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PARLEMENT EUROPÉEN    PARLAIMINT NA HEORPA    PARLAMENTO EUROPEO    EIROPAS PARLaments  
EUROPOS PARLAMENTAS    EURÓPAI PARLAMENT    IL-PARLAMENT EWROPEW    EUROPEES PARLEMENT  
PARLAMENT EUROPEJSKI    PARLAMENTO EUROPEU    PARLAMENTUL EUROPEAN  
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***DIRECTORATE GENERAL - INTERNAL POLICIES***

***Committees and Delegations***

**Committee on Budgetary Control**

**FEEDBACK REPORT**

**on the mission to Croatia of a joint delegation from the Committee on Budgets (BUDG) and the Committee on Budgetary Control (CONT)**



**22 - 25 June 2010**



## **Introduction**

The EP Committees on Budgets and on Budgetary Control included a delegation visit in their annual plan for 2010 with an aim to explore Croatia's preparedness concerning the EU budget, own resources and VAT, Croatia's administrative and absorption capacity and control mechanisms in place in a view of possible EU membership, as well as management and control systems for EU programmes, in particular IPA, in terms of error rate, effectiveness and efficiency.

The delegation was authorised by the Bureau in December 2009, and it was scheduled for June 2010.

The background for the delegation visit was formed by the Commission's Communication on Enlargement strategy and Main Challenges 2009-2010 (COM(2009)533), and the Croatia 2009 Progress report (SEC(2009)1333), as well as the EP Resolution on the progress report on Croatia of 10 February 2010. A note "The Economic and Political Situation in Croatia" was prepared by EP DG IPOL Policy Department D "Budgetary Affairs" for the visit.

The programme and list of participants is to be found in annex 1.

## Executive summary and recommendations

### Executive summary

Croatia's accession negotiations have taken longer than expected, partially due to institutional crisis, and partially due to financial crisis which followed. Croatia is the first country to negotiate using the new methodology. Recently (shortly after the visit, at the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) on 30 June 2010) two chapters (5 - Public Procurement and 16 - Taxation) were closed and three chapters (8 - Competition Policy, 23 - Judiciary and Fundamental Rights, and 31 - Foreign, Security and Defence Policy) were opened. Croatia expected to temporarily close three more chapters (12 Food Safety, Veterinary and Phytosanitary Control, 14 - Transport Policy, and 32 - Financial Control), but actually only two chapters - 12 and 32 - were closed at IGC on 27 July 2010. As for now, all 33 chapters are opened and of those are 22 temporary closed. Croatian side expects to conclude the accession talks by the end of 2011.

The new methodology means that in certain areas Croatia is not only requested to meet benchmarks, but also to demonstrate its track record. For instance, Chapter 23, Judiciary and Fundamental Rights, asks for a track record. In particular, as regards corruption, that includes three elements: investigation, prosecution and court judgements. Chapter 23, according to Chief negotiator Mr Drobnjak, is to be the decisive moment in the negotiation process.

As regards corruption, there is a political will and determination to combat corruption at the highest level. The legislation is up to the task; the problem lies in the implementation: although prosecution is ongoing, there are only a few court rulings, and arguably no ruling yet in a high level corruption case. For that reason Chapter 23 (Judiciary and Fundamental Rights) asks for a track record. As regards the perception of the corruption, the notion still is that corruption is widely prevalent.

The new negotiation methodology also stipulates that the Commission continues monitoring the temporarily closed chapters, and the Croatian side has to provide the necessary information and updates. According to the Commission, this, as well as provisions requiring reaching benchmarks and proven track records, should avoid problems such as were experienced in certain cases of the previous enlargement rounds.

The questions of administrative and absorption capacities, capacity building and staffing problems (recruitment difficulties, need for training and staff mobility), which were raised by several members, the Croatian side and the Commission ensures that the negotiation procedure effectively tackles the issue: these capacity questions are addressed in the benchmarks, which have to be met in order to temporarily close the chapters concerned (and, moreover, they are monitored once a chapter is temporary closed). However, since the Croatian side on several occasions admitted recruitment difficulties, as well as difficulties arising due to staff mobility, the matter deserves further attention.

