

# Standing Orders of the Croatian Parliament

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[Introduction](#)

[Constitution of Parliament, Commencement of Deputy Duties, Suspension and Cessation of Deputy Status](#)

[General Rights and Duties of Parliamentary Deputies](#)

[Speaker, Deputy Speakers, Presidency and Secretary of Parliament](#)

[Parliamentary Working Bodies](#)

[Relations between Parliament and the President of the Republic](#)

[Relations between Parliament and the Government](#)

[Acts](#)

of

Parliament

[Deputy Questions](#)

[Interpellation](#)

[Order at Sessions](#)

[Elections and Appointments](#)

[Minutes](#)

[Public Transparency](#)

[Work of Parliament during Wartime or Under Conditions of Clear and Present Danger to the Independence and](#)

[Integrity of the Republic of Croatia](#)

[Parliamentary Staff Service](#)

[Transitional and Final Provisions](#)

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## Introduction

### Article 1.

The internal structure and operating methods of the Croatian Parliament (hereinafter: Parliament) shall be governed by these Standing Orders.

### Article 2.

These Standing Orders shall govern:

- the constitution of Parliament, the commencement of duties by deputies, the suspension and cessation of the term of office of deputies,
- the exercise of the rights and duties of deputies in Parliament,
- the rights and duties of the Speaker and Deputy Speakers of Parliament,
- the rights and duties and operating methods of the Parliamentary Presidency,
- the authority, composition and operating methods of parliamentary working bodies,
- relations between Parliament and the President of the Republic of Croatia (hereinafter: President of the Republic),
- relations between Parliament and the Government of the Republic of Croatia (hereinafter: Government),
- procedures to enact legislation and discussion and debate and debate on individual issues within the jurisdiction of Parliament,
- procedures for election and appointment to, or dismissal and recall from Parliament,
- the procedural rules during parliamentary sessions,
- the public transparency of the work of Parliament,
- the performance of expert, administrative, technical and other tasks necessary to Parliament and the management of such tasks,
- the work of Parliament during wartime or under conditions of clear and present danger to the independence and integrity of the Republic of Croatia and during natural disasters.

## Constitution of Parliament, Commencement of Deputy Duties, Suspension and Cessation of Deputy Status

### Article 3.

Parliament shall be summoned to its first, constituent session by the President of the Republic.

Until the election of the Speaker of Parliament, the session shall be temporarily presided over by the Speaker of Parliament from the preceding convocation.

Until the election of the Speaker of Parliament, the temporary chair shall have all the rights and duties of the Speaker of Parliament with reference to presiding over the session.

After the election of the Speaker of Parliament, the Speaker-elect shall assume the duties of presiding over the session.

### Article 4.

Parliament shall be constituted with the election of the Speaker at the first session in which a majority of the deputies is present.

After Parliament is constituted, the hymn of the Republic of Croatia, Lijepa naša domovino ('Our Beautiful Homeland'), shall be sang.

#### **Article 5.**

At its constituent session, Parliament shall elect the members to the Credentials and Privileges Commission and the Speaker of Parliament.

In addition to the Speaker of Parliament, the Deputy Speakers of Parliament, Secretary and Deputy Secretaries of Parliament and the members of the Elections, Appointments and Administration Committee may also be elected at the constituent session of Parliament.

Parliamentary party deputy clubs shall be entitled to propose draft decisions from Paragraphs (1) and (2) hereof at the constituent session.

#### **Article 6.**

At the constituent session, the Credentials and Privileges Commission shall submit a report to Parliament on the completed parliamentary elections and the names of elected deputies, on resignations tendered by parliamentary deputies, on the names of deputies who are engaged in duties that do not comply with parliamentary duties so their posts as deputies are suspended, on the names of deputies whose posts have been suspended at their own request, and on the alternate deputies who perform these parliamentary duties in their stead. Elected deputies who resign or suspend their posts shall inform the Speaker of Parliament thereof not less than 24 hours prior to the commencement of the constituent session.

Alternate deputies shall attend the constituent session instead of deputies who resigned or suspended their posts as stipulated by the Croatian Parliamentary Deputy Elections Act.

Parliament shall accept the report of the Credentials and Privileges Commission by passing a conclusion.

#### **Article 7.**

After Parliament accepts the report of the Credentials and Privileges Commission on the completed parliamentary elections, the deputies shall swear an oath before the chair of Parliament (hereinafter: chair). The text of the oath is:

"I swear upon my honour that I shall perform the duties of deputy in the Croatian Parliament with dedication and accountability, and that in my work I shall uphold the Constitution and laws and adhere to the legal order and that I shall be committed to the general advancement of the vital interests of the Republic of Croatia."

The chair shall recite the text of the oath and afterward shall call on each deputy by name, and the deputy shall take the oath by standing and saying: "I do so swear."

#### **Article 8.**

Any deputy who was not present at the constituent session of Parliament shall swear the oath at the next session of Parliament.

Any deputy or substitute deputy not present at the session in which Parliament decided on the commencement of his/her post, shall swear the oath at the next session.

#### **Article 9.**

Deputies shall begin performing their duties as of the date of the constituent session of Parliament, and until the end of their term of office, they shall have all the rights and obligations of deputies as stipulated by the Constitution, laws and these Standing Orders.

The alternate deputy shall begin performing his/her duties as of the date When Parliament establishes the legal prerequisites for the application of substitution and the swearing of the oath.

The decision from Paragraph (2) hereof shall be published in Narodne novine – the official journal of the Republic of Croatia.

#### **Article 10.**

The term of office of a deputy shall end:

- if he/she tenders his/her resignation,
- if his/her working qualifications are stripped by a legally-binding court ruling,
- if he/she is sentenced to an unconditional prison term exceeding 6 months pursuant to a legally-binding court ruling,
- upon his/her death.

When, pursuant to the provisions of law and these Standing Orders, the conditions for the end of a deputy's term of office are fulfilled, the term of office shall end as of the date on which

**Parliament decides on the end of the term of office.**

**In case of death, the deputy's term of office shall end as at the date of his/her death.**

**Article 11.**

**The deputy's term of office shall be suspended for the duration of his/her performance of duties which are by law designated as incompatible with the duties of parliamentary deputy, or for the duration of the period he/she suspends his/her term of office.**

**For the duration of the suspended term of office, all rights and duties of the deputy are similarly suspended unless specified otherwise by law.**

**Article 12.**

**After the suspension of the term of office of Parliament (either by dissolution or termination of the constitutionally-designated period), the deputies in Parliament shall continue to perform their duties and exercise their authority until the convening of a new Parliament.**

**As at the date of the constituent session of Parliament, the term of office of the preceding convocation of Parliament shall end. The membership of these deputies in bodies and organisations outside of Parliament to which they were appointed from among the deputies by Parliament shall also cease on the same date if such appointments were conditional upon the performance of the duties of parliamentary deputy. Membership in the working bodies of Parliament for appointed members shall also cease on this same date.**

**Article 13.**

**After the date of the oath sworn by deputies, the election of the Speaker and Deputy Speakers of Parliament, the Secretary of Parliament and the Deputy Secretaries of Parliament and the Elections, Appointments and Administration Committee, the deputy club of the parliamentary majority or coalition of the parliamentary majority shall propose the agenda for the working portion of the constituent session.**

**Article 14.**

The rights and duties of the deputy are:

- to participate in sessions of Parliament and discussions and debates therein and to vote,
- to make motions and pose questions,
- to pose questions to the Prime Minister and members of the Government,
- to participate in sessions of working bodies and to speak therein, and to vote in the working bodies of which he/she is a member,
- to accept appointments determined for him/her by decisions of Parliament,
- to receive regular monetary remuneration,
- to receive compensation for specific material costs.

The deputy shall have other rights and duties as stipulated by the provisions of the Constitution, law and these Standing Orders.

**Article 15.**

The following shall be submitted to deputies:

- draft legislation adopted by Parliament,
- *Narodne novine*, the official journal of the Republic of Croatia,
- *Izvešća Hrvatskoga sabora* ('Croatian Parliament Reports'), the bulletin of Parliament,
- reports, analyses and other materials which are to be discussed and debated in Parliament.

**Article 16.**

All official materials, documents and data that are prepared or collected in the working bodies of Parliament and the Parliamentary Staff Service, the Government, Ministries and other state administrative bodies which pertain to discussion and debate in Parliament shall be made available to deputies.

The materials, documents and data from Paragraph (1) hereof may also be made available to deputies by means of an Internet site depending on the technical capabilities of Parliament.

**Article 17.**

The Speaker or chair of Parliament and the chairperson of a working body shall be obliged to provide notifications and explanations to parliamentary deputies.

The Secretary of Parliament shall be obliged to provide notifications and explanations to parliamentary deputies on the work of the Parliamentary Staff Service.

**Article 18.**

Parliamentary deputies shall be obliged to maintain the confidentiality of all data of which they acquire knowledge in the performance of their parliamentary duties and which, according to valid legislation and regulations, are designated as confidential, and they shall be held accountable for this under law. Parliament may adopt a code of ethics to govern the behaviour of parliamentary deputies.

**Article 19.**

Deputies may request that the Parliamentary Staff Service provide him/her with assistance in the performance of his/her parliamentary duties, primarily in the interests of preparing proposals to be submitted, in the performance of operations and tasks entrusted to him/her by a parliamentary working body and to provide supplemental documentation for individual items on the agenda of sessions of Parliament or working bodies, and he/she may additionally seek expert information and explanations. In the Administrative Service, technical and computer equipment and materials that are necessary for the performance of their duties shall be made available to parliamentary deputies. The technical and other conditions for their work shall also be secured.

**Article 20.**

Parliamentary identification cards shall be issued to parliamentary deputies. The immunity rights of deputies shall be cited on their identification cards. Upon the cessation of parliamentary duties and during the suspension of the deputy's term of office, the deputy shall be obliged to return the parliamentary identification card. The form of Parliamentary identification card shall be established by decision of Parliament at the proposal of the Elections, Appointments and Administration Committee. The Secretary of Parliament shall administer the issuing of parliamentary identification cards and records of issued cards.

**Article 21.**

As at the date of the constituent session of Parliament, or the commencement of the performance of parliamentary duties, until the date of the constituent session of the new convocation of Parliament, deputies shall be entitled to a salary and other rights pursuant to law.

**Article 22.**

After the commencement of the performance of parliamentary duties, deputies shall be obliged to complete a questionnaire. The content and form of the questionnaire from Paragraph (1) hereof shall be established by the Elections, Appointments and Administration Committee.

Legal Immunity of Deputies

**Article 23.**

The parliamentary deputy shall have legal immunity as at the constituent session of Parliament until the end of his/her term of office. When the conditions are fulfilled for the detention of a parliamentary deputy or the filing of criminal charges against a parliamentary deputy, the authorised state body shall be obliged to seek approval therefore from Parliament. The petition for the approval of detention or filing of criminal charges against a parliamentary deputy shall be submitted by the authorised state body to the Speaker of Parliament for its referral to the Credentials and Privileges Commission.

**Article 24.**

The Credentials and Privileges Commission shall be obliged to immediately discuss the request for the approval of detention or filing of criminal charges against a parliamentary deputy as well as the report on the detention of a parliamentary deputy caught in the act of committing a crime which carries a legally-mandated prison sentence with a duration of five years and submit a report thereupon to Parliament at the next scheduled session.

**Article 25.**

With reference to the request for approval of detention or filing of criminal charges against a parliamentary deputy, the Parliament shall decide, based on the report of the Credentials and Privileges Commission, on whether to approve detention or the filing of criminal charges against the parliamentary deputy.

**Article 26.**

Parliament shall inform the court with jurisdiction and the public prosecutor of its decision pertaining to the detention or filing of criminal charges against a parliamentary deputy.

**Article 27.**

Between sessions of Parliament, approval for restriction of freedom or the continuation of criminal proceedings is granted by the Credentials and Privileges Commission, and this body shall additionally decide on the application of legal immunity for a parliamentary deputy.

Parliament shall confirm such approvals and decisions at its next scheduled session.

A parliamentary deputy who is called in for questioning by the authorities has the right to refuse to appear for such questioning.

**Article 28.**

When Parliament or the Credentials and Privileges Commission grants approval for the detention or the filing of criminal charges against a parliamentary deputy, the parliamentary deputy may be detained or criminal proceedings may be conducted, but only for the criminal act for which approval was granted.

**Deputy Clubs****Article 29.**

A deputy club in Parliament may be established by:

- a political party which has not less than three deputies in Parliament,
- two or more political parties which jointly have not less than three deputies in Parliament,
- not less than three independent parliamentary deputies,
- parliamentary deputies elected as representatives of national minorities.

A deputy may be a member of only one deputy club, while a deputy representing a national minority may additionally be a member of the deputy club of the party to which he/she belongs with the consent of that party.

The chairperson of a deputy club shall have the status of the chairperson of a parliamentary working body as this pertains to rights and obligations.

**Article 30.**

Deputy clubs shall be obliged to inform the Secretary of Parliament of their establishment, and submit their procedural rules and data on membership. The Secretary of Parliament shall secure the adequate facilities and technical and other conditions for work to deputy clubs suited to the number of club members (session rooms, transcripts, photocopying, delivery of materials and other services).

A deputy club shall be entitled to employ a person to act as club secretary. As a rule, such a person is selected from the Parliamentary Staff Service. By way of derogation, a deputy club shall be entitled to employ a person to act as club secretary who is not an employee of the Parliamentary Staff Service but financed by parliamentary funds, although only for a limited time.

Deputy clubs may employ one advisor or more for each additional fifteen club members. Such advisors may be selected from among the ranks of the Parliamentary Staff Service or outside of it, and the costs of their employment shall be covered by parliamentary funds.

The advisors from Paragraph (3) hereof shall fulfil all conditions stipulated by law and other regulations.

**Speaker, Deputy Speakers, Presidency and Secretary of Parliament****Article 31.**

Parliament has a Speaker and two to five Deputy Speakers.

If two Deputy Speakers are elected, one is elected at the proposal of the parliamentary majority and the other at the proposal of the parliamentary minority.

If five Deputy Speakers are elected, three are selected at the proposal of the parliamentary majority and two at the proposal of the parliamentary minority.

**Article 32.**

The Speaker of Parliament:

- represents Parliament,
  - convenes and presides over sessions of Parliament,
  - submits motions from authorised sponsors for stipulated procedures,
  - proposes the agenda for sessions of Parliament,
  - handles the procedures for the enactment of laws and other regulations,
  - co-ordinates the activities of working bodies,
  - signs laws and other regulations enacted by Parliament,
  - directs enacted laws to the President of the Republic for proclamation,
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- manages relations between Parliament and the Government,
- co-signs decisions on the appointment of the Prime Minister and the appointment of members of the Government,
- accepts sponsorships *ex officio*,
- approves, taking into account available funds, the travel of parliamentary deputies when they have been invited, as parliamentary deputies, to visit another state or foreign organisation,
- co-ordinates the work of standing delegations of Parliament in international parliamentary and other institutions,
- determines, at the proposal of deputy clubs, the composition of temporary delegations of Parliament in visits to foreign representative bodies and organisations, such that they generally correspond to the party structure of Parliament and reflect the appropriate representation of both sexes,
- determines the composition of temporary delegations in cases when he/she is invited abroad as the Speaker of Parliament,
- designates representatives of Parliament at ceremonial and other occasions, adhering to the representation of both sexes,
- submits a request, at the proposal of the Secretary of Parliament, for the securing of funds for the work of Parliament and the Parliamentary Staff Service,
- ensures the protection of the rights and exercise of the duties of parliamentary deputies,
- presides over the oaths of elected and appointed officials, when specified by law and these Standing Orders,
- performs other activities determined by the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia, law and these Standing Orders.

