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42. Recalls that all recovery policies will need a strong gender component; calls, as a matter of urgency, for the enforcement of policies and practices ensuring that more women enter the labour market in jobs with decent working conditions and social protection; calls for public investment in care services to reduce women's unpaid domestic and care work; insists that labour market policies must address the lack of parental time for care and nurture;

43. Stresses that women must be more involved in social dialogue and decision-making processes; reiterates the fact that education for girls and women and gender empowerment are essential;

44. Urges governments to tackle critical human rights issues faced by the elderly, especially in times of economic downturn, such as long-term unemployment, age-related employment discrimination, income insecurity and unaffordable healthcare; calls on governments to put in place innovative new mechanisms for flexible workforce participation, such as entitling older people to social pensions while working part-time, retraining programmes or fiscal measures aimed at stimulating the employment of the elderly;

45. Calls for the transaction costs for remittances to be reduced and for it to be made easier, for example, for migrants to open a bank account in host countries;

46. Calls on governments to ensure that the fight against trafficking in human beings remains high on their agenda during times of economic and financial crisis; urges governments to fully implement legislation to prosecute traffickers and smugglers, expand support and legal assistance to victims of human trafficking, and develop closer international cooperation;

47. Welcomes the discussions within the UN High-Level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda with the participation of the European Commissioner for Development; considers that the post-2015 framework should prioritise the universal implementation of human rights, take into consideration the impact of the financial and economic crisis, notably on the poorest and the most vulnerable, and honour poverty reduction commitments; urges all involved parties to consider setting quantifiable targets and indicators, as well as qualitative and outcome-based indicators;

48. Emphasises that there is a need for further research and analysis on the impact of the financial and economic crisis on various regions, including in the EU and in its relations with third countries, and a need to improve the monitoring of early signals of global and regional crises; stresses that disaggregated data should be more prominent in research and policy planning in order to better capture and address the problems facing the poorest and most vulnerable members of society; calls on the Commission and the Member States to provide financial support for the UN innovation laboratory 'Global Pulse', launched by the UN Secretary General in 2009, with the aim of collecting and analysing the data required for a better understanding of the impact of the financial and economic crisis on vulnerable sections of the population and providing appropriate policy responses;

49. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the European External Action Service (EEAS), the EU Special Representative for Human Rights, the governments and parliaments of the Member States and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

P7_TA(2013)0183

2012 comprehensive monitoring report on Croatia

European Parliament resolution of 18 April 2013 on the 2012 Comprehensive Monitoring Report on Croatia (2012/2871(RSP))

(2016/C 045/07)

The European Parliament,

— having regard to the draft Treaty concerning the Accession of the Republic of Croatia to the European Union, the Protocol and the Final Act,