BUDG and CONT both have the same counterpart in Croatia — the Committee on finances and state budget of the Croatian Parliament (Sabor), which is responsible for the budgetary procedure and audit procedure (as well as the legislative work in those areas). In the audit procedure, the Committee on finances and state budget takes notice and investigates the findings of the state audit authority, and forwards the findings with its comments to the state attorney. However, the follow-up of the state audit findings are in the competence of the Ministry of Finance.

The Croatian state audit institution was established 16 years ago, and since then has been headed by State auditor Ms Šima Kراسić. There are legal provisions for the independence of the state audit office, among those a recent amendment to Croatia's constitution. However, the State audit office is an administrative body of the state, its budget is a part of the government's budget, and, as mentioned above, the follow-up of the state audit findings are in the competence of the Ministry of Finance. According to Ms Kراسić, a separation of the budgetary and budgetary control functions in the Croatian parliament (as in the EP) could increase independence of the state audit office.

The visited projects appeared to be good examples of a regular and appropriate spending of the EU funding. However, some members criticised the choice as not being adequately representative, pointing out that there were cases when the spending of the EU funding was not as free of errors and irregularities, and/or the effectiveness of the selected projects and/or their efficiency of was not as high as the examples chosen for delegation's visits.

The participants in the delegation would like to thank Mr Paul Vandoren, Head of EC Delegation, and his service, as well as the personnel of the mission of Croatia at the EU and the services of the Croatian parliament (Sabor) for their assistance in setting up of the programme as well as their assistance throughout the delegation visit.

## **2. Recommendations of the delegation**

1. Takes note of the observations and analysis presented by the Commission in its latest Communication on Enlargement strategy and main challenges and Progress report, and supports the Commission's conclusions;
2. Stresses the crucial role of the judges in combating corruption and fraud. Acknowledges recent Croatia's progress in the area of judicial rights, in particular the legislation adopted in order to make the process of appointing judges more independent, as well as the fact that the backlog of cases has been halved since 2005; however, is concerned that there are still 796,000 cases pending, (December 2009; round 90,000 older than three years), and the reduction of backlog has been unevenly distributed. Underlines the need for an effective reform of Croatia's judicial system, to be proved by concrete and tangible results;
3. Welcomes the willingness of Croatia's government to fight corruption, recognising Croatia's achievements, notably the legislation in place, control mechanisms for public spending, ongoing prosecutions, etc;
4. Notes with concern that perception is that corruption is widely prevalent, and that until now only a few court rulings have been carried out in corruption trials, and so far no rulings have been carried out in any case which could be strictly called a high level corruption case;
5. Urges the Croatian authorities to continue implementing the legislation and other measures combating corruption, as well as improving the independence and resources of judiciaries; urges the Commission to monitor developments in this area, and to provide detailed information on Croatia's progress in meeting the track record requirements of Chapter 23 "Judiciary and Fundamental Rights";
6. Notes with concern the media reports of alleged cases of irregularities, fraud and/ or corruption, in particular, concerning public procurement procedures, and invites the Croatian authorities to investigate those allegations. Acknowledges the steps taken by Croatian authorities to avoid risks of fraud and corruption in future, in particular, establishment of procedures and routines in public procurement. Calls upon the Commission to assess the efficiency of those measures and their implementation, as well as overall progress in this area;
7. Is concerned about Croatia's administrative and absorption capacities, in particular, about possible difficulties in capacity building in light of recruitment difficulties, as well as difficulties arising due to staff mobility. Notes that the new negotiation procedure not only addresses capacity issues in the benchmarks, but also foresees monitoring of the temporary closed chapters, and urges the Commission to closely monitor the capacity-building benchmark;
8. Emphasises the importance of the local authorities and smaller organisations and NGOs in successful, efficient and effective use of EU funding. Therefore, bearing in mind the expected increase of funding after Croatia's accession to the EU, invites the Croatian authorities to continue preparation work on the local and regional levels, providing further training with a particular focus on creation of networks and coordination. Urges

the Commission to continue providing the necessary assistance and to monitor progress in this area;

9. Welcomes the legislative provisions for the independence of Croatia's State audit authority, in particular, the recent amendment to Croatia's constitution. Believes that the independence of the State auditor could be further bolstered by a provision for a separate budget for the audit authority, as well as by separation of the budgetary and audit functions in the Croatian Parliament (Sabor) by establishing a dedicated parliamentary committee responsible for budgetary control. Welcomes also planned removal of election and political party audit from the remit of the State auditor.