**Article 33.**

The Deputy Speakers of Parliament assist in the work of the Speaker of Parliament and perform those duties of the Speaker for which they are authorised by the Speaker.

In case of the absence of the Speaker of Parliament or his/her inability to perform the duties of Speaker, one of the Deputy Speakers who is designated by the Speaker of Parliament and selected from among the deputies of the governing party or the majority party of the governing coalition shall act in his/her stead.

If the Speaker of Parliament does not designate or is unable to designate a Deputy Speaker, the Speaker's duties are performed by the Deputy Speaker selected from among the deputies of the governing party or the majority party of the governing coalition.

**Article 34.**

The Speaker and Deputy Speakers together form the Parliamentary Presidency.

**Article 35.**

At the invitation of the Speaker of Parliament, the Secretary of Parliament shall participate in the work of the Parliamentary Presidency.

The Speaker of Parliament may call the chairpersons of the working bodies and deputy clubs to attend meetings of the Parliamentary Presidency.

**Article 36.**

The Parliamentary Presidency shall:

- accept sponsorships on behalf of Parliament or working body of Parliament,
- establish the Draft Rules on the public transparency of the work of Parliament and its working bodies which are adopted by Parliament,
- establish the Draft Decision on the Parliamentary Staff Service, which is adopted by Parliament,
- provide prior opinions on the Draft Rules of Internal Conduct of the Parliamentary Staff Service,
- determine the arrangement of seats of parliamentary deputies in the session hall based on membership in individual deputy clubs,
- decide, pursuant to law and in co-operation with the Secretary of Parliament, on the allocation of available working facilities in Parliament and residential units for official needs in Zagreb,
- perform other activities as determined by these Standing Orders.

The Parliamentary Presidency shall make decisions within its competence by means of a majority of all present members, if a majority of its members are present at the meeting.

**Article 37.**

The Parliamentary Presidency and the chairpersons of deputy clubs shall:

- deliberate on the agenda of forthcoming sessions of Parliament,
  - deliberate on matters of importance to the work of Parliament,
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- promote the placement of specific topics on the agenda of parliamentary sessions,
- deliberate on other matters in accordance with the provisions of these Standing Orders.

**Article 38.**

The Parliament shall have a Secretary.

The Secretary of Parliament performs activities entrusted to him/her by the Speaker or Parliamentary Presidency.

The Secretary of Parliament, as needed, assists the Speaker of Parliament in the preparation of parliamentary sessions.

The Secretary of Parliament shall be accountable for the performance of the operations of Parliament and to the Speaker of Parliament.

**Article 39.**

The Secretary of Parliament shall direct the Parliamentary Staff Service and administer its operations, and adopt the Rules of Internal Conduct for the Parliamentary Staff Service.

The Secretary of Parliament shall prepare the proposal for the securing of funds for the operations of Parliament and the Parliamentary Staff Service, and shall be the chief executive in charge of the financial and material operations of Parliament and the Parliamentary Staff Service.

The Secretary of Parliament shall conclude contracts and conduct other legal transactions of Parliament.

The Secretary of Parliament shall be accountable to Parliament for his/her work and the operations of Parliamentary Staff Service.

**Article 40.**

The Secretary of Parliament shall have a deputy.

The Deputy Secretary of Parliament shall be the secretary of plenary sessions of Parliament.

The Deputy Secretary of Parliament shall assist the Speaker of Parliament in the preparation and organisation of sessions of Parliament, and shall conduct other activities as stipulated by these Standing Orders or entrusted to him/her by the Speaker of Parliament.

The Deputy Secretary of Parliament shall co-ordinate the work of employees of the Parliamentary Staff Service who are engaged in the preparation of sessions of Parliament.

The Deputy Secretary of Parliament shall stand in for the Secretary of Parliament in cases of his/her absence or inability to work.

The Deputy Secretary of Parliament shall answer to Parliament for his/her work, while he/she shall also answer to the Secretary of Parliament for the activities he/she performs while standing in for the Secretary.

**Article 41.**

The Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Parliament shall be appointed to and dismissed from their duties by Parliament at the proposal of the Parliamentary Presidency.

The Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Parliament shall be appointed for a term of four years and may be re-appointed to this post.

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## **Parliamentary Working Bodies**

General provisions

**Article 42.**

The working bodies of Parliament are its committees and commissions, in accordance with these Standing Orders.

The working bodies of Parliament discuss and debate motions and initiatives for the enactment of laws and other regulations and other matters within the authority of Parliament.

Working bodies monitor, within the limits of their competence, the work of the Government and other bodies whose work is overseen by Parliament pursuant to the Constitution and laws.

Working bodies discuss the reports of bodies and institutions which they submit to Parliament pursuant to law.

After conducting hearings, parliamentary working bodies adopt a position and establish draft legislation and report to Parliament thereupon.

Working bodies hold hearings on the petitions and proposals submitted to Parliament by citizens. If a petition or proposal for the enactment of legislation or other regulations is submitted by citizens to Parliament, then the Speaker of Parliament will direct it to the chairperson of the relevant working body

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which shall be obliged to notify the sponsor of the petition or proposal on the outcome of such petition or proposal within a period not to exceed three months.

**Article 43.**

In order to facilitate the consideration of other matters, Parliament may, in addition to the working bodies established by these Standing Orders, establish other working bodies.

The decision on the establishment of additional working bodies shall regulate their name, composition, competence and operating methods.

**Article 44.**

Parliamentary working bodies shall have chairpersons, deputy chairpersons and a specific number of members.

Parliament shall elect and recall chairpersons, deputy chairpersons and members of working bodies from among the ranks of parliamentary deputies, unless specified otherwise by these Standing Orders.

As a rule, the composition of working bodies shall correspond to the party composition of Parliament.

The term of office of the chairpersons, deputy chairpersons and members of the working bodies shall commence from the date of their election until the date of cessation or suspension of their term of office, or until the date of their dismissal from the duties to which they are elected.

**Article 45.**

The chairperson of a parliamentary working body shall co-ordinate the work of the working body with the work of Parliament and other working bodies, propose their agendas and preside over sessions of the working body.

The chairperson of a working body shall co-operate with the Speaker of Parliament, the Parliamentary Presidency, the chairpersons of other parliamentary working bodies and with Ministers of State and the directors of state administrative bodies in connection with matters under the working body's competence.

The chairperson of a parliamentary working body shall oversee the implementation of resolutions of that working body and the resolutions of Parliament on matters under the working body's competence and perform other operations stipulated by these Standing Orders.

In case of the inability to work or absence of the chairperson, the deputy chairperson of a parliamentary working body shall have the chairperson's rights, obligations and responsibilities determined by these Standing Orders.

In case of the absence or inability to work of the chairpersons or deputy chairpersons, the sessions of working bodies shall be presided over by working body members authorised to do so in advance by the chairpersons of working bodies.

If a working body member is not designated to preside over the working body, the Speaker of Parliament shall designate such member.

**Article 46.**

Sessions of a working body are convened by the chairperson of the working body, and the chairperson shall be obliged to convene it within a period of eight days based on a parliamentary resolution, or if it is sought by the Speaker of Parliament or one third of the members of the working body, with notation of the matter to be considered at the session.

If the chairperson fails to convene a session when obliged to do so, the session of the parliamentary working body shall be convened by the Speaker of Parliament or by a deputy designated by the Speaker.

**Article 47.**

A parliamentary working body may only adopt a position on matters within its competence if a majority of all members are present at the session. Decisions shall be made by majority vote of all members present.

Minutes shall be maintained on the work of the working body session which are signed by the chairperson and secretary of the parliamentary working body or the persons acting in their stead.

The minutes with the materials from the session shall be maintained by the working body secretary, and after the end of the term of office of Parliament they are stored in the archives of Parliament.

**Article 48.**

Parliamentary working bodies initiate discussion and debate on matters within their competence, and they are obliged to consider all matters within their competence submitted for their consideration or requested by the Speaker or Parliamentary Presidency.

**Article 49.**

A parliamentary working body may involve scientific and other organisations and individual experts in the preparation of legislation or the consideration of individual matters within their competence if the finances

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therefore are secured. The working body may propose to the Government that these tasks be entrusted to Ministries or other state bodies.

When a working body concludes that the activities from Paragraph (1) hereof are best conducted on a contractual basis, the contract shall be concluded on behalf of Parliament by the Secretary of Parliament.

**Article 50.**

In order to facilitate the consideration of individual matters within its competence, the preparation of proposals on these matters, and the compilation of reports and draft legislation prepared by Parliament, a working body may establish sub-committees, and its chairperson may establish a special task force.

The sub-committees and task forces from Paragraph (1) hereof shall operate exclusively within the framework of the working body and they are its components. They may not act independently nor are they entitled to bear any rights or obligations.

**Article 51.**

A parliamentary working body shall be obliged to inform the Parliament of its comments, opinions, positions and proposals. A working body may also provide information on the position of the minority of its members, and it shall be obliged to do so when opinions remain divided on proposals for solutions to individual issues or when an individual member of a working body requests that his/her opinion be specifically separated.

When submitting a report or proposal to Parliament, the working body shall designate a rapporteur who will explain the positions or proposals of a working body pursuant to the resolution of the working body, at his/her own initiative or at the request of Parliament.

**Article 52.**

Parliamentary working bodies shall co-operate, and they may hold joint sessions and submit joint reports thereupon to Parliament.

**Article 53.**

Sessions of parliamentary working bodies must be attended by a member of the Government, a Deputy or Assistant Minister of State when such sessions are held to consider Government proposals or positions, or by directors of state administrative bodies when such sessions are held to consider matters from within their competence.

The chairperson of a parliamentary working body shall be obliged to inform representatives of the bodies from Paragraph (1) hereof of the place and time of the session.

The representative of the Government or state body shall be entitled to participate in discussion and debate at the session.

The working body may decide to conduct hearings on individual proposals without the presence of the persons from Paragraph (1) hereof and inform the Government and Parliament thereof.

**Article 54.**

Parliamentary working bodies may invite scholars, professionals, public officials and other persons to sessions in order to obtain their views on matters being discussed at a given session.

Scholars, professionals and public officials appointed to the Committee on the Constitution, Standing Orders and Political System, the Legislation Committee, the Judiciary Committee, the Finance and Central Budget Committee, the Committee on the Economy, Development and Reconstruction, the Committee on Human and National Minority Rights, the Committee on Labour, Social Policy and Health, the Education, Science and Culture Committee, the Agriculture and Forestry Committee, the Committee on Local and Regional Self-government and the Committee on Information, Computerisation and the Media shall be entitled to all rights of the working body, with the exception of decision-making authority.

A parliamentary working body may, pursuant to these Standing Orders, adopt procedural rules governing its work.

**Article 55.**

The provisions of Article 201, Article 203(1), Article 204(1) and (2), Article 205(2), Article 206(1), Article 207(1), Article 208, Article 203 (except Paragraph (2)3 thereof) and Articles 219, 221, 223, 245, and 246 of these Standing Orders shall be applied accordingly to the work at sessions of parliamentary working bodies.

Special provisions

**Article 56.**

The working bodies of Parliament are:

1. the Committee on the Constitution, Standing Orders and Political System,
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2. the Legislation Committee,
3. the Foreign Policy Committee,
4. the Domestic Policy and National Security Committee,
5. the Finance and Central Budget Committee,
6. the Committee on the Economy, Development and Reconstruction,
7. the Tourism Committee,
8. the Committee on Human and National Minority Rights,
9. the Judiciary Committee,
10. the Committee on Labour, Social Policy and Health,
11. the Committee on the Family, Youth and Sports,
12. the Immigration Committee,
13. the War Veterans Committee,
14. the Physical Planning and Environmental Protection Committee,
15. the Education, Science and Culture Committee,
16. the Agriculture and Forestry Committee,
17. the Committee on Transportation, Communications and Maritime Affairs,
18. the Elections, Appointments and Administration Committee,
19. the Petitions and Appeals Committee,
20. the Interparliamentary Co-operation Committee,
21. the European Integration Committee,
22. the Committee on Information, Computerisation and the Media,
23. the Gender Equality Committee,
24. the Local and Regional Self-government Committee,
25. the Credentials and Privileges Commission.

Committee on the Constitution, Standing Orders and Political System

**Article 57.**

The Committee on the Constitution, Standing Orders and Political System shall:

- monitor and study the implementation of the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia,
- consider matters of principle pertaining to the alignment of legislation with the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia,
- consider positions and proposals of a constitutional nature directed to Parliament,
- prepare the relevant legislation in procedures to amend the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia,
- conduct the procedures to nominate candidates to the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Croatia and to propose their election to Parliament,
- prepare the drafts of relevant legislation in procedures to hold referendums if this is sought by ten percent of the total number of voters registered in the Republic of Croatia,
- settle disputes on the competence of parliamentary bodies,
- monitor the implementation of the Standing Orders of the Croatian Parliament,
- propose the adoption and amendment of the Standing Orders of the Croatian Parliament.
- considers matters of principle in issues pertaining to the protection and exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms and national minority rights established by the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia.

The determination and monitoring of policy implementation are under the competence of the Committee on the Constitution, Standing Orders and Political System, and during the procedures to enact laws and other regulations, it has the rights and duties of the competent working body in fields that pertain to:

- association, public assemblies and peaceful protests by citizens,
  - voting franchise, the election of deputies to Parliament, the election of the President of the Republic, elections for local and regional self-government units and referendums,
  - the legal position of religious communities,
  - the use and protection of the coat of arms, flag and hymn of the Republic of Croatia and other national symbols, national holidays, awards and other recognitions,
  - general matters of constitutionality and legality,
  - public information,
  - general matters in the functioning of the political system,
  - the structure and authority of bodies state bodies, the structure, authority and operating methods of state administrative bodies,
  - matters and relations in the field of state administration and issues surrounding the fulfilment of legality in the work of state administrative bodies,
  - reports from state administrative bodies on the application of laws and on general problems of state administration,
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- fundamental property rights issues,
- the structure, authority and operating methods of the post of ombudsman,
- other activities stipulated by these Standing Orders.

**Article 58.**

The Committee on the Constitution, Standing Orders and Political System has a chairperson, deputy chairperson and 11 members from among the ranks of parliamentary deputies, while 6 additional members are appointed from among the ranks of public officials, scholars and professionals.