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- having regard to the Commission's Comprehensive Monitoring Report of 10 October 2012 on Croatia's state of preparedness for EU membership (SWD(2012)0338),
 - having regard to the Commission's final Monitoring Report on Croatia's accession preparations of 26 March 2013 (COM(2013)0171),
 - having regard to the Commission's regular reports on Croatia's progress towards accession covering the period 2005-2011,
 - having regard to the Presidency Conclusions of the Thessaloniki European Council of 19–20 June 2003 on the Western Balkan countries and on enlargement,
 - having regard to all its previous resolutions and reports on Croatia's progress and the enlargement process, in particular those of 1 December 2011 on the accession to the European Union of the Republic of Croatia ⁽¹⁾, of 1 December 2011 on the application of Croatia to become a member of the European Union ⁽²⁾ and of 22 November 2012 on enlargement: policies, criteria and the EU's strategic interests ⁽³⁾,
 - having regard to all previous recommendations of the EU-Croatia Joint Parliamentary Committee,
 - having regard to Rule 110(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas Croatia is set to accede to the EU on 1 July 2013;
- B. whereas some EU Member States have not yet completed ratification of the Accession Treaty;
- C. whereas Croatia is on track to meet the outstanding requirements as regards the final preparations for EU membership;
- D. whereas reform efforts must be sustained beyond accession in order for Croatian citizens to benefit fully from EU membership;
- E. whereas Croatia's accession process testifies to the credibility of the EU's enlargement policy and its transformative effects on applicant states;
- F. whereas Croatian membership will make the EU stronger and more secure, enrich its culture and heritage, and serve as a powerful reminder to other aspirant countries that conscientious implementation of commitments yields tangible and durable benefits to their citizens;
- G. whereas Croatia is expected, and uniquely positioned, to play a constructive role in its neighbourhood, above all by promoting further EU enlargement, democratic consolidation, regional cooperation and reconciliation between the peoples of the Western Balkans, while doing its utmost to ensure that bilateral issues do not obstruct any of these processes;
1. Looks forward to welcoming Croatia as the 28th Member State of the EU on 1 July 2013, following the legally binding vote of the European Parliament on 1 December 2011 which gave consent to the accession of Croatia, and in accordance with the date set by the European Council in the Accession Treaty; expresses its confidence in the strength and maturity of Croatia's democracy and social market economy, its adherence to European values, and capacity to fulfil the obligations of membership;
 2. Notes that Croatia is on track to meet the outstanding requirements as regards the final preparations for membership;
 3. Notes that Croatia has completed the ten priority actions identified in the Commission's Comprehensive Monitoring Report;
 4. Welcomes the significant progress achieved by Croatia in completing tasks singled out in the Commission's Comprehensive Monitoring Report and calls on the Government and the Parliament to resolve all outstanding issues by 1 July 2013 and to advance with all other necessary reforms; encourages Croatia to respect and fulfil all its commitments from the accession negotiations, in order to be fully prepared as a new Member State, as this is in the interests of Croatia

⁽¹⁾ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2011)0538.

⁽²⁾ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2011)0539.

⁽³⁾ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2012)0453.

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and the EU; stresses that this process should be carried out in a transparent and inclusive manner, involving the Croatian Parliament and civil society to the largest extent possible;

5. Invites those EU Member States that have not yet completed their respective ratification procedures for the Accession Treaty to proceed in a timely manner;

6. Reiterates its view 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 modernisation, and as an opportunity whose benefits can only be fully realised through continuous policy action; invites Croatia to continue to 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;

7. Invites Croatian political and social actors to explore innovative ways of sustaining the impetus and consensus for reforms in the post-accession period, and of holding policy-makers accountable for the implementation of commitments undertaken in the Accession Treaty; stresses, in this respect, the indispensable role of effective parliamentary oversight and that of civil society;

8. Reaffirms the centrality of an independent judiciary, professional and accountable public administration, and the rule of law in strengthening democracy and supporting investment and economic activity; invites Croatia to continue improving the independence, accountability, impartiality, professionalism and efficiency of its judicial system and the members of its judiciary, *inter alia* by reducing the number of backlog cases by implementing the new system of asset declarations for judges, and by further improving the track record of the new system of disciplinary proceedings; urges Croatia to implement the new Judicial Reform Strategy for 2013-2018;

9. Notes that Croatia has put in place a satisfactory institutional and legal framework for combating corruption; calls on the Croatian authorities to further step up their fight against corruption, fraud and mismanagement of funds; points out that anti-corruption measures must continue to be strictly enforced; further invites the authorities to establish a track record of conflict of interest, corruption and organised crime cases and to improve implementation of the legal framework for the seizure and confiscation of assets;

10. Calls on the Croatian authorities to make full use of the existing anti-corruption instruments to ensure unbiased and successful prosecutions and court rulings, including in high-profile cases, in order to consolidate citizens' trust in the rule of law and public institutions; stresses the need for sustainable measures in the fight against corruption and organised crime and to reform the judiciary primarily for the benefit of Croatian citizens; emphasises that independent investigative journalism should be encouraged, as it is vital in exposing corruption and organised crime;