Luigi de Magistris  
Head of the Delegation and  
Chairman of the Committee on Budgetary Control

## Delegation to Croatia

**Wednesday 23 June**

### **Project visits (BUDG):**

- Municipality of Hum na Sutli "Water is life" – Cross Border Cooperation project: Supply of Drinking Water as a Basis for Sustainable Development and Environment Protection in Border Area.

(Phare 2006 CBC HR-SI-HU contract No. 2006-0017-971009);

In the framework of this project following objectives were achieved: 1) raised environment awareness of population and entrepreneurs, with particular emphasis on drinking water issues, 2) carried out research on public and village water supply, 3) carried out necessary investments and prepared documentation for future investments. The project has contributed to people's health and improved the quality of life in the area.



- Stražplastika Inc., municipality of Hum na Sutli "By Standardisation to Top 5" – grant awarded to the company Stražplastika Inc. to introduce the ISO 14001 and increase the export capacity of the company. (Phare 2006 National Programme contract No. 2006-0808-010107)

The project achieved an improvement of competitiveness of Stražplastika Inc. by introducing two new ISO standards (ISO 14001: 2004 and ISO TS 16949: 2002), and by improvement of corporate identity of Stražplastika Inc. (marketing mapping, new company logo, new webpage), resulting in significant increase of the overall export rate volume and potential creation of new jobs.



## **Meeting with Ambassador Paul Vandoren, Head of the EC Delegation**

Ambassador Vandoren welcomed the delegation and gave a general overview. He started by saying that Croatia's accession negotiations were making progress, and that the following week one or even three chapters would be opened (ed.: three chapters were opened at IGC on 30 June 2010). He said that in certain areas Croatia is required to meet benchmarks and to demonstrate track records. The Ambassador stated that the EC delegation had two main priorities: the development of an information and communication strategy for Croatia (initially that was not foreseen), and putting in place the necessary administrative capacity (recruitment of experienced personnel, etc.) to manage the 3.7 billion Euros earmarked for Croatia post-accession.

Mr Audy noted that public opinion in the current EU 27 was very reluctant about further enlargement, hence the situation was quite different from the one faced by Bulgaria and Romania. He also noted concerns about corruption, and questioned whether there was the political will to fight corruption.

Ambassador Vandoren replied that there were no doubts about Croatia's political will. He said that chapter 23 (Judiciary and Fundamental Rights), which would be opened shortly, would demand track records. As regards corruption, that would include three elements: investigation, prosecution and court judgements.

Mr Vaughan made a comment on the lack of detailed information on those issues.

Ms Macovei stated that there was not enough information on misused funds, and pointed towards public procurement problems exposed by the media.

Ambassador Vandoren replied that the issue of corruption was very sensitive, and that the Prime Minister of Croatia had taken a determined stance on the issue. He said that there were few court rulings, but prosecution was ongoing. In his reply on reported fraud and public procurement problems, the Ambassador said that the perception of corruption was that it was widely prevalent. However, the Ambassador stated that the political will was present, and the legislation was up to the task, —the problem lay in the implementation. For that reason Chapter 23 would ask for a track record.

## **Meeting with Mr Andrej Plenkovic, State Secretary for European Integration, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration (BUDG and CONT)**



State Secretary Plenkovic welcomed the delegation.

Chairman greeted the State Secretary and introduced the delegation and its aims. He stated the main points of interest were corruption related issues, situation with public procurement and the use of EU funds. He passed on floor to the members of the delegation.

Mr Farm noted that if Croatia joined EU, payments would considerably increase. He questioned Croatia's absorption capacity, and whether organisations would be capable and





ready to receive the funding, in particular at local level, NGOs and civil society organisations.

Mr Audy drew attention to the need to prepare the accession process, and put a question about the outreach programmes envisaged by Croatia.

Mr Vaughan stressed the importance of the preparedness on the local level, as well as the role of smaller organisations in the use of EU funding.

Ms Macovei underlined the importance of measures against corruption in the judicial system, and put a question on the convictions in high-level corruption, and corrupt judges. She drew attention to media reports on cases of public procurement contracts where prices were above the level of the market prices.