Legislation Committee

**Article 59.**

The Legislation Committee shall:

- consider draft legislation and other draft regulations which are enacted by Parliament with a view to their compliance with the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia and the legal system and with a view to their legal treatment,
- consider matters of consolidated legislative methodology and other matters essential to uniform legal techniques and terminological compliance of legislation enacted by Parliament,
- provide views on proposals for individual provisions of laws to have retroactive effect,
- oversee the unity of the political system and provides opinions on matters of principle pertaining to the development of the legal system or the uniform application of laws,
- consider regulations that are ratified or in any way whatsoever receive the consent of Parliament and provides an opinion thereupon,
- establish and issue consolidated texts of legislation and other regulations enacted by Parliament when authorised to do so by said legislation or when such regulations have been amended not less than three times,
- consider proposals to provide authoritative interpretations of laws or other regulations enacted by Parliament,
- performs other activities as stipulated by these Standing Orders.

**Article 60.**

The Legislation Committee shall have a chairperson, deputy chairperson and 11 members from among the ranks of parliamentary deputies, while 9 additional members of the Committee are appointed as follows: 6 from among the ranks of public officials, scholars and professionals, and one each from among the ranks of higher-level trade union representatives, employer associations and respected practising attorneys.

Foreign Policy Committee

**Article 61.**

The Foreign Policy Committee shall:

- consider matters of foreign policy and international relations which Parliament debates and decides upon, and prepare draft regulations within Parliament's authority in matters pertaining to this field,
- co-operate with the corresponding parliamentary committees of other countries,
- provide opinions to the President of the Republic on the appointment and dismissal of chiefs of Republic of Croatia diplomatic missions abroad,
- consider reports of standing or temporary parliamentary delegations to interparliamentary institutions in co-operation with the Interparliamentary Co-operation Committee,
- consider international treaties that are to be ratified by Parliament and submit its proposals and views to Parliament,
- co-operate with bodies in the Republic that operate in the field of foreign policy and international relations.

The Foreign Policy Committee shall have the rights and duties of the competent working body in procedures to enact legislation on the ratification of international treaties.

**Article 62.**

The Foreign Policy Committee shall have a chairperson, deputy chairperson and 11 members.

Domestic Policy and National Security Committee

**Article 63.**

The Domestic Policy and National Security Committee shall establish and monitor the implementation of

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policy, and in procedures to enact legislation and other regulations it shall have the rights and duties of the competent working body in matters pertaining to:

- the structure and authority of state administrative bodies in the field of domestic policy and defence,
- citizenship and the personal status of citizens,
- defence and safety, state and public security, traffic safety, protection from fires and natural disasters,
- oversight of the legality of the work of the National Security Office and the Constitutional Order Protection Agency, particularly with a view to the fulfilment of the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia and legally-established human rights and fundamental freedoms, legal persons, state other bodies and the rights and freedoms established by the standards of international law,
- opinions on the appointment of directors of security agencies in accordance with the Constitution,
- reports from the Central Auditing Office, the financial police and criminal investigations police in that portion that pertains to irregularities in the financial operations of state bodies,
- other matters of internal policy, national security and defence.

**Article 64.**

The Domestic Policy and National Security Committee shall have a chairperson, deputy chairperson and 11 members.

Finance and Central Budget Committee

**Article 65.**

The Finance and Central Budget Committee shall establish and monitor the implementation of policy, and in procedures to enact legislation and other regulations it shall have the rights and duties of the competent working body in matters pertaining to:

- the system to finance public needs in the Republic of Croatia,
- the Central Budget, the final settlement of the Central Budget and funds,
- the report of the Central Auditing Office on conducted audits,
- the tax system and tax policy,
- financial relations with foreign countries,
- the foreign currency system,
- credit relations with foreign countries,
- the customs system,
- the credit and banking system,
- the state treasury,
- securities,
- the monetary system,
- the Croatian National Bank,
- system of insurance for property and persons and other issues pertaining to the budget and finances,
- the structure, authority and operating methods of the Central Auditing Office and the Financial Agency.

**Article 66.**

The Finance and Central Budget Committee shall have a chairperson, deputy chairperson and 11 members from among the ranks of parliamentary deputies, while an additional 6 members may be appointed to the Committee: one each from among higher-level trade union representatives, employer association and the Croatian Chamber of Commerce, and three representatives of scientific and professional institutions.

Committee on the Economy, Development and Reconstruction

**Article 67.**

The Committee on the Economy, Development and Reconstruction shall establish and monitor the implementation of policy, and in procedures to enact legislation and other regulations it shall have the rights and duties of the competent working body in matters pertaining to:

- the concept and strategy of the economic development of the Republic of Croatia,
  - the basis of the economic system and the securing of conditions for the operation of markets and the protection of market competition,
  - goods stockpiles, current economic trends, and the economic development of all regions of the Republic of Croatia, particularly those lagging behind in economic development,
  - the co-ordination and improvement of economic life, reconstruction and development in regions in which wartime operations were conducted or upon which wartime destruction and devastation had a direct impact,
  - the reconstruction of commercial facilities destroyed in the war,
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- the electricity network and supply, shipbuilding and other industrial branches,
- economic restructuring and transformation of ownership,
- economic factors, development of free enterprise, and investments of particular importance to the Republic of Croatia,
- the securing of conditions for investments by foreign partners and economic relations abroad,
- individual economic matters and other issues of economic policy, reconstruction and development.

**Article 68.**

The Committee on the Economy, Development and Reconstruction shall have a chairperson, deputy chairperson and 11 members from among the ranks of parliamentary deputies, while an additional 6 members may be appointed to the Committee: one each from among higher-level trade union representatives, employer association and the Croatian Chamber of Commerce, and three representatives of scientific and professional institutions.

Tourism Committee

**Article 69.**

The Tourism Committee shall establish and monitor the implementation of policy, and in procedures to enact legislation and other regulations it shall have the rights and duties of the competent working body in matters pertaining to:

- the concept and strategy of the development of Croatian tourism,
- the establishment and monitoring of the implementation of tourism development policies of the Republic of Croatia,
- hospitality industry and tourism activities and directly related activities,
- monitoring of concessions in tourism,
- developmental programs in tourism of particular importance to the economic development of the Republic of Croatia,
- the establishment and monitoring of the implementation of protection and maintenance of the quality of tourism sites,
- co-operation with the corresponding bodies in the European Parliament and the parliaments of other countries.

**Article 70.**

The Tourism Committee shall have a chairperson, deputy chairperson and 11 members.

Committee on Human and National Minority Rights

**Article 71.**

The Committee on Human and National Minority Rights shall establish and monitor the implementation of policy, and in procedures to enact legislation and other regulations it shall have the rights and duties of the competent working body in matters pertaining to:

- the implementation of ratified international treaties that regulate the protection of human rights,
- matters of principle, proposals and opinions related to the application of the provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia dealing with human rights and fundamental freedoms,
- the exercise and protection of human rights and freedoms,
- the exercise of the rights of national minorities established by the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia and laws, and the proposal of measures to exercise these rights,
- the legal and actual position of Croatian minorities in neighbouring countries and the proposal of measures to improve overall co-operation in order to preserve their national identity,
- international treaties and programs of international cultural, educational and other cooperation when this is of interest to individual national minorities,
- the financing of specific needs of national minorities,
- other activities established by these Standing Orders.

The Committee on Human and National Minority Rights shall co-operate with scholarly and professional, governmental and non-governmental organisations that operate in the field of the protection of human and ethnic rights, with the relevant working bodies of parliaments in other countries and with foreign and international bodies that operate in the field of the protection of human and ethnic rights.

The Committee on Human and National Minority Rights shall co-operate with working bodies entrusted with petitions and appeals and with other parliamentary working bodies and may additionally consider matters under the competence of these working bodies if it assesses that they are of significance to the protection of human and ethnic rights.

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**Article 72.**

The Committee on Human and National Minority Rights shall have a chairperson, a deputy chairperson, and 13 members from among the ranks of parliamentary deputies, while an additional 6 members may be appointed as follows: two from among the ranks of representatives of religious communities (one representative of the Roman Catholic Church and one representative of other religious communities), two representatives of human rights protection associations and two representatives of interest groups dealing with women's and youth issues.

Not less than one deputy from among the ranks of each national minority that has a deputy in Parliament shall be a member of the Committee.

Judiciary Committee

**Article 73.**

The Judiciary Committee shall establish and monitor the implementation of policy, and in procedures to enact legislation and other regulations it shall have the rights and duties of the competent working body in matters pertaining to:

- the establishment, structure, jurisdiction and operating methods of the courts,
- the establishment, structure, jurisdiction and operating methods of the public prosecution,
- the establishment, structure, jurisdiction and operating methods of magistrates' courts and other bodies authorised to conduct lawsuits for minor infractions,
- the structure, jurisdiction and operating methods of the National Judicial Council,
- the issuing of prior opinions in procedures for the election and recall of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Croatia,
- the issuing prior opinions on the appointment and dismissal of the Chief Public Prosecutor of the Republic of Croatia,
- the issuing of opinions on the National Judicial Council in procedures for the appointment and dismissal of judges,
- petitions to initiate and implement nomination procedures for members of the National Judicial Council and the proposal of their election to Parliament,
- the establishment of grounds for the dismissal of a member of the National Judicial Council prior to the end of the period for which they were appointed and the submission of requests for dismissal,
- petitions to initiate nomination procedures for members of the Public Prosecution Council by the Chief Public Prosecutor and the dean of the Faculty of Law,
- the determination of candidates for membership in the Public Prosecution Council from among the ranks of deputies in Parliament,
- the establishment of grounds for the dismissal of members of the Public Prosecution Council prior to the end of the period for which they were appointed and the submission of requests for dismissal,
- the structure, jurisdiction and operating methods of the notary public service,
- the structure and operating methods of the attorney profession,
- ownership and other proprietary rights, contractual and other civil-legal relations,
- the regulation of criminal material and procedural rights and minor offence law and the execution of legal sanctions,
- matters of amnesty and pardons,
- the regulation of court proceedings,
- other judicial matters.

The Judiciary Committee reviews the reports on the work of the Public Prosecution of the Republic of Croatia, and if it assesses that the legally-required conditions have been fulfilled, it may initiate procedures to dismiss the Chief Public Prosecutor in accordance with law.

**Article 74.**

The Judiciary Committee shall have a chairperson, deputy chairperson and 11 members from among the ranks of parliamentary deputies, while an additional 6 members of the Committee shall be appointed from among the ranks of public officials, scholars and professionals.

Committee on Labour, Social Policy and Health

**Article 75.**

The Committee on Labour, Social Policy and Health shall establish and monitor the implementation of policy, and in procedures to enact legislation and other regulations it shall have the rights and duties of the competent working body in matters pertaining to:

- labour and the employment status of employees working in the public sector, and employment and housing policy,
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- social welfare,
- health protection and the organisation of health-care services,
- pension and disability insurance,
- protection of displaced persons,
- protection of the rights of former political prisoners,
- protection of the elderly and homeless persons and other matters of social policy and healthcare.

**Article 76.**

The Committee on Labour, Social Policy and Health shall have a chairperson, deputy chairperson and 11 members from among the ranks of parliamentary deputies, while an additional 6 members may be appointed to the Committee as follows: two from among the ranks of higher-level trade union representatives, one from an employers association, one from the Croatian Chamber of Commerce, one from the Croatian Chamber of Trades and one from the Croatian Chamber of Physicians.

Committee on the Family, Youth and Sports

**Article 77.**

The Committee on the Family, Youth and Sports shall establish and monitor the implementation of policy, and in procedures to enact legislation and other regulations it shall have the rights and duties of the competent working body in matters pertaining to:

- marriage, the family and guardianship, and special protection of children, motherhood and youth,
- the quality life of youth and their participation in all societal activities,
- protection of children and adolescents from all forms of addiction,
- occupational safety for women,
- family planning and demographic renewal,
- sports.

**Article 78.**

The Committee on the Family, Youth and Sports shall have a chairperson, deputy chairperson and eleven members.

Immigration Committee

**Article 79.**

The Immigration Committee shall establish and monitor the implementation of policy, and in procedures to enact legislation and other regulations it shall have the rights and duties of the competent working body in matters pertaining to the implementation of return programmes and the facilitation of conditions for the active involvement of immigrants in the economic, cultural and overall development of the Republic of Croatia.

**Article 80.**

The Immigration Committee shall have a chairperson, deputy chairperson and 11 members.

War Veterans Committee

**Article 81.**

The War Veterans Committee shall establish and monitor the implementation of policy, and in procedures to enact legislation and other regulations it shall have the rights and duties of the competent working body in matters pertaining to:

- the protection of victims of Greater Serbian aggression and the armed rebellion in the Republic of Croatia,
- the protection of the rights of Croatian defenders/soldiers from the Homeland War and the members of their families,
- the protection of military personnel and civilians disabled in the Homeland War and all participants in the Homeland War and the members of their families,
- the protection of military personnel and civilians disabled during World War II as well as all veterans of that war,
- the protection of other victims of totalitarian regimes.

**Article 82.**

The War Veterans Committee shall have a chairperson, deputy chairperson and 11 members.

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## The Physical Planning and Environmental Protection Committee

### **Article 83.**

The Physical Planning and Environmental Protection Committee shall establish and monitor the implementation of policy, and in procedures to enact legislation and other regulations it shall have the rights and duties of the competent working body in matters pertaining to:

- physical planning and the protection of the architectural heritage,
- the co-ordination of spatial resource protection activities and the co-ordination of regional spatial development,
- the promotion of spatial regulation in the interests of the most effective spatial management, construction and harmonisation of building construction of importance to the Republic of Croatia,
- the regulation of construction sites and other physical planning matters,
- fundamental solutions to the protection and promotion of comprehensive environmental protection activities pursuant to international criteria,
- measures to monitor, preserve and reinforce the biological and ecological balance between natural resources (the sea, water, air, soil, mineral wealth, flora and fauna) and economic development,
- measures to utilise and manage individual portions of the environment, particularly with a view to specially protected natural zones,
- monitoring and study of matters concerning nuclear and radioactive safety in order to secure a high level of security and effective protection of persons and the environment from ionising radiation,
- the promotion of measures to halt and turn back the current status of environmental degradation and the further prevention of pollution in order to facilitate quality conditions for human life and health,
- complaints directed to Parliament that indicate harmful activity concerning environmental degradation and investigation into whether such complaints have valid grounds.

### **Article 84.**

The Physical Planning and Environmental Protection Committee shall have a chairperson, deputy chairperson and 11 members.

## The Education, Science and Culture Committee

### **Article 85.**

The Education, Science and Culture Committee shall establish and monitor the implementation of policy, and in procedures to enact legislation and other regulations it shall have the rights and duties of the competent working body in matters pertaining to:

- pre-school education, primary, secondary and higher education,
- science, culture and technical culture,
- international scientific and technical/technological co-operation,
- protection and utilisation of cultural resources, historical materials and heritage, archives and archival materials, and the commemoration of historical events and persons,
- co-operation with religious communities,
- information technology and other matters of education, science and culture.

### **Article 86.**

The Education, Science and Culture Committee shall have a chairperson, deputy chairperson and 11 members from among the ranks of parliamentary deputies, while an additional 6 members may be appointed to the Committee as follows: two from the field of science, two from the field of education and two from the field of culture.

## Agriculture and Forestry Committee

### **Article 87.**

The Agriculture and Forestry Committee shall establish and monitor the implementation of policy, and in procedures to enact legislation and other regulations it shall have the rights and duties of the competent working body in matters pertaining to agriculture, forestry, water management, maritime and freshwater fishing, mariculture, veterinary medicine, and village and rural communities.

