

Ensuring basic air connectivity in the event of no-deal Brexit – Council sets its position

The EU is taking measures to mitigate the severe disruption to air connectivity for passengers and freight between the EU and the United Kingdom in the event of the UK leaving the EU without a deal. Today, member states' ambassadors in the Council's Permanent Representatives Committee approved a mandate for the Romanian presidency to negotiate with the European Parliament on a proposal which enables UK-licensed carriers to provide basic air transport services between the UK and the remaining 27 member states. These rights will be conditional on equivalent rights being conferred by the UK and subject to conditions ensuring fair competition.

A special provision ensures the right to continue to provide scheduled flights under public service obligations until 26 October 2019, in order to ensure continuity of the public services while national authorities make the necessary adaptations to the new situation.

Limited code-sharing and aircraft leasing arrangements, including wet lease, will be allowed under certain conditions.

If, as a result of Brexit, an air carrier holding an operating licence issued by an EU member state ceases to comply with EU ownership and control requirements, it will have until 26 October 2019 to fully meet all those requirements. To be able to benefit from this exception, air carriers will have two weeks from the entry into force of the regulation to submit a precise and complete plan presenting the measures intended to achieve full compliance with the ownership and control requirements as from 27 October 2019 at the latest.

The regulation would apply until an air transport agreement with the UK enters into force or 30 March 2020, whichever is the sooner.

The first meeting with the Parliament to agree on the final text will take place on 19 February.

Background

According to the overall principles for non-deal Brexit contingency measures, all such measures consist of unilateral EU-level action, on the assumption that the UK will reciprocate. The measures are exceptional in nature and strictly time-limited. The transport connectivity measures are not intended to replicate the status quo under EU law, but rather to preserve basic connectivity between the EU and the UK.

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Indicative programme – Competitiveness Council of 18 and 19 February 2019

Place: Europa building, Brussels

Chairs: Niculae Bădălău, Minister of Economy of Romania
Nicolae Hurduc, Minister for Research and Innovation of Romania

All times are approximate and subject to change

Monday, 18 February 2019

From 08.00

Arrivals

+/- 08.30

Doorstep by Minister Niculae Bădălău

+/- **09.30**

Beginning of the Council meeting (Roundtable)

Adoption of the agenda

Approval of non-legislative A items

Approval of legislative A items ([public session](#))

Internal Market and Industry

+/- 09.45

Competitiveness check-up

+/- 10.30

Impact of Artificial Intelligence on EU Industry ([public session](#))

Council conclusions on the coordinated plan on Artificial Intelligence ([public session](#))

+/- 12.00

Clean Planet for all: strategic long-term vision for a climate neutral economy ([public session](#))

+/- **13.00**

Lunch debate: Competitiveness of the Defense Industry

+/- 15.00

European Semester

+/- 16.30

AOB – Current legislative proposals ([public session](#))

+/- 16.45

(poss) AOB ECJ judgement cancelling Regulation 2016/646 on vehicles tested in real conditions

+/- 17.15

Press conference ([live streaming](#) from JL building press room)

Tuesday, 19 February 2019

from 08.30

Arrivals

+/- 09.00

Doorstep by Minister Nicolae Hurduc

Research

+/- 10.00

Beginning of the Council meeting (Roundtable)

+/- 10.00

Horizon Europe Package: Specific Programme implementing Horizon Europe ([public session](#))

AOB Horizon Europe Package: Framework Programme Regulation ([public session](#))

+/- 13.00

AOB ITER

+/- 13.30

Press conference ([live streaming](#) from JL building press room)

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[Basic road connectivity in the event of no-deal Brexit – Council agrees its position](#)

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[‘MF’ files: two-day coordination meeting at Eurojust](#)

 14 February 2019

On 13 and 14 February, a third coordination meeting was held at Eurojust regarding investigations into alleged criminal activity connected to the law firm ‘MF’.

On the invitation of German and Italian Desks at Eurojust, the Panamanian delegation met with representatives of Andorra, Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Slovenia, Switzerland, the UK and the USA. Europol also attended the meeting.

The 'MF papers' investigation represents an unprecedented case of large-scale international money laundering in which international judicial cooperation has been crucial.

Eurojust is playing a pivotal role in bringing together all the competent authorities of EU Member States and third States, facilitating the exchange of information and ensuring the coordination of investigations.

During the meeting, the Panamanian authorities informed the participants of the state of play of their national proceedings and their new legislation on tax evasion, which will enter into force at the beginning of March and will simplify judicial cooperation with foreign jurisdictions.

Prosecutors from the Office of the Attorney General of Panama made the following statement: *'Panama is a country on its way to overcoming some obstacles identified by international observers, and is now making unprecedented efforts in the fight against organised crime. For these reasons, one of the main priorities of the Attorney General of Panama is to strengthen international cooperation, as we are doing with Eurojust and with the Ibero-American Association of Public Prosecutors, over which we preside.'*

The two Eurojust Vice Presidents, Messrs Klaus Meyer-Cabri and Filippo Spiezia, made the following statement: *'We recognise the spirit of great international cooperation showed by the Panamanian authorities since the first meeting in this "Mossack-Fonseca" case. The new legislation on tax fraud recently adopted by Panama can be considered as a milestone in the fight against organised crime, because it leads to greater worldwide judicial cooperation. We congratulate the Office of the Attorney General of Panama for the excellent results achieved so far in their investigations and we are grateful for the comprehensive cooperation provided to EU authorities.'*

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