



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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**Fifth meeting of the Accession Conference at Deputy level
with Croatia
Brussels, 21 April 2008**

The fifth meeting of the Accession Conference with Croatia at Deputy level was held today in Brussels, following the start of accession negotiations on 3 October 2005. The aim of the Conference was to open negotiations on two further new chapters (all with closing benchmarks), namely: Chapter 14 – Transport Policy and Chapter 15 – Energy.

On the basis of the negotiating positions of Croatia for the two chapters, the Union has closely examined Croatia's general state of preparedness in the two areas. Taking into account Croatia's present state of preparations – and on the understanding that Croatia will continue to make progress in the alignment with and implementation of the *acquis* – the EU underlined the main issues regarding the closing benchmarks to be met by Croatia, namely:

P R E S S

Chapter 14 – Transport Policy

- Croatia adopts legislation aiming at transposing and implementing the *acquis* on social conditions in road transport and starts its application. Adequate administrative capacity must also be in place.
- Croatia establishes a competent and effective railway regulatory body.
- Croatia ratifies the European Common Aviation Area agreement and implements its first transitional phase.

The EU and Croatia also considered proposals for transitional arrangements concerning road haulage services (cabotage), rail transport and maritime transport.

In more general terms, the EU underlined that it would devote particular attention to monitoring all specific issues mentioned in its common position with a view to ensuring Croatia's administrative capacity and its capacity to complete legal alignment in all the areas under this chapter as well as to ensure the appropriate level of safety required for all modes of transport.

Chapter 15 – Energy

- Croatia adopts a new mining act, aiming at full alignment with EU *acquis* regarding the prospecting, exploration and production of hydrocarbons.
- Croatia fully implements EU legislation concerning common rules for the internal market in electricity and natural gas, and on conditions for access to the network for cross-border exchanges in electricity.
- Croatia sets an ambitious target for the percentage of electricity produced from renewable energy sources in accordance with the EU *acquis*, to achieve an increase in the EU's share of renewable energy consumption from around 7% in 2005 to 20% in 2020, as agreed by European Council in March 2007.
- Croatia demonstrates that it will have by the time of accession the adequate administrative capacity to properly implement and enforce the relevant legislation in all areas related to nuclear safety. A spent fuel and radioactive waste management strategy needs to be prepared.

The EU and Croatia also considered proposals for transitional arrangements concerning minimum stocks of crude oil and/or petroleum products and conditions for access to the network for cross-border exchanges of electricity.

In addition, the EU underlined that it will devote particular attention to monitoring all specific issues mentioned in its common position with a view to ensuring Croatia's administrative capacity.

The Union will closely monitor Croatia's progress in these two chapters throughout the negotiations.

Since the start of the negotiations, eighteen chapters have been opened, of which two have been provisionally closed. The EU and Croatia plan another Accession Conference at Ministerial level in June in order to take the process forward.