### **Article 88.**

The Agriculture and Forestry Committee shall have a chairperson, deputy chairperson and 11 members from among the ranks of parliamentary deputies, while an additional 6 members may be appointed from among the ranks of public officials, scholars and professionals.

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## Committee on Transportation, Communications and Maritime Affairs

### **Article 89.**

The Committee on Transportation, Communications and Maritime Affairs shall establish and monitor the implementation of policy, and in procedures to enact legislation and other regulations it shall have the rights and duties of the competent working body in matters pertaining to maritime affairs, transportation and communications, protection of the sea from pollution by ships, the coast guard and the social and economic development of the islands.

### **Article 90.**

The Committee on Transportation, Communications and Maritime Affairs shall have a chairperson, deputy chairperson and 11 members.

## Elections, Appointments and Administration Committee

### **Article 91.**

The Elections, Appointments and Administration Committee shall:

- prepare and submit to Parliament proposals for the election and recall of chairpersons, deputy chairpersons and members of parliamentary working bodies,
- propose the appointment and dismissal of representatives of Parliament in specific national and other bodies and associations,
- propose the election, appointment, recall and dismissal of other officials that are appointed or elected by Parliament unless specified otherwise by law,
- establish and submit to Parliament the draft regulations on the material rights of parliamentary deputies,
- have the rights and obligations of the competent working body in matters pertaining to labour relations, salaries and other income earned by public officials in procedures involving the enactment of legislation and other regulations,
- draft individual solutions pertaining to ongoing monetary compensation and other income of deputies and the salaries of officials appointed and dismissed by Parliament and its working bodies unless specified otherwise by law,
- decide on measures to establish income and compensation of costs to scholars, professionals and public officials who are members of parliamentary working bodies or are involved in their work,
- draft individual solutions pertaining to monthly monetary compensation paid to scholars, professionals and public officials who are members of parliamentary working bodies,
- perform other activities stipulated by these Standing Orders.

### **Article 92.**

The Elections, Appointments and Administration Committee shall have a chairperson, deputy chairperson and 11 members.

## Petitions and Appeals Committee

### **Article 93.**

The Petitions and Appeals Committee shall:

- consider petitions, appeals and proposals directed to Parliament and alert the responsible authorities of violations of the law and civil rights in procedures before the state administration and bodies which are vested with public authority,
- alert the Parliament of the violation of laws and other negative phenomena of wider significance and proposes the initiation of the necessary measures for their elimination,
- investigate, through the offices of the authorised bodies, the grounds for petitions, appeals and proposals and indicates the need for undertaking legally-founded measures to the authorised bodies and report thereupon to the sponsor of the petition, appeal or proposal,
- submit a report on its work once annually to Parliament.

### **Article 94.**

The Petitions and Appeals Committee shall have a chairperson, deputy chairperson and 11 members.

## Interparliamentary Co-operation Committee

### **Article 95.**

The Interparliamentary Co-operation Committee, together with the Foreign Policy Committee, shall oversee the implementation of the foreign policy of the Republic of Croatia within the framework of

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interparliamentary co-operation with other countries and international organisations in activities of common interest.

The Interparliamentary Co-operation Committee shall facilitate co-operation with representative bodies of other countries and international organisations by establishing joint bodies and friendship groups, undertaking joint actions, aligning positions on issues of common interest, and exchanging experiences through mutual work exchange programs, documentation and informative materials and bulletins, joint meetings between deputies and exchanges of delegations.

The Interparliamentary Co-operation Committee, together with the Foreign Policy Committee, shall consider reports from permanent and temporary parliamentary delegations to international parliamentary institutions, as well as reports on the work of friendship groups with the representative bodies of individual countries.

The chairperson and deputy chairperson of the Committee are elected by Parliament from among the ranks of deputies who are elected to permanent parliamentary delegations to international parliamentary institutions, while the members of the Committee are the members of these delegations.

#### European Integration Committee

##### **Article 96.**

The European Integration Committee shall:

- monitor the harmonisation of the legal system of the Republic of Croatia with the legal system of the European Union,
- monitor the exercise of the rights and commitments of the Republic of Croatia that ensue from international treaties pertaining to the Council of Europe,
- monitor European Union aid and co-operation programmes,
- co-operate and exchange experiences with bodies in European integration processes.

##### **Article 97.**

The European Integration Committee shall have a chairperson, deputy chairperson and 11 members.

#### Committee on Information, Computerisation and the Media

##### **Article 98.**

The Committee on Information, Computerisation and the Media shall establish and monitor the implementation of policy, and in procedures to enact legislation and other regulations it shall have the rights and duties of the competent working body in matters pertaining to information and the print and electronic media, and in particular the Committee shall:

- consider matters of communications, information and the media that are subject to decision by Parliament,
- monitor, encourage and participate in the enactment of legislation on the print and electronic media (the press, radio, television, the Internet),
- promote the emergence, formation and signing of the relevant international documents on information and the media,
- monitor the application of international documents on information and the media and monitors the work of media and/or information committees in other countries,
- uphold the right to information, the protection of intellectual property, and the protection of privacy in the electronic media,
- promote the right to information and communication with new technologies and means of electronic communication (Internet, electronic commerce, Internet education),
- promote technical/technological culture and international technical/technological cooperation in terms of the use of computers and computer networking (Internet),
- be involved with activities aimed at the co-ordination, promotion and advancement of economic activity based on information technologies,
- monitor existing and proposes and encourages the use of new information technologies in the work of Parliament and on the work of Parliament,
- co-operate with associations, the media, research institutions, commissions of the Government and the President of the Republic with reference to the study of communications, information and the media.

##### **Article 99.**

The Committee on Information, Computerisation and the Media shall have a chairperson, deputy chairperson and 11 members from among the ranks of parliamentary deputies, while an additional 6 members may be appointed to the Committee as follows: two from the media, two from the field of science and research and two from relevant associations.

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## Gender Equality Committee

### **Article 100.**

The Gender Equality Committee shall establish and monitor the implementation of policy, and in procedures to enact legislation and other regulations it shall have the rights and duties of the competent working body in matters pertaining to the promotion and monitoring the application of the principles of gender equality in the legislation of the Republic of Croatia, and in particular the Committee shall:

- promote the signing of international documents on gender equality and monitors the application of these documents,
- participate in the drafting, implementation and analysis of the implementation of the National Gender Equality Policy in the Republic of Croatia,
- co-operate and establish measures and activities to improve gender equality,
- propose packages of measures to eliminate discrimination between the sexes,
- promote equal gender representation in the composition of parliamentary working bodies and delegations,
- participate in the drafting of documents on the integration activities of the Republic of Croatia through the amendment and adaptation of legislation and executive measures to achieve gender equality according to the standards applied in the legislation and programmes of the European Union,
- prepare draft legislation and other regulations on gender quality,
- undertake efforts to introduce the principles of gender equality in education, health-care, public information, social policy, employment, free enterprise, decision-making processes, family relations, etc.,
- encourage co-operation between the Government Gender Equality Commission and associations and other institutions.

### **Article 101.**

The Gender Equality Committee shall have a chairperson, deputy chairperson and 11 members.

## Local and Regional Self-government Committee

### **Article 102.**

The Local and Regional Self-government Committee shall establish and monitor the implementation of policy, and in procedures to enact legislation and other regulations it shall have the rights and duties of the competent working body in matters pertaining to:

- the structure, jurisdiction and operating methods of local and regional self-government units,
- the establishment, dissolution and merger of local and regional self-government units and the functioning of representative bodies in local and regional self-government units,
- the financing of local and regional self-government units,
- the legal position of employees in the administration of local and regional self-government units.

### **Article 103.**

The Local and Regional Self-government Committee shall have a chairperson, deputy chairperson and 11 members from among the ranks of parliamentary deputies, while an additional 9 members may be appointed to the Committee at the proposal of representative bodies of local or regional self-government units, as follows: one each from Zagreb, Osijek, Split and Rijeka, two from regional self-government units, two from local self-government units (one from the inland section and the other from the coastal section of the Republic of Croatia) and one from among the ranks of respected legal experts.

## Credentials and Privileges Commission

### **Article 104.**

The Credentials and Privileges Commission shall:

- propose to Parliament decisions on the termination of a deputy's term of office or decisions on the suspension of a deputy's term of office when the legal conditions for this are fulfilled and submit reports to Parliament on the fulfilment of legal conditions for the commencement of the term of office of the alternate deputy,
  - propose to Parliament the passage of decisions on legal immunity of deputies, and when Parliament is not in session it decides on legal immunity, provided that such decisions are subsequently confirmed by Parliament,
  - propose to Parliament the passage of decisions in procedures to approve the detention or filing of criminal charges against the Chief Public Prosecutor, and when Parliament is not in session it decides on such approvals, provided that such approvals are subsequently confirmed by Parliament.
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- perform other activities as stipulated by these Standing Orders.

**Article 105.**

The Credentials and Privileges Commission shall have a chairperson, deputy chairperson and 7 members.

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**Relations between Parliament and the President of the Republic**

**Article 106.**

A petition to initiate proceedings to ascertain the exceptional accountability of the President of the Republic may be submitted to Parliament by one fifth of all parliamentary deputies.

The petition to initiate the proceedings from Paragraph (1) hereof, together with a declaration of the facts, legal designation and evidence of violations of the Constitution with which the President is burdened, is submitted in written form to the Speaker of Parliament with the signatures of Parliamentary deputies not less than 30 days before the session of Parliament scheduled for debate thereupon.

The petition from Paragraph (1) hereof shall be submitted by the Speaker of Parliament to the President of the Republic.

The President of the Republic shall be entitled to respond to the petition from Paragraph (1) hereof in writing within a period of 30 days upon receiving the petition.

Before decision-making on the procedures to ascertain the exceptional accountability of the President of the Republic, the Speaker of Parliament shall forward the official documents from Paragraph (2) hereof to the Committee on the Constitution, Standing Orders and Political System in order to obtain the Committee's position on the grounds for the petition. The Committee on the Constitution, Standing Orders and Political System shall state its position within a period of three days upon receiving the official documents from Paragraph (2) hereof.

The decision to initiate procedures to ascertain the exceptional accountability of the President of the Republic shall be passed by Parliament by a two thirds majority of all deputies within a period of 15 days upon receiving the position of the Committee on the Constitution, Standing Orders and Political System.

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**Relations between Parliament and the Government**

Presentation of the Government to Parliament

**Article 107.**

Immediately after selecting the Government and no later than 30 days after accepting appointment, the Prime Minister Elect shall be obliged to present the Government's programme and the Government to Parliament and seek a vote of confidence.

Together with the request for a vote of confidence, the Prime Minister Elect shall submit the Government's programme and the biographies of proposed members of the Government.

The Government's programme shall be subject to debate.

The vote of confidence shall be passed if a majority of all parliamentary deputies vote in favour of a proposal, and proposals shall be subject to a vote in their entirety.

The duties of the Government shall commence upon receiving the confidence of Parliament.

After subsequently appointing an individual member to the Government, the Prime Minister shall be obliged to seek a vote of confidence for this member at the next scheduled session of Parliament.

**Article 108.**

After passing the vote of confidence on the Prime Minister and members of the Government, the Prime Minister and members of the Government shall swear an oath of office.

The text of the oath shall be established by law.

The Prime Minister shall recite the text of the oath and thereafter call on each individual member of the Government, and the members of the Government shall swear the oath by standing and saying "I do so swear".

Any member of Government not present for the swearing of the oath of office shall swear the oath of office at the next scheduled session of Parliament.

**Article 109.**

The Government shall designate a member of the Government and Deputy Minister of State as its representative in Parliament during discussion and debate on draft legislation and other regulations.

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The Prime Minister, when present at sessions of Parliament or its working bodies, shall participate in their work, declare the position of the Government, provide notifications and expert explanations, adopt a position on submitted amendments if so authorised and inform the Government of the standpoints and views of Parliament and its working bodies.

If a representative of the Government is not present, Parliament or its working body may – if it deems the presence of a Government representative necessary – discontinue or postpone discussion and debate. Parliament shall so decide without debate.

Other members of the Government besides its authorised representative may also participate in discussion and debate in Parliament and its working bodies.

**Article 110.**

The Speaker of Parliament and the chairpersons of parliamentary working bodies shall inform the Prime Minister of scheduled sessions. The authorised representatives of the Government shall also be informed of scheduled sessions of Parliament and its working bodies.

In cases when it is not the sponsor, the Government shall be obliged to submit the opinions, positions and proposals requested of it by the beginning of discussion and debate in parliamentary working bodies and designate its representative.

Government accountability to Parliament

**Article 111.**

The Government shall be obliged, at the request of Parliament, to inform Parliament of its work, of the policies it is implementing (in their entirety or for an individual area), of the execution of laws and other regulations and of other matters within its authority.

The Government may, at its own initiative, submit a report on its work and the status of individual areas to Parliament.

**Article 112.**

The Government shall be accountable to Parliament for its work and the decisions it makes.

The Prime Minister and members of the Government shall be jointly accountable for the decisions made by the Government, and they shall be particularly accountable for their own area of work.

**Article 113.**

Not less than one fifth of the total number of parliamentary deputies may move to initiate a vote of confidence on the Prime Minister, individual members of the Government or the Government as a whole.

The Prime Minister may also request a vote of confidence on the Government.

The motion on the initiation of a vote of confidence on the Prime Minister, individual members of the Government or the Government as a whole shall be immediately placed on the agenda, without prior decision-making.

The Government shall be obliged to declare a position on the motion from Paragraph (1) hereof within a period of 8 days after it is placed on the agenda.

The matter of confidence may not be discussed nor voted upon prior to the expiry of seven days after the date on which the motion is forwarded to Parliament.

Parliament shall deliberate on the matter of confidence and vote not less than 30 days after the motion is submitted to Parliament.

In discussion and debate on confidence in the Prime Minister or the Government as a whole, the Prime Minister may verbally clarify the Government's position on the motion, while with reference to motions on confidence in an individual Minister of State, that Minister of State may clarify his/her stance.

The Prime Minister or other Minister of State may, prior to the concluding speech by the sponsor, may hold a speech, and they may also stand and take the floor during discussion and debate in order to provide clarifications.

The Prime Minister or Minister of State whose confidence is being debated may respond to comments made by representatives of the sponsor or a speech by a parliamentary deputy.

Only the parliamentary deputy mentioned by the Prime Minister or the Minister of State and the representative of the sponsor may respond to the comments of the Prime Minister or the Minister of State.

Only the person from Paragraph (9) hereof shall be entitled to a response.

The decision of no confidence is made if a majority of the total number of deputies in Parliament vote in favour.

**Article 114.**

If Parliament rejects the motion to pass a vote of no confidence in the Government or an individual member thereof, the deputies who so moved may not do so again prior to the end of a period of six

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months.

If a vote of no confidence in the Prime Minister or the Government as a whole passes, then the Prime Minister or the Government shall resign.

If a vote of no confidence in an individual member of the Government passes, the Prime Minister may propose another member to Parliament in his/her stead for a vote of confidence, or the Prime Minister and Government may resign.

