



FACTSHEET

Changes within the European Union as from 1 July 2013 related to the accession of Croatia



On 1 July 2013 the European Union will welcome Croatia as a member state. The EU will then have 28 member states and around 508 million inhabitants.

New weighting of votes

As from 1 July, where the Council acts on the basis of a Commission proposal, the qualified majority for votes in the Council is set at 260 votes in favour of the act out of a total of 352, cast by at least 15 member states out of 28¹. In addition, a member state may request verification that the qualified majority represents at least 62% of the population of the EU (for 2013 the threshold is around 315 million people out of a total of 508 million).²

The distribution of votes is the following:

Germany, France, Italy, United Kingdom	29 votes
Spain, Poland	27 votes
Romania	14 votes
Netherlands	13 votes
Belgium, Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Portugal	12 votes
Austria, Sweden, Bulgaria	10 votes
Denmark, Croatia , Ireland, Lithuania, Slovakia, Finland	7 votes
Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia, Luxembourg, Slovenia	4 votes
Malta	3 votes

As from 1 November 2014 the qualified majority is reached if a draft decision is supported by at least 55% of the member states (i.e. 16 member states) representing at least 65% of the EU population.³

New official language

Starting from 1 July 2013, Croatian becomes a new official language, bringing the total to 24.

¹ Where the Council does not act on the basis of a Commission proposal, the qualified majority threshold is the same with the difference that the votes in favour shall be cast by at least two-third of the member states out of 28 (i.e. 19 member states).

² The Council is expected to adopt a decision amending annex III of its rules of procedure in order to update the population figures of each member state for 2013 in line with data supplied by Eurostat.

³ Where the Council does not act on the basis of a Commission proposal, the qualified majority threshold is 72% of the member states (i.e. 21 member states) representing at least 65% of the EU population.

P R E S S

Order of presidencies

For the time being, the current order in which the presidency of the Council is held remains unchanged.¹ However, in line with a 2007 Council decision it will be reviewed in 2017 (*OJ L 1 of 4.1.2007, p. 11*).

Appointments

The Council is expected to decide on a number of appointments in the European Union's institutions in the context of the accession of Croatia early July. This includes notably the Croatian member of the Commission, of the Court of Auditors, of the Economic and Social Committee, of the Committee of the Regions, of the Court of Justice and of the General Court.

Useful links:

video: http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=gDZon4JVRvY

stockshots: <http://tvnewsroom.consilium.europa.eu/search/boxes/taxonomy/croatia-accession>

Commission memo: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-13-593_en.htm

Eurostat: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/1-25062013-AP/EN/1-25062013-AP-EN.PDF

DG enlargement website: <http://www.croatia-in-the-eu.eu/>

¹ The Council will be presided over for periods of six months in accordance with the following list:

	1st half	2nd half
2013:		Lithuania
2014:	Greece	Italy
2015:	Latvia	Luxembourg
2016:	Netherlands	Slovakia
2017:	Malta	United Kingdom
2018:	Estonia	Bulgaria
2019:	Austria	Romania
2020:	Finland.	