Empowering Austria to amend its existing bilateral road transport agreement with Switzerland with a view to authorising cabotage operations in the course of the provision of international road passenger transport services by coach and bus in the border regions between the two countries

2025/0407(COD) - 18/12/2025 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to empower Austria to amend its existing bilateral road transport agreement with Switzerland in order to authorise cabotage operations in the course of the provision of international road passenger transport services by coach and bus in the border regions between the two countries.

PROPOSED ACT: Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: the European Parliament decides in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure and on an equal footing with the Council.

BACKGROUND: the border regions of Austria and Switzerland are closely integrated. Many Austrians commute to work in Switzerland and vice versa and there is vibrant cross-border passenger traffic by road. A number of bus and coach services are offered which cross the border and thus connect the border regions of the two countries.

The two-way carriage of passengers and goods by road between Switzerland and the EU is regulated by the Agreement between the European Community and the Swiss Confederation on the Carriage of Goods and Passengers by Rail and Road ('Land Transport Agreement').

Currently, the Land Transport Agreement does not authorise any cabotage operations in road passenger transport by coach and bus. However, Article 20(2) of the Land Transport Agreement specifically allows the continued exercise of pre-existing cabotage rights provided there is no discrimination between EU carriers and there will be no distortion of competition. It is therefore appropriate to authorise such operations in the course of the provision of international passenger transport services by coach and bus in the respective border regions of Switzerland and Austria.

CONTENT: the purpose of this proposal is to empower Austria to amend its existing bilateral road transport agreement with Switzerland with a view to authorising cabotage operations during the provision of international passenger transport services by coach and bus in the border regions between the two countries.

In order to ensure that the cabotage operations concerned do not excessively alter the functioning of the internal market for coach and bus services, as established by Regulation (EC) No 1073/2009, their authorisation should be conditional upon there being no discrimination between carriers established within the Union and no distortion of competition.

For the same reason, cabotage operations should only be authorised in the border regions of Austria in the course of the provision of passenger transport services by coach and bus between Austria and Switzerland, namely the administrative districts of Bludenz, Bregenz, Dornbirn, Feldkirch in the region of Vorarlberg and the district of Landeck in the region of Tyrol.