**Article 115.**

Parliament or its working body may seek a report and data from Ministers of State or officials who administer the operations of other state administrative bodies, and upon receiving such request they shall be obliged:

- to report on issues and affairs within the authority of the Ministries or other state administrative bodies,
  - to submit a report on the execution and implementation of laws and other regulations and the tasks entrusted to them,
  - to submit data at their disposal, or data they are obliged to collect and record within the scope of their duties, as well as records and other necessary to the work of Parliament or its working body,
  - to respond to posed questions.
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## **Acts of Parliament**

General provisions

**Article 116.**

Parliament, pursuant to the rights and authorisations established by the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia and these Standing Orders, shall enact the Constitution, laws, the Central Budget, decisions, declarations, resolutions, charters, recommendations and conclusions, and issue authoritative interpretations of laws.

**Article 117.**

Parliament may, by decision, charter, certificate of gratitude or other official act, confer recognition to Croatian or foreign citizens or organisations for their work which is of exceptional interest to the Republic of Croatia. The proposal for recognition shall be submitted by the Speaker of Parliament.

**Article 118.**

A decision is passed to regulate the internal structure, operating methods and relations in Parliament.

A decision, which signifies the exercise of Parliament's rights, shall determine elections or appointments, dismissal or recall, appointments to specific bodies, the ratification of the bylaws of organisations and associations or the issuance of consent for such by-laws when specified by law and the exercise of other rights established by the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia and law.

**Article 119.**

Decisions, standing orders and rules shall be passed to determine the internal structure, operating methods and relations in Parliament or to delineate other authorisations.

**Article 120.**

A declaration shall express the general position of Parliament on domestic or foreign policy matters and on other vital matters of state.

**Article 121.**

A parliamentary resolution shall indicate problems in a specific area and measures that should be implemented therein.

Recommendations denote petitions and appeals submitted on irregularities in the work of bodies vested with public authority and proposals for their solution.

**Article 122.**

Parliamentary conclusions establish positions on specific events and circumstances.

Based on the status in an individual field, conclusions may be employed to communicate a position, express an opinion or ascertain the duties of the Government, Ministries and other state administrative bodies.

**Article 123.**

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Parliamentary working bodies may, within the framework of their authority, pass conclusions on their work and the work of the Parliamentary Staff Service whereby they communicate a position, express an opinion or submit proposals.

Parliamentary working bodies pass other official acts within the framework of their authority, as stipulated by law and other regulations.

**Article 124.**

The texts of laws and other official acts of Parliament are signed by the Speaker of Parliament.

Conclusions and other official acts passed by parliamentary working bodies shall be signed by the chairperson of the working body that passed the conclusions or other official acts.

**Article 125.**

The seal of Parliament is affixed to the original text of laws and other regulations.

The original text of laws and other regulations shall mean that text of a law or other regulation enacted at a session of Parliament.

The original text of all enacted legislation shall be maintained in the facilities of Parliament.

The Secretary of Parliament shall be entrusted with the drafting of original acts of Parliament, the affixation of the seal on such acts of Parliament, the maintenance of original texts and records thereof.

**Article 126.**

The Constitution, laws and other regulations and acts of Parliament, the authoritative interpretation of laws, decisions on elections, appointments, dismissals and recall of officials elected or appointed by Parliament, decisions on the form of deputy identification cards, declarations and resolutions shall be published in *Narodne novine*.

Conclusions whereby positions are communicated, opinions are expressed and the obligations of Republic bodies are established with a view to application of laws shall be published in the Parliament's bulletin, and additionally in *Narodne novine* if so decided by Parliament. Other conclusions shall be submitted to those bodies and organisations to which they pertain.

Acts on the ratification of international treaties shall be published in *Narodne novine* together with the text of the treaty.

The Secretary of Parliament shall be responsible for the publication of acts of Parliament.

The Secretary of Parliament shall, based on the original text of acts of Parliament, provide corrections to errors in the published texts of such acts.

**Article 127.**

If the Speaker of Parliament establishes that a submitted draft act of Parliament, or analysis, report or other document, was not compiled in accordance with the provisions of these Standing Orders, he/she shall request that the sponsor align the draft act into compliance with the provisions of these Standing Orders within a specific period.

Until the sponsor corrects any and all shortcomings in a draft act, none of the designated periods for the consideration of such acts as established by these Standing Orders shall commence, and if such shortcomings are not corrected within a period of 15 days after the request to make such corrections, it shall be deemed that such draft act was not submitted to Parliament.

Parliamentary enactment procedures

A. PROCEDURES TO ENACT LAWS

a) Initiation of procedures

**Article 128.**

The law enactment procedure shall commence with the submission of a bill to the Speaker of Parliament.

**Article 129.**

All deputies, deputy clubs and parliamentary working bodies and the Government shall be entitled to propose bills.

All of those mentioned in Article (1) hereof shall be entitled to propose other draft legislation unless the Constitution or these Standing Orders stipulate that individual proposals may only be submitted by specific bodies or a specific number of parliamentary deputies.

**Article 130.**

The sponsors of bills may, when justifying the need for the enactment of a given law, refer to petitions or appeals which, pursuant to the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia, may be submitted by citizens, and

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they shall indicate in the content of their bills the need to enact or amend a given law.

**Article 131.**

Parliament may, by conclusion, determine that preliminary hearings be held on the reasons for the enactment of a law and the fundamental issues to be regulated by such a law in working bodies based on a review of the status in individual fields and reports delivered on possible normative solutions.

The motion to conduct preliminary hearings may be made by the authorised sponsor of the bill.

Preliminary hearings may also be conducted at sessions of Parliament.

After conducting preliminary hearings, all positions, opinions and proposals shall be submitted to the sponsor, who shall be obliged, when drafting the bill, to take them into account and explain the grounds for those that could not be accepted.

b) Bills

Content of bills

**Article 132.**

Bills shall contain:

- the constitutional grounds for enactment of the law,
- an assessment of the status and fundamental issues to be regulated by the law and the impact of the enacted law,
- an assessment and sources of necessary funds to implement the law,
- the text of the draft law, with its interpretation and explanation,
- the text of the provisions of the existing law being amended or supplemented, if it is a matter of amending a law.

The sponsor may additionally submit the corresponding document to accompany the bill, particularly expert opinions, ratified international treaties and other effective legislation used to explain the grounds for the bill.

Sponsors shall be obliged to submit the bill only after it is thoroughly edited and corrected.

When the sponsors are parliamentary deputies, working bodies or deputy clubs, their bills shall be edited and corrected by the Parliament's editorial staff during the procedure to enact the law.

**Article 133.**

The text of bills shall contain solutions in the form of legal provisions.

Individual solutions may be proposed alternatively, with necessary explanation of each of the proposed alternatives.

The explanations of bills shall contain the explanation of individual provisions contained in the bill.

**Article 134.**

When a bill specifies that individual provisions are to be applied retroactively, the sponsor shall be obliged to explain in particular the reasons justifying such provisions.

c) Submitting and forwarding bills

**Article 135.**

The procedure to enact laws shall commence in the form of a bill containing the text of the draft law, and it must contain all components stipulated in Article 132 of these Standing Orders.

The sponsor shall be obliged to inform the Speaker of Parliament of who will provide notifications and explanations of the submitted bill in working bodies.

**Article 136.**

In the upper right-hand corner of the title page, bills shall bear the designation "P.Z. br \_\_\_\_" (abbreviations of the Croatian terms *Prijedlog zakona* – Bill, and *broj* – number) while legislation being aligned with the regulations of the European Union shall bear the designation "P.Z.E. br \_\_\_\_".

All bills shall receive a number at the end of the designation from Paragraph (1) hereof, and this designation must be cited in all other written materials (reports, opinions, amendments, final drafts, etc.) that pertain to the draft of a given law until its enactment.

The numbers from Paragraph (2) hereof shall commence from the number one and continue consecutively for the duration of the given convocation of Parliament.

**Article 137.**

The Speaker of Parliament shall forward bills to all working bodies, all deputies and the Prime

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Minister, when the Government is the sponsor.

d) Consideration of a bill in working bodies

**Article 138.**

Prior to discussion and debate on a bill at a session of Parliament, the chairperson of the competent working body and the Legislation Committee shall be obliged to place the bill on the agenda of the session of the working body and conduct discussion and debate thereupon.

Working bodies shall adopt a position on all elements of the bill, while the Legislation Committee must particularly adopt a position on the constitutional grounds of the law.

**Article 139.**

If the bill creates financial obligations, Parliament may not decide on the bill until it establishes, based on a report from the Finance and Central Budget Committee, that the funds for the fulfilment of these obligations can be secured.

**Article 140.**

If the bill encompasses individual matters which are under the authority of other working bodies, the bill shall also be considered by those working bodies in relation to such matters.

Working bodies, with the exception of the Legislation Committee and the Committee on the Constitution, Standing Orders and Political System, that have considered the bill together with the competent working body shall submit their opinions, comments and proposals to the competent working body, taking into account that the competent working body may discuss their opinions and positions.

**Article 141.**

Upon considering a bill, the competent working body shall submit its report to Parliament containing the opinions, comments and proposals initiated during its consideration.

The competent working body shall consider the opinions, comments and proposals submitted to it by other working bodies that considered the bill. In the report it submits to Parliament, the competent working body shall additionally communicate its position on the opinions, comments and proposals of other working bodies.

**Article 142.**

Reports from working bodies are submitted to the Speaker of Parliament, who submits them to the sponsor of the bill, the chairpersons of working bodies and parliamentary deputies.

**Article 143.**

When considering a bill, a working body shall designate a rapporteur who will present the positions, opinions and comments and explain the proposals of this body at a session of Parliament.

FIRST READING

Discussion and debate on bills at parliamentary sessions

**Article 144.**

The first reading of a bill is the first stage in the procedures to enact a law that is conducted at sessions of Parliament.

The first reading of a bill shall encompass the introductory speech of the sponsor, general discussion and debate on the bill, discussion and debate on details that include debate on the text of the bill, debate on the positions of working bodies that considered the bill and the adoption of a resolution on the need to pass the bill into law.

**Article 145.**

In addition to the speech delivered at the commencement of discussion and debate, the sponsor of the bill or the representatives designated by the sponsor shall be entitled to provide explanations, express opinions and adopt a position on the opinions, comments and proposals made throughout the course of discussion and debate.

The speech at the commencement of discussion and debate may be delivered only by the sponsor or one of the authorised representatives.

The sponsor of the bill or the authorised representatives may withdraw a bill up to the conclusion of discussion and debate.

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**Article 146.**

The rapporteur of the working body that considered the bill may present the opinions, comments and proposals adopted by the working body.

**Article 147.**

A representative of the Government may request the floor during the course of discussion and debate in Parliament even when the Government is not the sponsor of the bill.

**Article 148.**

At the session of Parliament, general discussion and debate and discussion and debate on details are conducted which are, as a rule, unified.

**Article 149.**

General discussion and debate on a bill are conducted such that deputies express their opinions on whether it is necessary to enact the law, on fundamental matters that are to be regulated by the law, on the constitutional authority that the proposal be regulated by law and on the scope and manner of the legal regulation of these relations.

Discussion and debate on details shall be conducted such that the text of bill is discussed.

If deputies assess that the need to enact the law does not exist, the bill will be rejected by a conclusion that must be explained and submitted to the sponsor.

The bill rejected at a session may not be once more placed on the agenda prior to the end of a period of three months after the date of its rejection by Parliament.

Upon the conclusion of discussion and debate by conclusion whereby the bill is accepted, positions, proposals and opinions shall be established pertaining to the bill and then submitted to the sponsor for the preparation of the final draft.

The conclusion on the acceptance of a bill may specify that the sponsor is obliged to obtain the opinions of individual bodies, organisations or communities on issues pertaining to the bill prior to submitting the final draft.

**Article 150.**

Based on the conclusion of Parliament on the acceptance of the bill, the sponsor shall compose the final draft, or the final draft shall be composed by another body if so determined by Parliament with the agreement of the sponsor.

With the consent of the sponsor, it may be decided that the final draft of the bill is composed by a working body of Parliament or the Government and such a body is thereby deemed the sponsor, while the previous sponsor loses this status.

Final draft

**Article 151.**

The final draft of a bill shall be submitted by the sponsor within a period of six months after the acceptance of the initial bill.

If the sponsor fails to submit the final draft within the stipulated period, the enactment procedure shall be deemed halted.

**Article 152.**

The final draft shall be submitted in the form in which the law is to be enacted.

The explanation of the final draft shall encompass the grounds for the enactment of the law, the matters resolved thereby, an interpretation of the provisions of the bill, data on funds necessary to implement the law and methods to secure such funds and other circumstances vital to the matters to be regulated by the law.

In the explanation of the final draft, the sponsor shall be obliged to state the differences between the solutions being proposed and the solutions from the bill, the reasons why these differences emerged and the proposals and opinions on the bill that were not accepted by the sponsor, with a statement of the reasons why they were not accepted.

**Article 153.**

When working bodies submit, forward and consider final drafts of bill, the provisions of these Standing Orders pertaining to bills shall be applied appropriately.

**Article 154.**

If the final draft of a bill foresees that individual provisions contained therein are to be applied

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retroactively, a special assessment and conclusion shall establish that there are particularly justified grounds for the retroactive effect of these individual provisions based on special explanations provided by the sponsor of the bill and reports from the competent working body and the Legislation Committee. Barring the above, decision-making on the retroactive effect of individual legal provisions cannot commence.

## SECOND READING

Discussion and debate on the final draft at parliamentary sessions

### **Article 155.**

The second reading is the second stage in the procedures to enact a law that is conducted at sessions of Parliament.

The second reading of a bill encompasses discussion and debate on the text of the bill, the positions of working bodies, discussion and debate on submitted amendments, decision-making on amendments and enactment of the law.

### **Article 156.**

The sponsor of the bill or the authorised representative thereof may deliver an introductory speech at the commencement of discussion and debate, and when the final draft contains provisions with retroactive effect the sponsor shall be obliged to particularly explain the reasons why the retroactive effect of these provisions is being proposed.

The sponsor of the bill or the authorised representative shall be entitled to seek the floor throughout the course of discussion and debate, provide explanations, express positions and adopt a position on submitted amendments and the opinions and comments of others.

A representative of the Government may request the floor during the course of discussion and debate in Parliament even when the Government is not the sponsor of the bill.

### **Article 157.**

During discussion and debate on the text of the final draft, the bill shall be debated by sections, headings, chapters, articles and submitted amendments.

After the discussion and debate from Paragraph (1) hereof, submitted amendments shall be debated.

The sponsor of the bill shall adopt a position on each submitted amendment. Only the sponsor of the amendment may respond to the stance of the sponsor of the bill.

After conducting discussion and debate and deciding on amendments, discussion and debate are concluded and enactment of the law is decided upon.

## THIRD READING

### **Article 158.**

The third reading of a bill is a special stage in the procedures to enact a law.

The third reading of a bill shall be conducted according to a decision of Parliament or at the request of the sponsor in cases when the text of the final draft is subject to a larger number of amendments or when the amendments are such that they significantly alter the content of the final draft.

As a rule, the third reading shall be conducted if the amendments of the sponsor significantly alter the content of the final draft of the bill.

