

## Twelfth meeting of the Accession Conference with Montenegro at Ministerial level, Brussels, 10 December 2018

Roaming charges ended in the European Union on 15 June 2017. Europeans travelling within EU countries will 'Roam Like at Home' and pay domestic prices for roaming calls, SMS and data. ...

On 23 June 2016 citizens of the United Kingdom (UK) voted to leave the European Union (EU). On 29 March 2017 the UK formally notified the European Council of its intention to leave the EU by...

Over the past 20 years, the European Union has put in place some of the highest common asylum standards in the world. And in the past two years, European migration policy has advanced in leaps and...

'Europe will not be made all at once, or according to a single plan. It will be built through concrete achievements which first create a de facto solidarity.' Robert Schuman 9 May 1950 On 25 March 2017, ...

In response to the illegal annexation of Crimea and deliberate destabilisation of a neighbouring sovereign country, the EU has imposed restrictive measures against the Russian Federation. ...

Enlargement is the process whereby countries join the EU. Since it was founded in 1957, the EU has grown from 6 member countries to 28. Any European country that respects the principles of liberty, ...

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## Press contacts

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The twelfth meeting of the Accession Conference with Montenegro at Ministerial level was held today in Brussels to open negotiations on Chapter 27 – Environment and Climate change.

The European Union delegation was led by Ms Karin Kneissl, Federal Minister for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs on behalf of the Austrian Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The European Commission was represented by Mr Johannes Hahn, Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations. The Montenegrin delegation was led by Prof. Dr. Srdjan Darmanović, Minister of Foreign Affairs, with line Minister Pavle Radulović, responsible for Sustainable Development and Tourism, intervening.

With today's Conference, out of a total of 35 negotiation chapters, 32 chapters have now been opened for negotiations of which 3 chapters have already been provisionally closed. Further Accession Conferences will be planned, as appropriate, in order to take the process forward in the first half of 2019. The accession negotiations were launched in June 2012.

## Chapter opened

Regarding the opening of negotiations on Chapter 27 – Environment and climate change, the Union has closely examined Montenegro's present state of preparations. On the understanding that Montenegro has to continue to make progress in the alignment with and implementation of the *acquis* in this chapter, the EU noted that there are benchmarks that need to be met for the provisional closure of this chapter.

In addition, the EU underlined that it would devote particular attention to monitoring all specific issues mentioned in its common position. Monitoring of progress in the alignment with and implementation of the *acquis* will continue throughout the negotiations. The Conference will have to return to this chapter at an appropriate moment.

The benchmarks for the chapter opened are as follows:

### **Chapter 27 – Environment and Climate change**

- Montenegro continues to align with the horizontal Directives and demonstrates that it will be fully prepared to ensure their effective implementation and enforcement at the date of accession.
- On air quality, Montenegro fully aligns with the revised Directive on the reduction of national emissions of certain atmospheric pollutants

(NEC Directive 2016/2284/EU). Montenegro presents an analysis of cost-effective emission control strategies for 2020 and 2030, which shall serve as a basis for final agreement between the EU and Montenegro on its reduction obligations under the NEC Directive. Montenegro reports on an annual basis its emissions, in line with the Directive and the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution and develops a National Air Pollution Control Programme. Furthermore, Montenegro enhances the preparation for the implementation of the *acquis* in this area, by regularly taking measures to reduce national air pollution, particularly in zones where EU limit values for air quality are exceeded, and by developing or updating air quality plans, as envisaged by the Directive on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe (Directive 2008/50/EC).