State Secretary Plenkovic commenced with a synopsis of the Croatia's accession negotiations. He started with saying that this process had taken longer than expected, because the negotiations coincided with an institutional crisis, followed by a financial crisis. Also Croatia was the first country to negotiate using the new methodology of pre accession monitoring. However, steady progress was being made: the following week (week 26, 28 June–4 July 2010) it was expected to close two chapters (5 - Public Procurement and 16 - Taxation) and to open three chapters (8 - Competition Policy, 23 - Judiciary and Fundamental Rights, and 31 - Foreign, Security and Defence Policy), and it would have all 33 chapters opened and of those 20 temporary closed<sup>1</sup>, and three more chapters - 12 Food Safety, Veterinary and Phytosanitary Control, 14 - Transport Policy, and 32 - Financial Control - were expected to be closed within a month<sup>2</sup>. The Croatian side expected to sign the accession treaty before the end of the Hungarian presidency, and it was their belief that there would be no need for a referendum on the matter in any of the EU Member States. Mr Plenkovic said that Croatia was strengthening its capacities on all levels, it was prepared for increased funding, and that it had used pre-accession funds up to 85-95% (with an exception of SAPARD (65%)). He also said that tackling corruption was the top priority of the government, and confirmed that Croatia envisaged an information campaign on accession. The latest surveys (April 2010) indicated a 71% turnout and 73% positive vote.

Ms Macovei put a question on the mechanisms in place to protect EU funds.

The Chairman asked for comments on the implementation of the anti-corruptions measures.

Mr Plenkovic replied saying that there had been several high level corruption cases resolved, and in the year before (2009) the annual number of convictions in corruption cases had increased by 138%.

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<sup>1</sup>this happened at IGC on 30 June 2010

<sup>2</sup> only two chapters - 12 and 32 - were closed at IGC on 27 July 2010

## Meeting with Mr Vladimir Drobnyak, Chief Negotiator for Croatia's accession negotiation - (BUDG & CONT)

Mr Drobnyak welcomed the delegation. He stressed that Croatia's accession negotiations are the first ones using a new mechanism of pre-accession monitoring, effectively making a precedent for the future. He said that this procedure ensures that a country would not be able to access the EU unless it was prepared in the all areas covered by the negotiations. Mr Drobnyak said that he believes that Chapter 23 would be the decisive moment.

The Chairman greeted Mr Drobnyak, and stated that the areas of main interest of the EP delegation were Chapter 22 (Regional Policy and Coordination of Structural Instruments), as well as Chapter 23, in particular, the corruption issues.



Mr Farm said that his main areas of concern were Chapters 22 and 11 (Agriculture and Rural Development). He asked about Croatia's absorption capacity, pointing out that there was 900 million Euros foreseen for 2012.

Mr Audy put a question regarding the independence of the Croatian national audit institution.

Ms Macovei expressed concerns about corruption and problems observed in public procurement.

Mr Vaughan asked if the Croatian administration had problems with recruitment.

Mr Drobnyak replied that Croatian constitution had been amended and that it

guaranteed the independence of the national audit office, and that Croatia was ready to close the chapter (ed.: Chapter 32 was closed at IGC on 27 July 2010). Speaking of the questions on administrative capacity, he said that these issues were dealt by benchmarks. When Croatia had met the benchmarks, it meant that the capacities were present. For instance, Chapter 11 required a payment agency to be approved by the Commission. Mr Drobnyak admitted that it remained a challenge to keep young specialists in the civil service. As regards Chapter 23, he said that, once it would be opened, a number of pre-prepared actions would take place.

Mr Drobnyak passed on floor to Ms Ivana Maletić. She said that a system to prevent irregularities was set up. The system, rules and procedures were already in place. Changes had also been made to the agricultural systems under SAPARD. Training for personnel at the local/ regional level had been organised; however, real experience had been limited.

Mr Drobnyak also mentioned that during the time when the accession negotiations had been blocked, some chapters were in preparation to enable their opening and rapid closure.

### Project visit:

"Nuclear safety" RODOS system - institutional capacity building in the field of nuclear safety (Phare 2005 and 2006 funding).

