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## **Travel packages: Council agrees on general approach to update rules**

The Council agreed on a general approach for the reform of the Travel Package Directive, on the basis of a compromise text prepared by the Presidency.

The revised directive will extend the current protection for traditional pre-arranged packages to combinations of separate travel services, in particular if sold online.

An overwhelming majority of EU tour operators and travel agents are SMEs, which are set to greatly benefit from the reform. It will cut red tape and thus reduce the average cost of offering packages. By harmonising rules and compliance costs, the new conditions will favour a level playing field. Additionally, removing obstacles to cross-border trade will open up more opportunities for businesses, particularly SMEs, to expand their activities across borders. This will generate a broader choice of travel agents and holiday products and may therefore lead to cheaper prices for consumers.

Consumers buying travel services are already protected by a wide range of EU and national rules. But the travel market has been deeply transformed, notably by the internet, since common rules were adopted 20 years ago, and the new market environment does no longer meet the needs of consumers and businesses.

The agreement allows starting negotiations with the European Parliament with a view to concluding the reform as soon as possible. The Parliament adopted its position at first reading on 12 March 2014.

[Text of the general approach on travel packages](#)

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