- Montenegro decides on its waste management system and dedicates appropriate funding to infrastructure investments, in line with relevant EU legislation, including the waste hierarchy. Montenegro establishes waste prevention programmes, prepares waste management plans (WMP), and adopts measures for the separate collection of waste for paper, metal, plastic and glass.
- Montenegro makes significant progress on *acquis* alignment in the water sector, including drinking water legislation, and Directive 2008/56/EC establishing a framework for Community action in the field of marine environmental policy. Montenegro designates the competent drinking water authorities and develops river basin management plans for each river basin district lying entirely within its territory, including the portions of international river basin districts falling within its territory.
- In the area of nature protection, Montenegro submits the list of proposed Natura 2000 sites, sufficiently covering the habitat types and species in line with the requirements of the Birds and Habitats directives, to the Commission. Montenegro demonstrates the capacity to manage the Natura 2000 network, including by affording the Ulcinj Salina the appropriate protection status and effectively implementing the necessary conservation measures leading to the improvement of its conservation status.
- Montenegro continues its alignment with the *acquis* in the chemicals, noise and civil protection sectors, and demonstrates that it will be fully prepared to ensure the implementation and enforcement of the EU requirements at the date of accession.
- On climate change, Montenegro continues its alignment with the *acquis*, notably by adopting legislation on the functioning of the European Emissions Trading System (EU ETS), in line with the EU ETS Directive 2003/87/EC and its successive amendments. Montenegro further aligns with relevant secondary legislation on monitoring and reporting, accreditation and verification, the Union Registry, free allocation, and auctioning. Montenegro makes sure that the appropriate framework is in place to implement the EU ETS in its entirety regarding the monitoring, reporting, and verification of greenhouse gas emissions.
- Montenegro, in line with the Action Plan for the transposition, implementation and enforcement of the EU *acquis* on environment and climate change, significantly enhances the capacity of the

administrative bodies at all levels, including inspection services, further improves coordination of work and demonstrates that all appropriate administrative structures and adequate training will be in place in good time before accession to enable implementation and enforcement of the *acquis* in all sectors of this chapter.

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## [#COP24: EESC president Luca Jahier calls for new EU governance on climate action](#)



Non-state and subnational actors have so far played a decisive role in action on climate, but they often face unsurmountable obstacles. At the COP 24 climate change conference in Katowice, Poland, on 2-14 December 2018, the president of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), Luca Jahier, stressed how urgent it was to tackle climate change and underlined the fact that Europe needed to embrace a new mechanism for sustainability that included multi-stakeholder governance.

“When we look at where we are today,” said Mr Jahier, “seeing how strong the disconnect is between the absolute urgency to act now and the slow pace in which the governments are moving or even regressing in some cases, we understand how important it is for others to assume leadership and demonstrate the strong determination and huge potential from the bottom-up movement.” Sending a clear message at COP 24, the EESC president highlighted the absolute necessity of urgent climate action: “We either invest in concrete action against climate change or we will have to bear serious consequences. It will be too late to save our planet and our future generations. We need to involve civil society. We have to act now and we have to do it quickly!”

It is essential to embrace a new EU governance structure on climate action and sustainability by adopting a coordinated and multi-stakeholder approach. “Europe must be sustainable – or it will simply cease to be,” declared Mr Jahier, adding that only by combining efforts from local communities, non-governmental and civil society organisations, businesses, researchers and multi-level governments would it be possible to spur robust climate action and effect positive change and thus speed up both low-carbon development and sustainable development. “Climate action must become the new ‘business as usual’ and must involve all actors in the transformation,” Mr Jahier went on to note. “Nobody must be left behind. We cannot develop solutions without including the voices of those who are most impacted and vulnerable.”

The EESC delegation at COP 24 also included EESC vice-president for communication **Isabel Caño** and EESC members **Stefan Back**, **Rudy De Leeuw**, **Tellervo Kylä-Harakka-Ruonala**, **Cillian Lohan** and **Mindaugas Maciulevičius**. They discussed the vital contribution of bottom-up initiatives and how to fund climate action with representatives of civil society and other organisations from all over the world.

- **Permanent involvement of grass-roots organisations**

Local governments, business and civil society networks have played a central role in the shift towards a low-carbon and climate-resilient economy through their bottom-up initiatives. They have made commitments in a number of areas to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. They should therefore be continuously involved in climate change negotiations and in the implementation of the Paris Agreement.