11. Calls on Croatia to continue implementing the new, robust legislation on access to information, thereby consolidating the prevention framework against corruption; notes that the newly created Conflict of Interest Commission is now operational, and calls on the Croatian authorities to fully implement the legislative package on public procurement and on the financing of political parties and electoral campaigns;

12. Calls on the Croatian authorities to remain vigilant in ensuring that fundamental rights are fully respected, while combating all forms of discrimination and acts of intolerance against national minorities, the Roma community, migrants, LGBT people and other minority groups and vulnerable groups; calls furthermore on Croatia to foster an environment that will ensure that members of the aforementioned minorities (e.g. LGBT people) can freely express their views and beliefs in line with the principles of the EU Charter on Fundamental Rights;

13. Encourages the authorities to promote freedom of expression, including freedom and pluralism of the media; acknowledges that the new law on the public broadcaster was adopted in July 2012; encourages the authorities to continue with efforts to ensure that the public service broadcaster is free from political and economic pressure and to increase its transparency;

14. Observes that Croatia is preparing adequately for the future management and implementation of operations financed by the EU Structural and Cohesion Funds; calls on Croatia to create a project pipeline for the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF); encourages the Government to further strengthen the administrative capacities of the institutions responsible, including at regional and local levels, in line with the recommendations of the 2012 report by the European Court of Auditors; urges the Government to do its utmost to minimise the risk of corruption, fraud and irregularities in both the allocation and use of EU funds;

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15. Reminds the Member States, in the context of the negotiations on the MFF, of the EU's commitments to Croatia and its citizens as regards future assistance in economic and regional development;
16. Encourages Croatia to carry out further structural reforms to stimulate economic growth and revive the labour market; calls upon Croatia to continue to keep the banking sector stable and to continue the policy of fiscal consolidation in order to boost competitiveness; welcomes Croatia's participation in the European Semester from January 2013; supports efforts to ensure timely and effective use of EU funds as well as to improve Croatia's transport infrastructure and its links with the EU Member States and the countries of the region; invites the Government to fully implement the legislative framework on small businesses, *inter alia* by appropriate policy actions, by improving their access to finance and by supporting the internationalisation of SMEs;
17. Is of the view that special emphasis should be laid on the social and environmental dimensions of economic modernisation; encourages Croatia to continue to strengthen social dialogue and uphold social and labour union rights; calls on the Croatian authorities to ensure transparency regarding environmental assessments of large-scale investment projects; urges the Croatian authorities to give priority to protection of the environment, especially in the field of spatial planning;
18. Is concerned that the proposed law on strategic investments is not in line with European standards; calls on the Croatian Government and Parliament to revise it with a view to better protecting fundamental rights, notably property rights, and the environment;
19. Calls on the Member States not to restrict Union citizens' fundamental rights more than absolutely necessary with respect to the transitional measures provided for in Article 18 of the Act of Accession; calls on the Member States, in particular, 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; points out that restricting access to their labour markets during transitional periods after previous rounds of enlargement has proved detrimental to the welfare of those Member States enacting the restrictions;
20. Notes the progress in the construction of the border crossing points at the Neum corridor;
21. Invites the Croatian authorities to take further action, including on legislative alignment, interinstitutional cooperation and border management, to prepare for Croatia to enter the Schengen area in due course;
22. Calls on Croatia to continue to cooperate with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and to intensify domestic efforts to investigate and prosecute war crimes, in line with the adopted strategy on impunity; makes a strong appeal to Croatia and Serbia to cooperate in good faith on the prosecution of war crimes in order to achieve justice and true reconciliation in the region;
23. Calls on the Croatian authorities to continue to pay special attention to the rights and social conditions of returning refugees and displaced persons, in line with the goals of the Sarajevo Declaration Process; continues to support the RECOM (Regional Commission for Truth and Reconciliation) initiative to search for ways to acknowledge suffering and respect the right to truth and justice for all victims of war crimes;
24. Encourages Croatia to play an active role in the process of stabilisation and European integration of the Western Balkan countries; believes that Croatia's experience and expertise, accumulated in the course of its transformation and accession, are of significant value to other applicant and aspirant states; encourages Croatia to share its experiences with other candidate and potential candidate countries and to strengthen regional cooperation; is of the view that Croatia's promotion of European values and further enlargement is built on good neighbourly relations and the pursuit of reconciliation;
25. Appeals to Croatia and its neighbours to engage actively in the resolution of outstanding bilateral issues in accordance with international commitments and the principles of good neighbourly relations and regional cooperation; welcomes, in this regard, the steps taken by the Government of Croatia and the Government of Serbia to improve relations, and looks forward to an intensification of their cooperation; welcomes the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between Slovenia and Croatia on finding a solution to the Ljubljanska Banka case in a constructive manner; welcomes the ratification of the Accession Treaty by the Parliament of Slovenia; recalls that issues of a bilateral nature must not be used to impede the integration processes of current or future applicant countries; in this context, urges all Member States to ratify Croatia's Accession Treaty on time;