The third reading shall be conducted under the conditions and according to procedures stipulated in these Standing Orders for the second reading.

Summary enactment procedures

### **Article 159.**

By way of derogation, laws may be enacted under summary procedures only when required by the interests of national defence or other particularly justified grounds, or when necessary in order to prevent or eliminate major economic ruptures.

The final draft of the bill is submitted together with the petition to enact the law under summary procedures. The final draft shall contain all that is contained in a bill, with the exception that instead of the bill the text of the final draft of the bill is attached.

When the petition to enact the law under summary procedures is submitted by a parliamentary deputy, he/she must have the support of an additional 25 deputies.

The petition to enact the law under summary procedures may be submitted by a deputy club that has 15 or more members and deputy clubs that together have 15 or more members.

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The first and second readings are consolidated in summary procedures.

The petition to enact the law under summary procedures is submitted to the Speaker of Parliament not less than 24 hours prior to the confirmation of the agenda for that session. The Speaker of Parliament shall immediately direct the petition to enact the law under summary procedures to the chairpersons of the working bodies, all deputies and the Government if it is not the sponsor.

**Article 160.**

The petition from Article 159 of these Standing Orders shall be subject to decision during the confirmation of the agenda at the beginning of the session, and it may be subject to decision during the confirmation of addenda to the agenda.

If the Speaker of Parliament fails to enter the petition to enact a law under summary procedures into the agenda although the petition was submitted within the time-frame and according to the methods stipulated by these Standing Orders, the bill shall be added to the agenda at the request of the sponsor, and the petition for summary procedures is decided upon thereafter.

If the petition for summary procedures is not accepted, the Speaker of Parliament may move to conduct the first reading at the same session, i.e. proceed in accordance with Article 203(2) of these Standing Orders.

**Article 161.**

Legislation being aligned with the regulations of the European Union shall be enacted under summary procedures if so sought by the sponsor.

By way of derogation, if the competent working body, the Committee on the Constitution, Standing Orders and Political System or the Legislation Committee propose that the legislation from Paragraph (1) hereof be discussed and debated in the first reading due to its failure to comply with the Constitution or the legal system, the legislation shall be discussed and debated in the first reading.

Core legislation

**Article 162.**

Core legislation shall regulate the rights of national minorities and elucidate constitutionally established human rights and fundamental freedoms, the electoral system, the structure, authority and operating methods of state bodies and the structure and authority of local and regional self-government.

In the procedures to enact core legislation, the provisions of these Standing Orders contained under Heading VIII: ACTS OF PARLIAMENT shall be applied.

The equality and protection of the rights of national minority shall be regulated by constitutional law which shall be enacted under the same procedures as apply for core legislation.

Amendments

**Article 163.**

The proposal to modify or supplement the final draft of a bill shall be submitted in writing in the form of an amendment accompanied by an explanation.

All deputies, deputy clubs and working bodies of Parliament and the Government shall be entitled to submit amendments.

If the purpose of the final draft of a bill is to amend an existing law, then amendments may only be submitted for the articles encompassed by the initially proposed amendments.

By way of derogation from Paragraph (3) hereof, amendments may be submitted to articles of a law not encompassed by proposed amendments if necessary due to alignment with the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia or documents pertaining to international integration or pertaining to rulings of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Croatia.

**Article 164.**

Amendments are submitted to the Speaker of Parliament by the end of discussion and debate at the session of Parliament on the final draft of the bill.

**Article 165.**

The Speaker of Parliament shall immediately forward the submitted amendments to deputies, the sponsor of the bill and the Government when it is not the sponsor.

The Speaker of Parliament shall also forward the submitted amendments to the competent working body and the Legislation Committee so that they can submit their reports with opinions and proposals thereupon.

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**Article 166.**

By way of derogation, if the majority of present deputies agrees, the sponsor may submit amendments to the final draft of a bill during decision-making procedures on submitted amendments at the session. Such amendments are submitted in writing with the necessary explanations.

The amendments from Paragraph (1) hereof shall be subject to discussion and debate and voting. Only representatives of the deputy clubs may participate in discussion and debate.

**Article 167.**

If submitted amendments are such that they significantly alter or deviate from the final draft of the bill, Parliament may decide to postpone discussion and debate so that deputies have sufficient time to prepare prior to decision-making.

If, during discussion and debate on submitted amendments, the chairperson or member of the Committee on the Constitution, Standing Orders and Political System points out their non-compliance with the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia, the session shall be discontinued until the Committee on the Constitution, Standing Orders and Political System submits its opinion. If non-compliance with the provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia is pointed out by a member of the Committee on the Constitution, Standing Orders and Political System, the session shall be discontinued and the Committee on the Constitution, Standing Orders and Political System shall convene, if the Committee member has the support of one third of the Committee members.

Voting on amendments shall be postponed if this is sought by a representative of the sponsor, the Government (regardless of whether or not it is the sponsor), the chairperson of the competent working body, the chairperson of the Committee on the Constitution, Standing Orders and Political System or the chairperson of the Legislation Committee.

**Article 168.**

The sponsor and the Government (regardless of whether or not it is the sponsor) shall adopt a position on amendments.

The stance from Paragraph (1) hereof is generally communicated verbally.

After the sponsor adopts a position on a given amendment, only the sponsor of the amendment may respond to such a position, and the duration of this speech may not exceed two minutes.

**Article 169.**

Amendments submitted within the period from Article 164 of these Standing Orders shall become a component of the bill and voting thereupon shall not be separate:

- if it is submitted by the sponsor of the bill,
- if the sponsor of the bill agrees to the amendment.

If the deputy seeks a separate explanation of individual amendments from Paragraph (1) hereof, voting on this amendment shall be conducted separately.

If the final draft of the bill is not submitted by the Government, voting on amendments not supported by the Government shall be conducted separately.

Voting on amendments shall be conducted according to the order of articles of the final draft of the bill to which they pertain.

If more than one amendment are submitted for the same article of the final draft of the bill, voting on amendments is conducted according to the order determined by the chair of Parliament, without debate.

If more than one amendment submitted for the same article of the final draft of the bill are identical in content, then voting shall be conducted only on the first.

If more than one amendment is submitted for the same article which are mutually exclusive, that amendment shall be accepted which is the last accepted in the order of voting.

**Article 170.**

An amendment adopted at a session of Parliament shall become a component of the final draft of the bill subject to decision-making.

**B. AUTHORITATIVE INTERPRETATION OF LAWS****Article 171.**

Petitions to provide authoritative interpretations of laws may be submitted by an authorised sponsor of a law.

**Article 172.**

Petitions to provide authoritative interpretations of laws shall be submitted to the Speaker of Parliament, and shall contain the title of the law, the designation of provisions requiring interpretation and the grounds

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for seeking interpretation.

The Speaker of Parliament shall submit the petition to provide authoritative interpretation of laws to the Legislation Committee, the competent working body and the Government (if it is not the petitioner) in order to assess its validity.

The competent working body and the Government shall be obliged to submit an opinion to the Legislation Committee within a period of 15 days. If the competent working body and the Government do not submit their opinions within the stipulated period, it shall be deemed that they concur with the petition to provide authoritative interpretation of laws.

**Article 173.**

Upon obtaining the opinions of the competent working body and the Government, or after the expiry of the deadline from Article 172(3) hereof, the Legislation Committee shall assess whether a petition to provide authoritative interpretation of laws has grounds and report its position to Parliament within a period of 15 days.

If it assesses that the petition has grounds, the Legislation Committee shall establish the text of the authoritative interpretation which shall be attached to its report to Parliament.

If the Legislation Committee assesses that the petition to provide authoritative interpretation has no grounds, it shall inform Parliament thereof and Parliament shall make a decision thereupon.

C. PASSING THE CENTRAL BUDGET

**Article 174.**

The Draft Central Budget accompanied by an explanation to the Speaker of Parliament shall be submitted by the Government.

Draft financial plans for extra-budgetary funds shall be submitted together with the Draft Central Budget with explanations and the final draft of the Central Budget Execution Bill.

**Article 175.**

The provisions of these Standing Orders pertaining to the procedures to enact laws shall be applied accordingly to the passage of the Central Budget.

Joint discussion and debate in general, by sections and by amendments shall be held on the Central Budget.

Voting on submitted amendments and the budget as a whole may not be conducted prior to the expiry of three days after the date of discussion and debate from Paragraph (2) hereof.

**Article 176.**

The Government shall submit a report on budget execution to the Speaker of Parliament within the period stipulated by law.

During discussion and debate on execution of the Central Budget, and based on a breakdown of implemented operational programmes, the foundations of policy for future periods or guidelines for budget development may be established, and the conditions and measures to finance the tasks of state bodies and organisations and to finance other state needs may additionally be established.

D. PASSAGE OF OTHER ACTS OF PARLIAMENT

**Article 177.**

With reference to the procedures to pass decisions, declarations, resolutions, recommendations and other acts of Parliament, the provisions of these Standing Orders on the procedures governing discussion and debate on the final draft of a bill shall be applied unless Parliament decides otherwise. Discussion and debate on these acts of Parliament shall be unified, unless it is decided to first deliberate on the proposal in principle and then in detail.

The procedures to pass other acts of Parliament, regardless of whether they are passed under procedures for bills or the final draft of bills, shall always be initiated by a draft act.

The sponsor of the act of Parliament from Paragraph (1) hereof shall be obliged to submit the draft act to the Speaker of Parliament, and this draft by its nature must be accompanied by an explanation.

Reports, analyses and other information not submitted to Parliament by the Government shall be submitted to the Government by the Speaker of Parliament for its opinion.

**Article 178.**

If the reports, analyses and other information exceed 30 pages, a summary shall be submitted to parliamentary deputies, while the original material shall be available to them in the Parliamentary Staff Service. The summary shall contain all essential points of the original material and the sponsor shall be

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obliged to submit it to Parliament together with the original materials.

Persons submitting reports, analyses or information shall be obliged to cite the sources and documentation upon which the original materials are based.

When two or more sponsors move to pass conclusion or other acts at a session of Parliament, the chair shall decide on the order of voting.

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## **Deputy Questions**

### **Article 179.**

Deputies may pose questions to the Government and individual members of the Government on the exercise of its constitutional rights and duties, and particularly on the status in specific areas of social life and on the execution of laws and other acts of Parliament, or the work of ministries and other state administrative bodies and organisations vested with public authority.

Questions from deputies may also be posed in writing. The deputy must indicate to whom the question is directed.

### **Article 180.**

Verbal questions

Questions posed to the Government or to individual members of the Government may be posed by deputies at sessions during "Morning Question Time".

"Morning Question Time" shall be held at the beginning of each session of Parliament prior to going to the first item on the agenda and generally it shall have a duration of four hours.

The order of posing questions shall be determined according to the order of entry of deputies in the session attendance roster. The session attendance roster shall be opened by an authorised official on the first day of the session two hours prior to its commencement in front the main session hall.

Deputies may pose one question. It must be brief and unambiguously formulated such that as a rule it can be answered immediately without preparation.

A deputy may express satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the response to the question in an explication of reasons that may have a duration not to exceed one minute.

If the deputy is dissatisfied with the answer, he/she may request that the Government or an individual Minister of State submit a written response.

During "Morning Question Time", a deputy may not seek the floor to respond to a statement or correct an inaccurate statement in the question of another deputy or in the response to a deputy question by the Prime Minister or member of the Government.

The posing of a question may not exceed two minutes.

### **Article 181.**

The Prime Minister or other member of the Government shall respond to questions posed to the Government. An individual Minister of State shall respond to a question posed to him/her.

The Prime Minister shall be obliged to ensure the presence of not less than half of the members of the Government at sessions of Parliament during the time allotted for deputy questions.

### **Article 182.**

The member of the Government to whom a question is directed shall respond to such a question at the same session at which the deputy question is posed or state the reasons why he/she cannot respond.

The response to a question shall, as a rule, have a duration of two minutes. The response may have a duration of up to four minutes if the question demands a more complex response.

### **Article 183.**

A member of the Government to whom a question is posed may decline from responding to the question if such question does not pertain to his/her work or activities under his/her authority.

### **Article 184.**

If the response is of a confidential nature, the member of the Government may move to respond directly to the deputy or at a closed session of the working body under whose competence such a question belongs.

Written deputy questions

### **Article 185.**

Deputies may, through the intercession of the Speaker of Parliament, pose questions in writing after receiving a response, and pose supplemental questions.

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**Article 186.**

Deputy questions shall be posed in accordance with the provisions of these Standing Orders.

If the question is not posed in accordance with the provisions of these Standing Orders, the Speaker of Parliament shall call on the deputy to align his/her question with the provisions of these Standing Orders.

If the deputy fails to align his/her question with the provisions of these Standing Orders, the Speaker of Parliament shall not direct this question to the Government or the Minister of State and shall inform the deputy thereof.

**Article 187.**

A written response to a question posed in writing shall be provided within a period 30 days after the date on which the question was posed to the Government or individual Minister of State. The Government or the Minister of State shall be obliged to respond to verbally posed questions within the same period if the deputy did not receive a response at the session of Parliament or sought a written response.

If the Government or member of the Government is unable to respond within the period from Paragraph (1) hereof, the deputy shall be informed, through the Speaker of Parliament, of the reasons therefor and the time-frame within which the response shall be provided.

**Article 188.**

The Government or the Minister of State shall submit a written response to the question posed by the deputy through the Speaker of Parliament. The Speaker of Parliament shall direct the written response to all deputies.

**Article 189.**

If the Government or member of the Government does not respond to the deputy question pursuant to Article 187 of these Standing Orders, at the end of question time the Speaker of Parliament shall inform the deputies of questions to which the Government or member of the Government has not provided a response within the stipulated period and request that a response be provided within a period of eight days.

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**Interpellation****Article 190.**

Discussion and debate on the work of the Government as a whole or on individual decisions of the Government or Ministries of State, if they deviate from the general positions of the Government or the Ministries of State in the implementation of laws and established policy, shall be opened at sessions of Parliament by interpellation.

Interpellations may also be submitted when a deputy is not satisfied with a supplemental written reply from the Government or member of the Government to a question, and if the question and response indicate particularly justifiable grounds to open discussion and debate thereupon in Parliament.

Interpellations shall be submitted in writing. It must clearly pose and explain the question that is to be considered. Interpellations shall be signed by all deputies who initiated it.

Interpellations to the Speaker of Parliament must be submitted by not less than one tenth of the deputies.

**Article 191.**

The Speaker of Parliament shall submit the interpellation to the Prime Minister and parliamentary deputies.

**Article 192.**

Pursuant to an interpellation, the Government shall be obliged to submit to the Speaker of Parliament a report containing its opinions and positions on the interpellation within a period of 8 days upon receiving said interpellation.

The Speaker of Parliament shall forward the report to the deputies.

**Article 193.**

The interpellation shall be added to the agenda of the next session of Parliament held after the delivery of the Government's report.

If the Government fails to submit the report from Paragraph 192(1) of these Standing Orders, the interpellation shall be added to the agenda on the next session after the expiry of that period.

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**Article 194.**

The representative of the deputy who initiated the interpellation shall be entitled to explain the interpellation at a session of Parliament.