The project strengthened competences of the state Croatian State Office for Nuclear Safety by putting into operation 25 measuring stations along Croatia's border line, thereby expanding Croatian Early Warning System (CEWS). A second project, building on the first, developed a



CEWS public web portal, developed aerosol monitoring procedures. That was followed by the third project installing Real-time On-line Decision Support System (RODOS) in Croatia, which enables efficient national emergency planning and response in the case of a possible nuclear accident, minimizing the radiological consequences.

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**Thursday 24 June**

### **Meeting with Mr Ivan Šuker, Minister for Finance**

Mr Šuker welcomed the delegation.

The Chairman greeted Mr Šuker, and introduced the delegation. He named his priorities, in particular, issues of corruption and sound financial management, and asked what measures to prevent fraud had been put in place.

Minister replied that, as regards the EU funding, a system to prevent fraud and irregularities was in place. He referred to the amendment to constitution ensuring the independence of the state audit office. As for the means to protect EU financial interests, Mr Šuker told that an anti-fraud structure had been established, as well as an action plan to that effect. He also said that projects' standards and supervision system were already in place, as well as an established control system. Minister said that the latest state audit report had been mostly without comments. He acknowledged the absorption question (3.5 billion Euros over two years, of which Cohesion would be 2.1 billion). Minister also said that there is a plan to establish a dedicated institution which would work with EU funds.

Mr Farm put forth a question on an economic strategy for the future, in particular about international transport corridors. He referred to the facts that shipyards were outdated and thus were not competitive, and the tourism industry were vulnerable, and questioned whether there were plans to use EU funding for diversification.



Mr Šuker said that the shipyards presented an example of a missed opportunity. He stressed the importance of developing the transport corridor, and the private sector in general. He said that particular stress should be put on local and regional development.

Mr Stalojan put a question on difficulties envisaged as regards to joining the Eurozone, and the impact of the capital account liberalisation.

The Minister replied that Croatian side did not have any particular problems. The currency had been linked to German Mark and afterwards to Euro, also most of the borrowing was in Euro. He stated that historically the shipping industry had suffered considerable losses due to purchase of materials in Euros and ships being sold for US dollars.

Mr Vaughan asked about post-accession action plans related to improving workforce skills using ESF.

Mr Šuker replied that there was ongoing work to that effect, and a dedicated committee chaired by himself, has already outlined the plan.

Mr Audy noted that the public opinion in the MS was rather reluctant towards the enlargement. He encouraged the Croatian side to carry out an information campaign, since often the population in the EU MS did not distinguish Croatia for its neighbouring countries.

The Minister recognised the lack of information and recognition to be Croatia's biggest problem. He also said that Croatia's accession would help to stabilise some of its neighbouring states.

Ms Macovei referred to the anti-corruption legislation, observing that, while the legislation was in place, its implementation remained a problem. She asked if the minister could name any results in that field.

Mr Šuker replied saying that anti-money-laundering office had proven successful, and there had been convictions as a result of its work.

### **Meeting with the Committee on finances and state budget of Croatian Sabor (Chairman Dr Goran Marić).**

Mr Marić welcomed the delegation. He started with saying that the current crisis had exposed Croatia to another shock after ten years of economic growth (before that, the country was at war for five years). He also said that privatisation process had presented both positive and negative impacts. Overall the ratio of retired persons vs. working population had worsened up to 1 : 1.4. However, 2010 had brought improvement in indicators if compared to 2009.



The Chairman outlined several points of interest of the delegation, in particular, ensuring the efficient and transparent use of the EU finding, the means for supervision over local and

regional authorities to that effect, and the methods of preventing and resolving cases of corruption.

Mr Farm put forth a question on Croatia's plans for economic diversification, and on its national strategy on the use of increased EU funding, in particular, its long-term strategic planning to overcome issues like volatility in the tourism sector.

Mr Audy raised a question on the security of economic transactions, in particular on the protection of investors and of the intellectual property rights.

Mr Vaughan stressed the importance of coordination of the use of EU funds (ESF and others in addition to ERDF) between local authorities, and put a question on the role of Sabor in the coordination process.

Ms Macovei raised the issue of contested public procurement contracts, as well as the role and independence of the state auditor in that.

