
JUNCKER HOPES CROATIA WILL GET NOD TO JOIN SCHENGEN BY END-OCT - GOVT

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European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker hopes to see a recommendation on Croatia's accession to the EU's Schengen free-travel area by the end of his term in office at the end of October, the Croatian government said.

"I want us to give a recommendation to the Council during the term of this European Commission that Croatia should become part of the Schengen area," the government quoted Juncker as saying in a press release.

He was speaking during a joint news conference with Croatian prime minister Andrej Plenkovic in Zagreb at the end of his two-day visit to the Adriatic state on Friday.

Croatia has set a goal to enter the Schengen area before the start of its six-month presidency of the Council of the EU in January 2020.

Concerning Croatia's aspirations to adopt the euro, Juncker said the country is completely ready to join the European Exchange Rate Mechanism II (ERM II) soon and the Commission will support the country's bid.

Croatian finance minister Zdravko Maric said last month that the government plans to launch its bid to join the euro area within two months. The process is expected to take at least four years to complete, with the first formal step being the entry into ERM II.

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