

The Ministry of Maritime Affairs, Transport and Infrastructure of the Republic of Croatia (HRV) welcomes the opportunity to respond to the consultation on the draft RSPG opinion on the process for EU assistance in bilateral negotiations with third countries and between EU countries. In the framework of Public Consultation Process, we examined thoroughly the draft opinion and consider that the document as a whole gives an excellent guidelines for the process for EU assistance.

However, as the Republic of Croatia is an EU accession country, in proposed RSPG opinion it is unclear how principles and procedures from the opinion are applicable to the accession countries. Respectively, the key points that HRV wishes to emphasize, and which we consider should be reflected in the RSPG opinion, are as follows:

- We think that in paragraph 2 of the opinion should be made explicitly clear that similar principles for EU assistance and use of the “good offices” of the RSPG in bilateral negotiations with third countries and between EU countries are applicable to the accession countries as applied to the EU Member States;
- We think that paragraph 3 of the opinion should be amended in a way that recommended processes for the EU assistance in bilateral negotiations and for use of the „good offices“ should be applicable to the accession countries as applied to the EU Member States.