



Informal video conference of transport ministers 28 September 2020

Chair: Andreas Scheuer, German Federal Minister for Transport and Digital Infrastructure

The **meeting** will **start** at 10.00.

Ministers will hold a policy debate on a **pandemic contingency** plan for the European **freight** transport sector.

Under 'any other business', the Commission will brief ministers on its amended proposal for the Single European Sky (SES 2+).

Both items will be livestreamed on the Council website.

Online **press conference**: at the end of the meeting, +/-14.00.

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[Transport ministers' video conference webpage](#)

[Press conferences and public events by video streaming](#)

[Video coverage in broadcast quality \(MPEG4\) and photo gallery](#)

¹ This note has been drawn up under the responsibility of the Press Office.

Pandemic contingency plan for the European freight transport sector

Ministers will hold a policy debate on a pandemic contingency plan for the European freight transport sector. The aim of the discussion is to provide impetus for further steps to improve the sector's preparedness for future pandemics.

Drawing on the experience gained during the COVID-19 pandemic, the presidency deems it important to carry on with the successful actions pursued in recent months, such as regular information sharing between the national contact points of member states' transport ministries and targeted EU contingency measures for maintaining freight transport operations.

The presidency considers that during a pandemic, critical and systemically relevant infrastructures and transport services must be kept functional to the greatest extent possible, and critical and systemically relevant processes interrupted as a result of specific circumstances must be able to resume as swiftly as possible. The presidency considers that this requires clear guidelines and a sound organisation of responsibilities at European and national levels.

On this basis, the presidency has prepared the following **questions to structure the ministers' discussion**:

- *Should a pandemic and crisis contingency plan for European freight transport only comprise regulations and recommendations applicable at the level of the EU or is it to address also individual member states and transport operators with best practice recommendations?*
- *To what extent are government departments responsible for health and internal affairs and, if necessary, also other departments to be involved in the preparation of a pandemic and crisis contingency plan for European freight transport?*
- *How should information on the state of affairs and on special provisions in times of pandemic/crisis that is relevant to the freight sector be gathered across Europe, or, in other words, what information should be collected and distributed by which institution?*
- *What aspects of passenger transport should be coordinated or controlled throughout the EU in the medium or long term when there is a pandemic?*

The presidency is also preparing Council conclusions on this topic. Work on the draft conclusions will continue in the working party, with a view to their swift adoption by the Council.

Both the debate and the conclusions will provide input for the Commission for further work in this area.

The presidency will prepare a summary of the debate which will be made available to the public on the Council website.

[COVID-19: travel and transport \(background information\)](#)

[Travel and transportation during the coronavirus pandemic \(European Commission\)](#)

Other business:

Single European Sky

The Commission will brief ministers on its amended proposal for the recast of the Single European Sky regulation (SES 2+) ([10840/20](#)) and a proposal for a regulation amending the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) Basic regulation ([10841/20](#)). The aim of amending the EASA regulation is to entrust the EASA with the role of a Performance Review Body of the Single European Sky. The Commission presented these proposals on 22 September 2020.

The Commission launched the [Single European Sky \(SES\) initiative](#) in 1999 to improve the performance of air traffic management and air navigation services through better integration of European airspace. The second SES package entered into force in 2009 and was mainly aimed at the implementation of a performance-oriented model of economic regulation.

The Commission proposed an interim update of the SES rules, called Single European Sky 2+, in 2013. The Council agreed on a general approach in December 2014, but the file was blocked because of the disputed question of its application to Gibraltar airport.

Since 2014, the aviation context has evolved and there is a general understanding that the Council position from 2014 is no longer a good starting point for discussions with the European Parliament.

In December 2019 the Transport Council held a policy debate on the future of the Single European Sky to guide the Commission's work in this area. The presidency concluded the debate by inviting the Commission to reconsider its SES2+ legislative proposal and to provide detailed information to justify new measures and to analyse their potential benefits and consequences.

[Questions and Answers – Single European Sky: for an efficient and sustainable air traffic management \(European Commission\)](#)

[Clean and sustainable mobility for a climate neutral EU \(background information\)](#)
