



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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**Ninth meeting of the Accession Conference at Ministerial level
with Croatia
Brussels, 21 December 2009**

The ninth meeting of the Intergovernmental Conference with Croatia at Ministerial level was held today in Brussels, following the start of the negotiations on 3 October 2005. The European Union delegation was headed by Carl Bildt, Sweden's Minister of Foreign Affairs. The Croatian delegation was led by Gordan Jandroković, Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration.

The Conference provisionally closed negotiations on two new chapters: Chapter 3 - Right of establishment and freedom to provide services and Chapter 19 - Social policy and employment.

The Conference also confirmed at Ministerial level three chapters — Chapter 9 - Financial services; Chapter 15 - Energy and Chapter 28 - Consumer and health protection — which were previously closed by Accession Conferences at Deputy level.

P R E S S

Details on the new chapters are provided below:

Chapter 3 - Right of establishment and freedom to provide services

The negotiations on Chapter 3 - Right of establishment and freedom to provide services were opened on 26 June 2007 at the Accession Conference at Ministerial level. At this meeting of the Conference the EU noted that, in order for the chapter to be provisionally closed, Croatia would have, inter alia, to comply with the acquis on the recognition of professional qualifications for EU citizens, to repeal any nationality requirements as regards the right of establishment and to align its legislation with the acquis on aliens, cross-border provision of services on a temporary basis and postal services.

On the basis of the information provided by Croatia and the considerable progress made with preparations in all areas under this chapter, the EU noted today that, at this stage, this chapter does not require further negotiations.

The European Union also 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 to implement the legislation in the field of right of establishment and freedom to provide services. The Union will, if necessary, return to these chapters at an appropriate moment.

The EU and Croatia also considered proposals for transitional arrangements concerning the recognition of professional qualifications, and postal services.

Chapter 19 - Social policy and employment.

The negotiations on Chapter 19 - Social policy and employment were opened on 17 June 2008 at the Accession Conference at ministerial level. At this meeting of the Conference the EU noted that, in order for the chapter to be provisionally closed, Croatia would have, inter alia, to amend the Labour Act and the Occupational Safety and Health Act in order to align its legislation in the fields of labour law and health and safety at work with the acquis, and to adopt an anti-discrimination act and a new Gender Equality Act in order to align its legislation in the fields of anti-discrimination and equal opportunities with the acquis.

On the basis of the information provided by Croatia and the considerable progress made with preparations in all areas under this chapter, the EU noted today that, at this stage, this chapter does not require further negotiations.

The EU also 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 ensure proper implementation and enforcement of the acquis under this chapter. The Union will, if necessary, return to these chapters at an appropriate moment.

Since the start of the negotiations, twenty eight chapters have been opened, of which seventeen have been provisionally closed. Further Accession Conferences will be planned, as appropriate, in order to take the process forward.