Mr Marić started his reply by saying that at the time most projects were linked to the infrastructure, which was neglected in the past. He admitted the volatility of the tourism, and said that in general there was an increase in industry. He said that Croatia had new opportunities in agriculture; in particular, its wine industry was underdeveloped. As regards the protection of property rights, Mr Marić said that former owners were either restored in rights, or received compensation. As for combating corruption, he ensured that a significant progress had been achieved, and a system was in place to prevent irregularities. Mr Marić admitted that not all areas had been successful in use of the EU funds, for instance, research area was a bad example. As for the public procurement, state audit office recorded all detected problems, and, according to Mr Marić, a considerable progress had been made, and there were several control systems in place. As regards coordination of the use of the EU funds by municipalities, Mr Marić explained that it was not a competence of the Croatian parliament. As for the role of Sabor in the audit procedure, its Committee on finances and state budget took notice and investigated the findings of the audit authority, and forwarded to the state attorney. Mr Marić clarified that the follow-up of the state audit findings were in the competence of the Ministry of Finance.

Chairman commended the positive efforts on the Croatian side.

The meeting was followed by a press point.



## Meeting with Mr Šima Krsić, State Auditor (CONT).

Ms Krsić greeted the delegation. She introduced the Croatian state audit institution, and explained that its independence and funding had been re-affirmed by a recent legislation change. She acknowledged staffing difficulties due to mobility of staff; however, she said that staff leaving the state audit institution for employment in other governmental services brings overall improvement.

Mr Audy stressed the need to prepare Croatia's accession to the EU, as EU citizens were more and more reluctant about the enlargement. As regards the control issues, he raised the question of simplification as a means to lower the number of errors; however, he stressed the need for zero tolerance towards fraud.

Ms Krsić stressed that the state audit office had been independent since its creation 16 years ago. She confirmed that by now the state audit institution has all the necessary experience and expertise.

Mr Vaughan put a question on the scope and competence of the audits the kinds of errors discovered and recommendations made for improvement, and asked whether joining the EU would bring a change to the requirements and provisions for state audit in Croatia.

Ms Krsić replied that state audit office looked into all types of imperfections, and issued its opinions and recommendations. In the selection process the higher risk transactions were given priority.

Mr Deutsch raised a question of cooperation and roles of state audit office and internal auditor(s) of the government, as well as asked Ms Krsić to identify the fields with high-level corruption risks.

Ms Krsić replied that every audit conducted by the state audit office commenced with the check on the internal audit system and its performance regarding the particular case.

Mr Audy pointed out that while in the EU Court of auditors was an independent institution, in Croatia it was an administrative body of the state. He asked if that administrative situation had a bearing on its independence. He then asked for Ms Krsić's opinion on the national management declarations / national declarations of assurance.

Ms Krsić replied that state audit office checked all the accounts of the government, the parliament and the president, and was fully independent in this.

Mr Vaughan asked whether the organisations subject to auditing paid the audit fees.

Ms Krsić replied that this was not the case: all costs of that auditing were funded directly from Croatia's budget.

Ms Krsić added that, according to her, a separation of the budgetary and budgetary control functions in the Croatian parliament (as in the EP) could increase independence of the state audit office.



**Project visit (CONT):**

Bregana border crossing

(CARDS and Phare programmes funded capacity building project for the Ministry of Interior, Customs, border veterinary and phytosanitary inspection).

The project strengthened institutional and administrative capacity of the border police, customs, phytosanitary, veterinary and sanitary services, facilitated the flow of persons and goods across the border, established National Border management Information System, as well as prepared the border police to implement the measures of Schengen Acquis. Bregana border crossing was described as a model for other border crossings.