These non-state and subnational actors face many difficulties when it comes to stepping up climate action. For this reason, the EESC has called for a "[European Dialogue on Non-State Climate Action](#)" to strengthen such climate action by European non-state organisations. Multi-stakeholder dialogue, policy instruments and toolkits, for instance through the [International Climate Governance Coalition \(ICGC\)](#), could help their climate action to take place worldwide.

- **Funding a sustainable Europe**

In order to guarantee the appropriate funding needed to achieve the transition to a zero-carbon economy and a sustainable Europe by 2050, we need to support projects that can unite Europe's strengths in the interests of workers, businesses and all Europeans. The EESC has recently proposed a finance-climate pact for high-quality jobs. The aim is to redirect the money that could otherwise bring about a new financial bubble towards the fight against climate change and the real economy, providing a new roadmap and an integrated plan. In the words of **Mr De Leeuw**, author of the [EESC opinion](#): "40% of the EU budget should be devoted to the fight against climate change and its consequences from the environmental, economic and social perspective."

It is important not only to provide financial support, but also to make existing financing mechanisms accessible for non-state climate actors. "We need to unlock more and better climate action by shifting the approach to climate finance access," said **Mr Lohan**, who drafted the [EESC opinion](#) that will be put to the vote at this week's plenary session. He went on to conclude: "It is crucial to develop and adapt financial mechanisms, provide access to information and knowledge sharing on sources of finance, adapt finance allocation criteria to the specific needs of local actors and, finally, propose a strategy for financing micro-projects."

## **Background**

For further information on the work carried out by the EESC on climate change, please consult our website:

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# Ninth meeting of the Accession Conference with Serbia at Ministerial level, Brussels, 10 December 2018

## Press contacts

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The ninth meeting of the Accession Conference with Serbia at Ministerial level was held today in Brussels to open negotiations on Chapter 17 – Economic and monetary policy and Chapter 18 – Statistics.

The European Union delegation was led by Ms Karin KNEISSL, the Austrian Federal Minister for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, on behalf of the Austrian Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The European Commission was represented by Mr Johannes HAHN, Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations. The Serbian delegation was led by Ms Jadranka JOKSIMOVIĆ, Minister of European integration.

With today's Conference, 16 negotiation chapters have now been opened for negotiations out of a total of 35, of which 2 chapters have already been provisionally closed. Further Accession Conferences will be planned, as appropriate, in order to take the process forward in the first half of 2019. The accession negotiations were launched in January 2014.

## Chapters opened

Regarding the opening of negotiations on Chapter 17 – Economic and monetary policy and Chapter 18 – Statistics, the Union has closely examined Serbia's present state of preparations. On the understanding that Serbia has to continue to make progress in the alignment with and implementation of the *acquis* in these chapters, the EU noted that there are benchmarks that need to be met for provisional closure of these chapters.

In addition, the EU underlined that it would devote particular attention to monitoring all specific issues mentioned in its common positions. Monitoring of progress in the alignment with and implementation of the *acquis* will continue throughout the negotiations. The Conference will have to return to these chapters at an appropriate moment.

As regards the benchmarks, the opened chapters may only be provisionally closed once it is agreed by the EU that the following benchmarks are met:

## **Chapter 17 – Economic and monetary policy**

- Serbia has aligned its legal framework with the *acquis* in order to ensure full central bank independence, the prohibition of monetary financing of the public sector, the prohibition of privileged access by public authorities to financial institutions, and the full integration of its central bank into the European System of Central Banks.
- Serbia has aligned its legal framework to comply with requirements for national budgetary frameworks as laid down in Council Directive 2011/85/EU.
- Serbia has fulfilled the criterion of being a functioning market economy.

## **Chapter 18 – Statistics**

- Serbia submits key national accounts data in accordance with European System of National and Regional Accounts (ESA) 2010 and other relevant requirements together with the required detailed description of the methodology used. Eurostat has verified the data and the descriptions presented, and confirmed appropriate alignment with the EU rules.

Serbia presents to the Commission a road map for the transmission of the remaining tables from the ESA 2010 Transmission Programme and the not yet implemented methodological issues.

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