
CROATIA OUTLINES GOALS FOR DEVELOPMENT, FURTHER EU INTEGRATION

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Croatia's goal is to enter the Schengen area, to prepare for the introduction of the euro and safe borders , Croatian Prime Minister Andrej Plenkovic said at a conference "Croatia that we need" on Monday in Zagreb.

The prime minister expressed satisfaction with the global position of Croatia in the world after ten years of NATO membership and six years of membership in the European Union.

"Today, we have a healthy growth of the economy, an increase in employment and a fall in unemployment, a rise in salaries and a faster trend in the reduction of a public debt," Plenkovic said.

He announced that his government will fight to ensure the survival of shipbuilding in Croatia, but on healthy grounds, not as it was before. The prime minister said that he believes that the investment rating of Croatia will rise again if the current trend continues.

Croatian President Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic said at the conference organized by the Zagreb daily newspaper Vecernji list that Croatia is doing well on the international stage today, but that it has internal challenges.

"The average net salary in Croatia should be 7,500 kuna (1,145 U.S. dollars). That's the minimum I came to after conversations with people around Croatia", the president said.

Grabar-Kitarovic said that Croatian citizens must have greater purchasing power and a better living standard, and that it is important to restore optimism in the country.

A series of proposals for Croatia's promotion, primarily in the field of education and demography, were also presented at the conference.

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