration Forum, co-organised by the EESC and the European Commission – Brussels

18 June 2020

European Consumer Day – Zagreb

Spring 2020 (tbc)

Empowering Women in Leadership and Entrepreneurship

Spring 2020

Circular Economy annual event – Brussels

Spring 2020

EU-Western Balkans Regional civil society conference – Zagreb

The Croatian members of the EESC



HANŽEVAČKI Marija
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General Secretary, Independent Trade Unions of Croatia (NHS)



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Director, ODRAZ – Sustainable Community Development



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President, MATICA – Association of Croatian Trade Unions; General Secretary, NSZVO



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Director-General, Croatian Employers' Association (HUP)



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Diversity Europe Group (Group III)
Director, SOLIDARNA – Foundation for Human Rights and Solidarity



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Director, Representative Office of the Croatian Chamber of Economy (HGK) in Brussels



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Diversity Europe Group (Group III)
Head, Zelena Akcija (Friends of the Earth Croatia)



MILIĆEVIĆ-PEZELJ Anica
Workers' Group (Group II)
Executive Secretary, Union of Autonomous Trade Unions of Croatia (SSSH)

EESC opinions requested by the Croatian Presidency

- Financing the transition to a low-carbon economy and the challenges in financing climate change adaptation
- Demographic challenges in the EU in light of economic and development inequalities
- Sustainable funding for lifelong learning and development of skills, in the context of a shortage of skilled labour
- The effects of campaigns on participation in political decision-making
- A single market for all

Did you know that:

- Croatia invented the tie, the pen, the electric speedometer, forensic fingerprinting and pay-by-phone parking
- Croatia is one of the top three EU countries on the UNESCO's list of intangible cultural heritage
- Croatia is home to the world's largest Neanderthal site
- Croatia used to have its own alphabet, known as Glagolitic – the oldest known Slavic alphabet, in use between the 12th and 16th century.



**European Economic
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