



EAF PRESIDENT FRANZ OBERMAYR PARTICIPATES ON THE WTO'S 10TH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

The WTO's 10th Ministerial Conference was held in Nairobi, Kenya, from 15 to 19 December 2015. It culminated in the adoption of the "Nairobi Package", a series of six Ministerial Decisions on agriculture, cotton and issues related to least-developed countries (LDCs). The Conference was chaired by Kenya's Cabinet Secretary for Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Amina Mohamed.

Main purpose of the meeting was the continuation of the so-called Doha Round, which had set the objective, inter alia millennium ago by 15, to improve the situation of developing countries in world of trade patterns. Therefore Nairobi offered space to discuss topics such as standardization of customs legislation, the protection of intellectual property or new standards of transparency in particular a package of measures in favour of developing countries.

"The fact that the Ministerial Conference for the first time takes place on the African continent is a positive thing, the African hosts had positive expectations for the outcome of the conference, you could just feel the commitment of the Kenyan government. But there were fears that the outcome of the conference offered no significant betterment of developing countries, and that the parties shall not agree on a conclusion of the Doha process. The main reasons for concern were that some countries want to maintain their export subsidies for food or partition for their markets, while others are pushing for liberalization. If Doha actually fails, this would indeed have a bad appearance to the outside, however, other topics might well be successfully completed: for example, the ITA 2 agreements on information technology, transparency issues, the Environmental-Goods segment Agreement EGA or the regulation of



competition in the export of agricultural products. " Nevertheless: "The interests of the parties diverge far, a positive conclusion currently hangs in the air. For the EU, improvement of the economic situation of Africa is desirable also because it is the main reason for the current mass exodus that we are combating at the European external borders. " Obermayr concluded.

Obermayr had previously (November 2015) refused an EU Parliament report on the state of the pending on Doha negotiations agreement, "because at that time neither the slow negotiation process was openly criticized, even criticism of discrimination against developing countries has not been discussed openly. at the time"



CROATIAN PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS 8TH NOVEMBER 2015

THE elections for the eighth mandate of the Croatian Parliament came in a time that can be characterised as a general citizens apathy towards politics which is result of the continuous economical difficulties the country is facing, high unemployment rate, exodus of the young and educated in other countries of the EU, the public debt which covers an astonishing 95 per cent of GDP and many other negative factors.

At the time the date of the election was announced, Croatia got hit by the migration crisis, and became one of the main stations of the so called "Balkan Route". The electorate's low interest derives also from the fact that in the first 25 years of Croatian independence there was a change of power and governance of the two big parties, which the majority sees as the culprits for the state's weak economy.

Due to the lack of ideas that could bring the country back to the track of economical prosperity, the main topics of the political debates in the elections year were based on ideological differences and historical disagreements without

offering clear and health future solutions for the country heated issues.

A clear bipolarisation on the political stage gathered around the two blocks (right and left) made up of the following political parties:

1. Homeland Coalition (Croatian Democratic Union, Croatian Peasants Party, Croatian Rights Party Ante Starčević, Block Retired Citizens Together, Croatian Social Liberal Party and other)
2. Croatia Grows Coalition (Social Democratic Party of Croatia, Croatian People's Party, Croatian Pensioners Party, Croatia Labour Party, Autonomous Croatian Peasants Party, Party of Zagorje)

Similar to other parts of Europe, Croatia has seen a rise and formation of other movements, that have no political baggage or experience. For Croatian political scene one of the big novelties was the independent list called " Bridge" that has been formed to contest the parliamentary elections and gathered independent local politicians, businessmen, individuals from the academic circles and many other well known and respected citizens.



Long before the elections another movement was formed. It came as the response to aggressive government policies on evictions; a group of individuals organised themselves and formed “Human Shields” when people where about to be evicted from their properties, and many time successfully postponed evictions and helped many people to have a roof over their head before ending up in the street. This anarchist liberal group of young, unknown individuals decided to contest the parliamentary elections 2015 as well under the name Human Shield.

The other parties that contested the elections were mainly of regional character or of the radical left or right political line that couldn't compromise in order to enter on of the two main coalitions.

The day before the elections (and the elections are always held on a Sunday) the election silence must be respected. There are in total 6 574 election posts that have each an electoral committee present of 10 members and that offer the possibility for observers with previous registration.

The election day starts on the Sunday morning (exception being the voters that cast their votes abroad, they can vote on Saturday as well). The general turnout at this election was 63,5% of the total 3.770.000 eligible voters.

The results came very close to the published exit polls, with a difference of only two seat in total. The results were the following

- Homeland Coalition 59 seats (+11)
- Croatian Grows Coalition 56 seats (- 19)
- The Bridge 19 seats (first time elected to the Parliament)
- Istria Democratic Assembly and the Party of Primorsko Goranska 3 seats (no change)
- Parties of labour and solidarity coalition 2 seats (

Constituency	Number of candidates lists
I	19
II	17
III	16
IV	14
V	13
VI	15
VII	17
VIII	15
IX	13
X	16

first time elected)

Croatian Democratic Assembly of Slavonija and Baranja 2 seats (- 4)

Human Shield 1 seat (first time elected)

The Reformist Party Coalition 1 seat (first time elected)

Added to this are the 8 elected parliamentary representatives of the national minorities.

Due to the lack of the relative majority, Croatian political parties are trying to compromise with the Bridge coalition as they will be the decisive factor in forming the future government.

In case of a failure of the negotiations the President may call for new elections or appoint a minority government.



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