

EU-UK relations: Coreper agrees mandate on Channel tunnel railway safety



The EU is working on legislation to ensure the **safe and efficient operation of the Channel Tunnel railway connection** between continental Europe and the United Kingdom (Channel Fixed Link) after the end of the Brexit transition period. Today, the Council's Permanent Representatives Committee agreed on a negotiation mandate on two proposals aimed at maintaining a **single safety authority**, which would continue to apply the **same set of rules** over the whole infrastructure, including in its section under UK jurisdiction.

Currently, all matters concerning the operation of the Channel Fixed Link are supervised by an Intergovernmental Commission set up by the Treaty of Canterbury, signed between France and the UK in 1986.

Under the **Council mandate**, France will be empowered to negotiate an amendment to the Canterbury Treaty and the EU railway safety and interoperability rules will be amended so that the Intergovernmental Commission can be maintained as the safety authority competent for the application of EU law within the Channel Fixed Link.

The draft regulation amending the safety and interoperability provisions will be split into two draft regulations, in order to amend the Statute of the European Court of Justice in a manner that respects the Court's prerogatives while avoiding a delay in the start of the negotiations.

A swift adoption of the draft decision and draft regulation will allow the prompt start of the talks between France and the UK. The adoption of the amendments to the Statute of the ECJ will be essential at the end of these negotiations, before France is authorised to sign and conclude the actual agreement.

The negotiations between the Council and the European Parliament on the two proposals are taking place as a matter of urgency.