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**DRAFT PROGRAMME**

**Joint Delegation of the Budgetary Control Committee and Budgets Committee  
to  
CROATIA  
22-25 June 2010**

**Participants**

**MEPs**

Luigi de Magistris - Head of delegation (CONT / ALDE)  
Jean Pierre Audy (CONT / EPP)  
Tamas Deutsch (CONT / (EPP)  
Goran Farn (BUDG / (S&D)  
Monica Luisa Macovei (CONT / EPP)  
Theodor Stolojan (BUDG / EPP)  
Derek Vaughn (CONT / S&D)

**Secretariat of the Committee on Budgetary Control:**

Mr Rudolfs Verdins (Administrator)  
Ms Sylvana Zammit (Assistant)

**(Special GSM number for the days 22-25 June 2010: +32 475-75 46 68)**

**Secretariat of the Committee on Budgets:**

Lucia Cojocaru (Administrator)

**Political group advisors**

Jonas Kraft (EPP)  
Maggie Coulthard (S&D)  
Dominykas Mordas (ALDE)



**Interpreters (Active: EN, IT, HR - Passive: FR)**\*

Fusco Maria Antonietta (IT) (Team Leader)

Varesco Enrico (FR, EN)

Mance Natasa (EN)

Levak Potrebica Tamara (EN, HR)

Maras Marija (EN, HR)

Hobbs James (IT)

Collins Mani Anna (FR, IT)

**Members' Assistants**

Emilie Apell (assistant to Mr Farm S&D)

Ana Brinza (assistant to Mr Stolojan EPP)

**EC Delegation in Zagreb:**

Mr Paul Vandoren

Head of Delegation

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Mr Sandro Ciganovic

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The delegation will have a bus at its disposal in Zagreb during meeting days.

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\* Interpretation can be active or passive :

active interpretation : the speaker uses his mother tongue and other speakers' statements are also interpreted into that language (there is a booth for that language)

passive interpretation : the speaker uses his mother tongue, but other speakers' statements are not interpreted into that language (there is no booth for that language : the person can speak but no listen in that language)

## Tuesday 22 June

16.00 - 21.30 Departure to Zagreb (BUDG) (Transfer from the Airport to hotel Regent Esplanade [www.regenthotels.com](http://www.regenthotels.com) **by taxi**)

## Wednesday 23 June

08.30 - 13.00 Project visits (BUDG):

- Municipality of Hum na Sutli – Cross Border Cooperation project: Supply of Drinking Water as a Basis for Sustainable Development and Environment Protection in Border Area. (Phare 2006 CBC HR-SI-HU contract No. 2006-0017-971009);
- Municipality of Hum na Sutli By Standardisation to Top 5, grant awarded to the company Stražplastika Inc. to introduce the ISO 14001 and increase the export capacity of the company. (Phare 2006 National Programme contract No. 2006-0808-010107)

*(Departure and Return point: Hotel Regent Esplanade)*

13h15 Arrival of the CONT Members to Zagreb (*Transfer from Airport to hotel Regent Esplanade*) (*approx. 20mins drive from airport to hotel*)

14.00 - 15.00 Lunch (own arrangements)

15.20 Meeting point at Hotel Regent Esplanade to go to EC Delegation premises

15.30 - 16.15 Meeting with the EC Delegation (BUDG & CONT) (*Premises are approx. 5mins from delegation hotel*).

16.30 - 17.15 Meeting with **Mr Andrej Plenkovic**, State Secretary for European Integration, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration (BUDG and CONT)

17.30 - 18.30 Meeting with **Mr Vladimir Drobnjak**, Chief Negotiator for Croatia's accession negotiation - (BUDG & CONT)

18.45 - 19.45 Project visit: RODOS system - institutional capacity building in the field of nuclear safety (Phare 2005 and 2006 funding).

20.00 - Dinner (own arrangements)

## **Thursday 24 June**

***Participants leaving today - N.B. - Please bring your luggage to the bus***

08:30 - 09:00 Meeting with **Mr Ivan Šuker**, Minister for Finance

09:30 - 10:30 Meeting with the Committee on finances and state budget of Croatian Sabor (**Chairman Dr Goran Marić**).

### **11.00 - 12.00 Press point**

12:00 - 14:00 Working lunch hosted by **Dr Goran Marić**, Chairman of the Committee on finances and state budget of Croatian Sabor.

14:30 - 16:00 Meeting with **Mrs Šima Kراسić**, State Auditor (CONT).

*(Departure at 16:20)*

17.30 - 19.30 Project visit (CONT):

Bregana border crossing (CARDS and Phare programmes funded capacity building project for the Ministry of Interior, Customs, border veterinary and phytosanitary inspection).

20.00 Dinner (own arrangements)

## **Friday 25 June**

Individual return flights to places of origin (CONT)