When an interpellation is initiated on the work of the Government as a whole or on individual decisions of the Government, the Prime Minister shall be entitled to verbally explain the report of the Government on the interpellation, while a Minister of State shall do so when an interpellation pertains to the work of a Ministry.

Parliament shall conduct discussion and debate thereafter.

**Article 195.**

Parliament may close discussion and debate on an interpellation by establishing positions on the question that served to initiate the interpellation. Upon closing discussion and debate on an interpellation, Parliament may pose the question of the Government's accountability or initiate the matter of confidence in the Prime Minister, an individual member of the Government or the Government as a whole.

**Article 196.**

Deputies who initiate an interpellation may withdraw it prior to decision-making thereupon.

If an interpellation is rejected at a session of Parliament, an interpellation may not be initiated on the same topic prior to the end of a period of three months after the date on which Parliament passed a conclusion to reject the initial interpellation.

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**Order at Sessions**

Convening sessions

**Article 197.**

Parliament shall hold regular sessions twice annually: the first between 15 January and 15 July, and the second between 15 September and 15 December.

Outside of the periods cited in Paragraph (1) hereof, Parliament may hold extraordinary sessions at the request of the President of the Republic, the Government or a majority of all deputies in Parliament.

The Speaker of Parliament, upon obtaining the prior opinion of deputy clubs of parliamentary parties, may convene an extraordinary session of Parliament.

When the authorised petitioner from Paragraph (2) hereof submits a request for an extraordinary session of Parliament, he/she shall be obliged to cite the grounds for seeking an extraordinary session to the Speaker of Parliament.

At the request of the authorised petitioner from Paragraph (2) hereof, the Speaker of Parliament shall be obliged to convene a session of Parliament within a period of eight days upon receiving such request.

During the regular session of Parliament, the Speaker of Parliament shall be obliged to convene a session of Parliament within a period of 8 days after the date of receiving the written request from a majority of the total number of parliamentary deputies.

If the Speaker of Parliament fails to convene a properly requested session or a session during the period of regular session, the session shall be convened by the Parliamentary Presidency.

**Article 198.**

The session of Parliament shall be convened by the Speaker of Parliament.

At the beginning of each regular session of Parliament, the hymn of the Republic of Croatia, *Lijepa naša domovino* ('Our Beautiful Homeland'), shall be sang.

**Article 199.**

During its regular period of sessions, sessions of Parliament shall be held once monthly and more frequently if necessary. The agenda for regular sessions shall be delivered to deputies 8 days prior to the convening of the session.

By way of derogation, the Speaker of Parliament may, in case it is necessary to enact specific legislation under summary procedures or when this is demanded by other particularly justifiable reasons, convene a session of Parliament within a period shorter than 8 days, while the agenda for this session may be proposed at the session itself.

**Article 200.**

In case of convening extraordinary sessions of Parliament, the Speaker of Parliament may proceed in the manner foreseen by Article 199(2) of these Standing Orders.

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**Article 201.**

Unless Parliament decides otherwise, a session of Parliament shall continue until all items on the agenda are covered and resolved, while the number of each session shall be determined consecutively for sessions held regularly and extraordinarily during a single convocation of Parliament.

**Article 202.**

When these Standing Orders stipulate that individual tasks in the enactment of laws and other acts of Parliament be conducted within a specific period, and such period is tied to the delivery of materials to deputies (bills, summons to session, reports of working bodies, etc.), the date of deposit in the box of the deputies shall be deemed the date of delivery.

## Agenda

**Article 203.**

The agenda of sessions of Parliament shall be proposed by the Speaker of Parliament. If the agenda of sessions is proposed in written form and attached to the summons to the session, the Speaker of Parliament may amend the draft agenda at the session itself, such that individual matters are removed from or added to the draft agenda. Such an amended or supplemented agenda shall be submitted to deputies in the form of a final draft agenda.

In the draft agenda attached to the summons to a session, the Speaker of Parliament shall include all matters which are submitted for procedures pursuant to these Standing Orders within a period of 30 days when pertaining to bills or 15 days when pertaining to final drafts of bills or other acts of Parliament.

A deputy or other sponsor may file a written objection to the draft agenda attached to the summons to a session not less than one day prior to the scheduled session of Parliament.

The written objection to the draft agenda may be filed if the Speaker of Parliament failed to include in the draft agenda matters directed for procedures pursuant to these Standing Orders while the periods from Paragraph (2) hereof have expired. If the objection has valid grounds, the matter is added to the agenda without discussion and debate.

If none of the deputies or other sponsors of bills file written objections to the agenda proposed at the session not less than one day prior to the scheduled session, the draft agenda shall be deemed established.

At sessions of Parliament, deputies or other sponsors of bills may file objections only to those items of the agenda not contained in the draft agenda attached to the summons to a session or omitted from the final draft agenda but contained in the draft agenda attached to the summons to a session.

Decisions on objections to amendments to the agenda shall be made at sessions without discussion and debate.

**Article 204.**

As a rule, the agenda of sessions of Parliament shall be established at the beginning of sessions.

If a session of Parliament has a duration exceeding one day, the Speaker of Parliament may subsequently propose that new items be added to the agenda. The addenda to the agenda shall be established in the manner foreseen by Article 203(5) of these Standing Orders.

The Speaker of Parliament shall be obliged to propose addenda to the agenda when, during sessions, this is sought by one third of the total number of parliamentary deputies in writing.

With the exception of the cases from Paragraphs (2) and (3) hereof, addenda to the agenda may not be proposed at sessions of Parliament.

**Article 205.**

During the establishment of the agenda at sessions of Parliament, the Speaker of Parliament shall first put to a vote motions that individual laws be enacted under summary procedures, whereby such decisions are made without discussion and debate, and in cases of proposals not to enact laws under summary procedures prior to a vote, the Speaker of Parliament shall grant the floor only to the deputy who opposes enactment under summary procedures and the sponsor of the bill.

After the agenda is established, the Speaker of Parliament shall proclaim the established agenda. At the beginning of each working day of the session, the Speaker shall, as a rule, proclaim which items on the agenda are to be discussed on that day. By way of derogation, the order of discussion and debate or decision-making may be altered during sessions if there are no reports on individual items on the agenda from the authoritative working bodies, the sponsor or the Government.

At the close of a daily session, the chair shall, as a rule, proclaim which items on the agenda are to be covered during the morning of the session on the following day.

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## Chairing and participation

### **Article 206.**

Sessions of Parliament shall be chaired by the Speaker of Parliament, and when the Speaker is absent or similarly hindered, sessions shall be chaired by one of the Deputy Speakers.

All persons invited by the Speaker of Parliament may attend sessions as guests.

Foreign state officials may hold speeches as guests at sessions at the invitation of the Speaker of Parliament.

### **Article 207.**

No person may speak at sessions prior to seeking and obtaining the floor from the chair.

Requests for the floor shall be submitted no later than one hour after the commencement of discussion and debate.

### **Article 208.**

The chair shall grant the floor to deputies in the order in which the floor is requested.

Regardless of the order, a deputy may be granted the floor when he/she wishes to point out violations of the Standing Orders, to correct an inaccurate statement or to reply.

A speaker may be censured or interrupted exclusively by the chair. The chair shall ensure that the speaker is not otherwise interrupted or prevented in his/her speech.

### **Article 209.**

A deputy who wishes to point out violations of the Standing Orders shall be granted the floor by the chair immediately upon seeking the floor. The speech of this deputy may not exceed a duration of one minute, and the deputy must immediately cite the Article of the Standing Orders being violated. The chair is obliged to provide an explanation immediately after hearing the objection. If the deputy is not satisfied with this explanation, he/she may seek the opinion of the Committee on the Constitution, Standing Orders and Political System within a period of 24 hours. Parliament shall decide on the opinion of the Committee on the Constitution, Standing Orders and Political System without discussion and debate.

If a deputy seeks the floor to correct an inaccurate statement, the chair shall grant him/her the floor immediately after the end of the speech in which the statement is made. The deputy must confine his/her speech to the correction; otherwise the chair shall take the floor from him/her. The deputy's speech may not exceed one minute.

If the deputy seeks the floor to respond to a statement (reply), the chair shall grant him/her the floor immediately after the end of the speech in which the statement is made. The deputy's reply and the response thereto may not exceed two minutes.

A deputy may correct an inaccurate statement and reply to a statement only once, and that based on the original statement.

A deputy may not reply to statements made by the chair.

A deputy may not seek the floor to respond to statements from speeches (replies) by representatives of the Government and chairpersons of deputy clubs.

A deputy may not seek the floor to respond to statements from speeches which served as grounds for the chair to declare disciplinary measures against a speaker.

### **Article 210.**

A speaker may only speak on the matter being debated in accordance with the established agenda.

If the speaker departs from the matter on the agenda, the chair shall caution him/her to adhere to the agenda.

If, even after being cautioned twice to adhere to matters on the agenda, the chair shall take the floor from him/her. In this case the deputy may no longer participate in discussion and debate on this matter of the agenda.

### **Article 211.**

As a rule, deputies may speak for no longer than 10 minutes during discussion and debate, while representatives of deputy clubs may speak for 15 minutes. Exceptionally, depending on the importance of the matter at hand, Parliament may decide to allow individual representatives of deputy clubs or deputies to speak for a longer duration.

The sponsor, or representatives of the sponsor, may deliver an introductory speech at the beginning of discussion and debate that may not exceed 30 minutes, while upon providing individual explanations during discussion and debate they shall be limited to 10 minutes.

A representative of the Government, when not the sponsor, may speak no longer than 10 minutes during discussion and debate each time he/she is granted the floor.

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A deputy who requests the floor but is not present in the session hall when called upon shall lose the right to speak on the item of the agenda for which the floor is requested.

The representative of a deputy club who is not present in the session hall when called upon shall lose the right to speak on behalf of that deputy club on the item of the agenda for which the floor is requested.

After all deputies who requested the floor complete their speeches, the representatives of deputy clubs may once more seek the floor and then may speak for no longer than five minutes regardless of whether a representative of a deputy club already participated in discussion and debate on a given item of the agenda.

#### **Article 212.**

By way of derogation, the Parliamentary Presidency may, with the consent of all chairpersons of deputy clubs, decide that discussion and debate on a given item of the agenda may have a specific duration within which framework the sponsor may speak for no longer than 20 minutes, while representatives of deputy clubs, a representative of the competent working body and a representative of the Legislation Committee may speak for no longer than 15 minutes, and representatives of other working bodies may speak no longer than 10 minutes.

The remainder of the time shall be allocated to political parties in proportion to the existing party composition of Parliament, provided that independent deputies and deputies from among the ranks of national minorities may speak no longer than five minutes.

Decisions on the duration of discussion and debate from Paragraph (1) hereof shall be made by Parliament.

The chair, deputy clubs, working bodies, political parties, independent deputies and national minority deputies may utilise the time from Paragraph (1) hereof in a manner they determine as best.

Maintenance of order and disciplinary measures

#### **Article 213.**

Order at sessions shall be maintained by the chair.

Disciplinary measures may be imposed by the chair against deputies for violating the order of sessions, as follows:

1. censure,
2. censure and losing of the floor,
3. removal from the session.

The disciplinary measures from Paragraph (2) hereof shall be final and they are not subject to debate.

#### **Article 214.**

Deputies may be censured if:

- they do not adhere to the matter being discussed and debated,
- they speak without the approval of the chair,
- they interrupt or otherwise hinder the speech of a speaker,
- they request the floor due to violations of the Standing Orders or to correct inaccurate statements and then begin speaking of other matters for which they are not granted the floor,
- they belittle or insult the chair or other deputies,
- their behaviour deviates from generally accepted conduct in Parliament,
- they violate the order at sessions by other means.

#### **Article 215.**

Censure and losing of the floor shall be imposed to a deputy who, even after being censured, continues to violate the provisions of these Standing Orders by speech or behaviour that led to the initial censure.

Censure and losing of the floor shall be imposed against a deputy who, during his/her speech, insults the Croatian people, religious communities, national minorities, representatives of foreign states and international organisations.

#### **Article 216.**

A deputy shall be removed from a session when his/her behaviour so disrupts the order and violates the provisions of these Standing Orders pertaining to order at sessions that the continuation of the session is brought into question.

Removal from sessions may be imposed for the duration of discussion and debate and decision-making on one or more items on the agenda or for the entire day when such disciplinary measure is imposed.

When a deputy is removed from a session of Parliament, that deputy is obliged to immediately depart from the session, and if he/she does not do so, the chair may double the duration of such disciplinary measure.

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If, even after imposition of the measure from Paragraph (3) hereof, the deputy does not depart from the session, the chair shall adjourn the session and order that the deputy be removed from the session hall. In this case the chair may request that Parliamentary Guard removes the deputy from the session hall. The chair may request that Parliamentary Guard prevent the entry of the deputy removed from the session into the session hall for the duration of the disciplinary measure.

**Article 217.**

The deputy shall be entitled to object to the disciplinary measure of removal from a session.

The objection is filed with the Speaker of Parliament within a period of 24 hours after the imposition of the disciplinary measure, while the Speaker shall forward it to all deputies.

The chair shall add the objection to the agenda of the next day, if the session is in progress, or of the next scheduled session.

The Committee on the Constitution, Standing Orders and Political System shall provide an opinion on the objection.

Parliament shall pass the decision on the objection by a majority vote of all present deputies, without discussion and debate, and only the deputy who filed the objection and the rapporteur of the Committee on the Constitution, Standing Orders and Political System shall be entitled to the floor.

**Article 218.**

Upon receiving an objection, Parliament may:

- confirm imposed disciplinary measure,
- annul the disciplinary measure.

Parliament's decision shall be final.

**Article 219.**

The chair may request that any listeners disrupting the order at sessions be removed. In this case the chair may request the removal from the session hall of the listeners or visitors disrupting the order at sessions by the Parliamentary Guard.

Course of sessions

**Article 220.**

Prior to the commencement of sessions, deputies shall enter their names in the attendance roster.

**Article 221.**

After the opening of the session, the chair shall provide the necessary clarifications pertaining to the work of the session and notifications on other preliminary matters.

**Article 222.**

Upon establishing the agenda, discussion and debate shall commence on individual items on the agenda in the order in which they are established on the agenda.

Discussion and debate on individual items on the established agenda shall be conducted regardless of the number of deputies in attendance.

In discussion and debate on items on the established agenda, representatives of deputy clubs shall also be entitled express their positions and they shall have precedence in the order of speakers.

**Article 223.**

Each item on the established agenda shall be discussed and debated and then decided upon at sessions unless these Standing Orders specify that such items shall be decided upon without discussion and debate.

The chair shall ensure that discussion and debate on individual items on the agenda proceed according to the scheduled programme and shall provide interpretations and explanations on procedures to enact laws and other regulations.

At the proposal of the chair, the competent working body or deputy clubs, discussion and debate on two or more items on the established agenda may be conducted jointly.

**Article 224.**

The chair shall close discussion and debate when it is established that there are no more scheduled speakers.

As a rule, the chair shall adjourn a session when all items on the agenda have been resolved.

Decision-making

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**Article 225.**

Decision-making at sessions of Parliament shall require the presence of a majority of deputies, except in cases when the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia or these Standing Orders specify otherwise. As a rule, the chair shall establish the number of those in attendance each time a decision is to be made.

