

# Major step against organised crime in Western Balkans

## **First Liaison Prosecutor for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia at Eurojust**

23 November 2018

**On 12 November 2018, Ms Lenche Ristoska took up her duties as the first Liaison Prosecutor for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (fYROM) at Eurojust. Her appointment is an important contribution to the growing relationship between the European Union and the Western Balkan region in the area of criminal law.**


Since 2008, Eurojust has established an increasingly strong framework for structural judicial cooperation in the fight against serious cross-border crime between EU Member States and the Western Balkan States. Cooperation agreements, which unlock the possibility of safe and efficient exchange of judicial information and sharing of evidence, have been concluded with Albania, Montenegro and fYROM. The agreements also allow for the partner States to take part in, and benefit from, all the practical cooperation tools offered through Eurojust to prosecute serious, transnational crime cases.

Since the conclusion of the cooperation agreement with fYROM in 2008, prosecutors from various EU Member States and fYROM have worked together in a growing number of cases, including in investigations of swindling and fraud, drug trafficking and migrant smuggling.



The cooperation agreement also provides for the appointment of a Liaison Prosecutor to Eurojust. Ms Ristoska, a prosecutor from the Special Public Prosecutors' Office, is the second Liaison Prosecutor from a Western Balkan State at Eurojust after the arrival of the Liaison Prosecutor for Montenegro earlier this year. Liaison Prosecutors work side by side with magistrates from the EU Member States and play an important role in facilitating ongoing investigations of serious cross-border organised crime.

*Upon her arrival, Ms Ristoska said: 'It is a great honour and privilege to be the first Liaison Prosecutor for my country at Eurojust. As soon as I joined the Eurojust family, I witnessed the inspiring working atmosphere and deep commitment of all employees. I strongly believe that my country's presence at Eurojust will contribute to enhancing international cooperation in the fight against transnational organised crime. I am also confident that this will be beneficial not only for my country but also for all countries with which international cooperation exists or will be established.'*

 *Ms Lenche Ristoska is warmly welcomed by Mr Ladislav Hamran, President of Eurojust. Photos © Eurojust*

### **Quick facts**

Ms Ristoska graduated with honours from the Law Faculty of the St Cyril and Methodius University of Skopje and obtained a degree in law. In 2008, she passed her Bar Examination. Currently, she is working on her master thesis in the area of seizure of illegally gained assets.

In 2013, Ms Ristoska was appointed as public prosecutor at the Primary Public Prosecutor's Office of Skopje, after graduating from the Academy for Judges and Public Prosecutors. In the Primary Public Prosecutor's Office of Skopje, she worked in the Department for International Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, executing incoming mutual legal assistance (MLA) requests, as well as in the Department for Drugs, Sexual and Violent Crimes.

In November 2015, she was appointed as prosecutor to the Special Public Prosecutor's Office, where she was in charge of matters of international cooperation and MLA requests. She also conducted national criminal investigations into complex cases of illegal interception of communications, abuse of official powers, corruption, illegal political party financing and money laundering.

### **Background**

The negotiation of cooperation agreements between Eurojust and Western Balkan States and the appointment of Liaison Prosecutors to Eurojust are facilitated through the [Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance 2014-2020 \(IPA II Project\)](#) 'Countering Serious Crime in the Western Balkans', which fosters structural judicial cooperation between EU Member States and the Western Balkan States. The project is jointly funded by the European Union, Germany and Italy.

### **More information**

[Q & A on Eurojust's cooperation with Albania and the Western Balkans](#)

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## **Schluss mit Gewalt gegen Frauen: Erklärung der Europäischen Kommission und der Hohen Vertreterin zum Internationalen Tag gegen Gewalt an Frauen**

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. ...

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## [Antitrust: Commission opens investigation into airline ticket distribution services](#)

Commissioner Margrethe **Vestager**, in charge of competition policy said: *“The liberalisation of the EU aviation market more than 25 years ago has brought significant benefits to EU citizens, including more choice and lower ticket prices. Our investigation into Amadeus and Sabre focuses on possible restrictions in competition in the market for airline ticket distribution services. We are concerned that such restrictions could create barriers to innovation and raise ticket distribution costs, ultimately raising ticket prices for travellers.”*

Amadeus and Sabre are leading worldwide suppliers of Computerised Reservation Systems, also known as Global Distribution Systems. These systems aggregate information about flight schedules, seat availability and ticket prices from multiple airlines. They enable travel agents and travel management companies (both online and brick-and-mortar) to compare airline services and reserve and issue tickets on behalf of travellers.

The Commission will investigate whether certain terms in Amadeus’ and Sabre’s agreements with airlines and travel agents may restrict the ability of airlines and travel agents to use alternative suppliers of ticket distribution services. This may make it harder for suppliers of new ticket distribution services to enter the market, as well as increase distribution costs for airlines, which are ultimately passed on in the ticket prices paid by consumers.

The agreements under investigation may breach EU competition rules which prohibit agreements between companies that prevent, restrict or distort competition within the EU’s Single Market ([Article 101](#) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU)).

The Commission will now carry out its in-depth investigation as a matter of priority. The opening of a formal investigation does not prejudice its outcome.

### **Background**

**Amadeus**, based in Spain, and **Sabre**, based in the US, are both companies that supply IT products to the travel industry worldwide, including booking systems enabling travel agents to book flights and other travel services, and software that manages airlines' reservations and inventory.

[Article 101](#) TFEU prohibits anticompetitive agreements and concerted practices which may affect trade and prevent or restrict competition. The implementation of this provision, which can also be applied by national competition authorities, is defined in the Antitrust Regulation ([Council Regulation No 1/2003](#)).

Article 11(6) of the Antitrust Regulation provides that the opening of proceedings by the Commission relieves the competition authorities of the Member States of their competence to also apply EU competition rules to the practices concerned. Article 16(1) further provides that national courts must avoid giving decisions which would conflict with a decision contemplated by the Commission in proceedings that it has initiated.

There is no legal deadline for bringing an antitrust investigation to an end. The duration of an investigation depends on a number of factors, including the complexity of the case, the extent to which the companies concerned cooperate with the Commission and the exercise of the rights of defence.

More information on the investigation will be available on the Commission's [competition website](#), in the public [case register](#) under the case number AT.40617 Airline ticket distribution (Amadeus) and AT.40618 Airline ticket distribution (Sabre).

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## [Ententes et abus de position dominante: la Commission ouvre une enquête sur des services de distribution de billets d'avion](#)

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