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26. Encourages Croatia to continue to play a constructive role in regional cooperation; calls on the Croatian authorities to fully implement the declaration on promoting European values in Southeast Europe endorsed by the Croatian Parliament on 21 October 2011; invites all countries in the region to adopt and implement similar positions; urges the Commission to assist all countries in the region in this respect; calls on the Commission to learn from past experience in the enlargement process, including the enlargement process with Croatia, by helping 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 that countries in the region can draw on if they so wish;

27. Acknowledges the activities and the constructive contribution of the Croatian observers in the European Parliament; welcomes the outcome of the elections for the Croatian Members of the European Parliament held on 14 April 2013, but regrets the low turnout; looks forward to welcoming MEPs from Croatia as of Croatia's accession to the EU on 1 July 2013;

28. Appreciates the work of the Commission in steering Croatia's accession process; asks the Commission to take stock of the exercise and draw policy lessons for future applicant states, such as use of the comprehensive monitoring regime in the period between the completion of negotiations and accession; calls on the Commission to evaluate the involvement of civil society and parliament throughout the accession process in order to draw lessons for current and future negotiations; asks the Commission, in this specific context, to draw up proposals to better involve civil society and parliaments in the candidate countries in the accession process;

29. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments and parliaments of the Member States and the Republic of Croatia.

P7_TA(2013)0184

2012 progress report on Turkey

European Parliament resolution of 18 April 2013 on the 2012 Progress Report on Turkey (2012/2870(RSP))

(2016/C 045/08)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission's 2012 Progress Report on Turkey (SWD(2012)0336),
- having regard to the communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council entitled 'Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2012-2013' (COM(2012)0600),
- having regard to its previous resolutions, in particular those of 9 March 2011 on Turkey's 2010 progress report⁽¹⁾, 29 March 2012 on Turkey's 2011 progress report⁽²⁾, 22 May 2012 on a 2020 perspective for women in Turkey⁽³⁾, and 22 November 2012 on Enlargement: policies, criteria and the EU's strategic interests⁽⁴⁾,
- having regard to the Negotiating Framework for Turkey of 3 October 2005,
- having regard to Council Decision 2008/157/EC of 18 February 2008 on the principles, priorities and conditions contained in the Accession Partnership with the Republic of Turkey⁽⁵⁾ ('the Accession Partnership'), as well as to the previous Council decisions on the Accession Partnership of 2001, 2003 and 2006,

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 199 E, 7.7.2012, p. 98.

⁽²⁾ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2012)0116.

⁽³⁾ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2012)0212

⁽⁴⁾ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2012)0453.

⁽⁵⁾ OJ L 51, 26.2.2008, p. 4.