**Article 226.**

Laws, decisions, resolutions, conclusions and other acts of Parliament shall be passed by a majority vote, provided that a majority of deputies are present at a session, unless specified otherwise by the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia and these Standing Orders.

By a majority vote of all deputies, Parliament shall pass:

- decisions to initiate the amendment of the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia and the establishment of draft amendments to the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia,
- laws (core legislation) that refine constitutionally-established human rights and fundamental freedoms, the electoral system, the structure, authority and operating methods of state bodies and the structure and authority of local and regional self-government,
- the National Security Strategy and the Defence Strategy of the Republic of Croatia,
- votes of confidence on the Prime Minister and members of the Government or votes of no confidence on the Prime Minister, the Government as a whole or individual members of the Government,
- decisions to dissolve Parliament,
- the Parliamentary Standing Orders.

**Article 227.**

By a two-thirds majority vote of all deputies, Parliament shall:

- enact the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia and amendments to the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia,
- ratify international treaties whereby an international organisation or alliance is granted authority vested by the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia,
- enact the Constitutional Law on the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Croatia,
- pass the decisions from Article 7(2) and Article 8 of the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia,
- enact constitutional laws (core legislation) whereby the rights of national minorities are regulated,
- pass decisions on the initiation of procedures to ascertain the exceptional accountability of the President of the Republic.

**Article 228.**

When, during the procedures to enact laws at sessions of Parliament pursuant to the provisions of these Standing Orders, decisions are made that precede the enactment of laws and other acts of Parliament in the sense of Articles 226 and 227 of these Standing Orders, a majority vote of all deputies in attendance shall be necessary for their passage, regardless of whether individual laws or acts of Parliament are passed by a majority vote of all deputies or two-thirds majority vote of all deputies, unless the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia or these Standing Orders specify that the decision be passed by a qualified majority.

Voting

**Article 229.**

Voting at sessions shall be public, unless these Standing Orders specify a secret vote.

Public voting shall be conducted by raising hands, roll call or electronically.

Voting by roll call shall be conducted when this is sought by a deputy club or the sponsor of a bill.

Voting by raising hands shall be conducted such that the chair shall first call on deputies to declare whether they are 'in favour' of a bill or proposal, and then call on those 'opposed' and those who 'abstain'.

When establishing the agenda, voting shall be 'in favour' or 'opposed'.

By way of derogation from Paragraph (4) hereof, if less than half of the present deputies vote in favour of an amendment, the chair may immediately conclude that the amendment has been rejected.

Roll-call voting shall be conducted such that each deputy, when called by name, shall stand and state whether he/she is 'in favour' or 'opposed' to a bill or proposal, or state that he/she 'abstains'.

When the calling is complete, those deputies whose votes are not recorded shall be called once more.

Deputies shall be called and their votes counted by the Secretary of Parliament.

**Article 230.**

After voting, the chair shall ascertain whether the decision received the required majority of votes and proclaims the result of the vote, and the votes of deputies who are present in the session hall and did not

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vote 'in favour' or 'opposed' to a bill or proposal and did not declare that they abstained shall be deemed abstained.

The chair shall order a renewed count and once more proclaim the results of the vote at the request of a deputy who seeks a verification of the vote. A verification of the vote must be sought before the chair establishes that an individual decision is passed.

**Article 231.**

As a rule, secret voting shall be conducted for the elections or appointments when the number of candidates is greater than the number of posts being filled.

At the proposal of not less than one tenth of the deputies, Parliament may decide on public voting in the case from Paragraph (1) hereof, provided that the candidate nominated submitted by the Elections, Appointments and Administration Committee is voted on first, and thereafter other candidates in alphabetical order according to their surnames.

**Article 232.**

Secret voting is conducted by ballot. Ballots shall be the same size, colour and form and certified by the seal of Parliament.

The surnames of candidates shall be listed on ballots in alphabetical order.

Ballots shall be prepared by the Secretary of Parliament.

**Article 233.**

A certain number of deputies shall assist the chair and Secretary of Parliament in secret voting.

Deputies who assist the chair in conducting a secret vote shall hand the ballots to deputies.

The hand-over of ballots shall be recorded on the register of deputies by the Secretary of Parliament by circling the number preceding the name of the deputy who is given a ballot.

**Article 234.**

The number of ballot boxes and their location shall be determined by the Secretary of Parliament.

Voting at each ballot box shall be attended by one of the deputies selected to assist the chair.

**Article 235.**

In case of renewed voting, the session shall be discontinued to prepare new ballots.

Renewed voting shall be conducted under the same procedures as the first vote.

**Article 236.**

A deputy may only vote with one ballot, personally.

Deputies vote such that they circle the number preceding the name of the candidate on the ballot.

A ballot on which the circled numbers preceding the names of several candidates are greater than the number of candidates being elected shall be deemed invalid.

Incomplete ballots shall also be deemed invalid, as well as ballots on which new names are written or ballots so completed that the candidate voted for by the deputy cannot be ascertained.

**Article 237.**

After all present deputies cast their ballots and after the chair proclaims the voting over, the results of the vote shall be confirmed in the hall in which the session is being held.

The result of the voting is established on the basis of ballots submitted.

The result of voting shall be established by the chair in the presence of the deputies who assisted him/her in the voting process.

**Article 238.**

The chair shall proclaim the results of the elections and appointments at the same session at which the ballots are cast.

The chair shall proclaim how many deputies out of the total number received ballots, how many deputies out of the total voted, the number of invalid ballots and the number of deputies who voted for the election or appointment of a given candidate.

Thereafter the chair shall proclaim whether the candidates were elected or appointed.

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Elections and Appointments

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Article 239.

Parliament shall elect or appoint officials to Parliament and state bodies and organisations, as well as other institutions pursuant to proposal submitted by authorised sponsors.

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Article 240.

Prior to the commencement of voting, the chair shall inform the deputies of the voting methods and the methods for establishing the results of election or appointment, or recall and dismissal, process.

Article 241.

If the candidates elected or appointed cannot be ascertained because two or more candidates received an equal number of votes, voting shall be repeated only for these candidates.

Article 242.

If the number of candidates being elected does not receive the necessary majority, voting shall be repeated for those candidates who did not receive the necessary majority.

Candidates who did received less than one fifth of the votes of present deputies may not participate in the first repeated vote.

Candidates who received less than one third of the votes of present deputies may not participate in the second repeated vote.

If an individual candidate does not receive the required majority in the second repeated vote, the nomination of this candidate shall be removed from the list of candidate.

Article 243.

The Speaker and Deputy Speakers of Parliament and the chairpersons, deputy chairpersons and members of parliamentary working bodies shall be elected for the duration of their term of office, or until the date of their dismissal.

The dismissal of the Speaker and Deputy Speakers of Parliament may be proposed by deputy clubs and not less than 40 deputies.

The election, appointment and dismissal of the chairpersons, deputy chairpersons and members of parliamentary working bodies shall be conducted at the proposal of the Elections, Appointments and Administration Committee or at the proposal of not less than 15 deputies.

Article 244.

The candidates for election or appointment or candidates for recall or dismissal shall be submitted to Parliament by the Elections, Appointments and Administration Committee unless the Constitution, law and or these Standing Orders stipulate that the nominations for election or appointment or petitions for recall or dismissal are to be submitted by another body or specific number of deputies.

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Minutes

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Article 245.

Minutes shall be recorded on work at sessions.

Minutes shall contain basic data on the work of the session, participation in discussion and debate and the passage of decisions.

The results of voting on individual items shall be recorded in the minutes.

Article 246.

At the beginning of each session, all deputies shall be entitled to remark on the minutes of the preceding session.

The grounds for remarks on the minutes shall be decided upon without discussion and debate. If the remarks are accepted, the corresponding amendments shall be entered into the minutes.

Minutes not subject to remarks, or minutes amended in accordance with accepted remarks, shall be deemed adopted.

Article 247.

Adopted minutes shall be signed by the chair and Secretary of Parliament.

Article 248.

The original minutes of a session of Parliament shall be maintained by the Secretary of Parliament, and after the end of the term of office of Parliament they shall be stored in the archives of Parliament.

Article 249.

Audio recordings shall be made of parliamentary sessions.

The Secretary of Parliament shall be obliged to permit deputies to review the audio recordings of sessions at their request.

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Deputies may, if possible, receive a transcript of audio recordings of sessions in written or electronic form at their own choice.

Deputies and others who spoke at sessions of Parliament may edit their speeches without entering any essential alterations to the text of these speeches. Decision-making on questions as to the grounds of requests for corrections in transcripts of audio recordings of sessions shall be conducted at sessions without discussion and debate.

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## **Public Transparency**

### **Article 250.**

Parliament shall inform the public of the work of Parliament and decisions made therein and of all matters subject to discussion and debate.

Draft acts of Parliament or acts of Parliament may be published in full in the public media or as separate publications.

### **Article 251.**

In the interests of informing deputies and the public of its work, Parliament may publish its bulletin and other publications.

The official bulletin of Parliament, *Izvešća Hrvatskoga sabora*, shall publish:

- overviews of the basic matters subject to discussion and debate at sessions of Parliament,
- individual bills or final drafts of bills and other acts of Parliament,
- individual texts of enacted laws and other legislation and regulations,
- conclusions of Parliament and parliamentary working bodies,
- initiatives, positions and opinions expressed with reference to matters subject to discussion and debate and decision-making in Parliament,
- acts of the President of the Republic,
- brief speeches delivered at sessions of Parliament,
- deputy questions and replies of the Government,
- overviews of the work of the Government,
- a chronicle of the most important events in Parliament, the Office of the President of the Republic and the Government,
- a chronicle of the interparliamentary co-operation of Parliament,
- the biographies of officials elected or appointed by Parliament.

In order to facilitate the comprehensive notification of Parliament and the public of its work, Parliament shall publish its bulletin and other publications, when possible, in electronic and other forms, and make them accessible on the Internet and by audio-visual and multimedia means.

### **Article 252.**

Those documents and materials of Parliament not be made available to the public which, pursuant to special regulations, are declared confidential.

Deputies may not, at sessions, proclaim any of the data from the documents cited in Paragraph (1) hereof.

### **Article 253.**

The methods for handling documents deemed official, military or state secrets shall be governed by a regulation issued by the Secretary of Parliament.

### **Article 254.**

Rules on the public transparency of the work of Parliament and its working bodies shall govern:

- the presence of representatives of civic associations, non-governmental organisations and citizen observers at sessions,
- visits to Parliament by organised groups,
- methods for the audio and visual recording of sessions of Parliament and its working bodies,
- direct radio and television broadcasts during sessions,
- methods for registering domestic and foreign correspondents in Parliament,
- other matters pertaining to the public transparency of the work of Parliament.

The rules from Paragraph (1) hereof shall be published in *Narodne novine*.

### **Article 255.**

Sessions or individual portions thereof of parliamentary working bodies may be held closed to the public

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pursuant to a decision of such working body.

**Article 256.**

Correspondents of the mass media shall be entitled to follow the work of Parliament and its working bodies and inform the public of their work.

Parliamentary working bodies may decide at sessions that correspondents from the mass media may attend sessions even if their discussion on a specific matter is closed to the public. Correspondents of the mass media may only provide that information to the public which is decided upon at the session. The working body may decide at such a session that information on a specific matter may only be released after the end of a specific period.

**Article 257.**

In order to offer assistance and create conditions conducive to the work of representatives of the press and other forms of media in Parliament, they shall be secured the timely delivery of materials and conditions to follow the work at sessions of Parliament and working bodies, interviews with representatives of sponsors or with officials in Parliament and other contacts with correspondents.

**Article 258.**

Parliament may issue transcripts of audio recordings on the course of work at sessions of Parliament with materials delivered to deputies for each item of the agenda of a session attached thereto, which shall be the responsibility of the Secretary of Parliament.

**Article 259.**

In order to make available to the public the most comprehensive and accurate possible information on the results of the work of Parliament and its working bodies, an official release for the press and other forms of media may be issued. Press conferences shall be held on the basis of decisions of the Speaker of Parliament or the Parliamentary Presidency or Parliament.

Press conferences may also be called by parliamentary working bodies based on a decision of that body or the chairperson of that body or the chair of the working body.

Press conferences may also be called by deputy clubs of parliamentary parties.

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**Work of Parliament during Wartime or Under Conditions of Clear and Present Danger to the Independence and Integrity of the Republic of Croatia**

**Article 260.**

During wartime or under conditions of clear and present danger to the independence and integrity of the Republic of Croatia, Parliament shall continue its work in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia.

The work and organisation of Parliament during wartime or under conditions of clear and present danger to the independence and integrity of the Republic of Croatia shall be subject to the application of these Standing Orders unless specified otherwise in its provisions or other acts of Parliament.

**Article 261.**

In the situation described in Article 260 hereof, parliamentary deputies shall be obliged to immediately, either in person or by means of the competent bodies, inform Parliament of their address of residence, work or unit or institution of the armed forces of the Republic of Croatia to which summons to sessions and other notifications pertaining to the performance of deputy duties are to be sent.

**Article 262.**

The high command of the armed forces of the Republic of Croatia, state and other bodies and the Parliamentary Guard shall be obliged to enable parliamentary deputies to attend sessions of working bodies or Parliament and provide all necessary assistance thereto during wartime or under conditions of clear and present danger to the independence and integrity of the Republic of Croatia.

**Article 263.**

The Committee on the Constitution, Standing Orders and Political System shall:

–confirm that it is impossible to convene Parliament and inform the President of the Republic and the Government thereof,

– establish that the circumstances preventing the convening of Parliament have passed and inform the President of the Republic and the Government thereof.

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**Article 264.**

The structure, operating methods and systemisation of the working bodies in Parliamentary Staff Service during wartime or under conditions of clear and present danger to the independence and integrity of the Republic of Croatia shall be determined by the Committee on the Constitution, Standing Orders and Political System at the proposal of the Secretary of Parliament.

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**Parliamentary Staff Service****Article 265.**

Parliament shall establish an administrative service to perform professional, administrative, security, technical and other operations and it shall be called the Parliamentary Staff Service.

Parliament may have joint administrative services with the Office of the President of the Republic and the Government and other bodies in the Republic for the performance of specific tasks from Paragraph (1) hereof.

**Article 266.**

The director of Parliamentary Staff Service shall be the Secretary of Parliament.

The Secretary of Parliament shall direct and co-ordinate the work of Parliamentary Staff Service and be accountable for its work.

In relation to Parliamentary Staff Service, the Secretary of Parliament shall have the status of an official who is the director of a state administrative body.

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**Transitional and Final Provisions****Article 267.**

The opinion of the Committee on the Constitution, Standing Orders and Political System provided in case of interpretations of individual provisions of these Standing Orders and accepted by Parliament shall be component of these Standing Orders.

**Article 268.**

As of the date of entry into force of these Standing Orders, the Standing Orders of the Chamber of Deputies of the Croatian National Parliament (*Narodne novine*, no. 99/95, 8/96 and 89/98) shall cease to be valid.

**Article 269.**

These Standing Orders shall enter into force on the date of their passage and they shall be published in [Narodne novine](#).

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