Datalink in Europe: What Are The Rules?

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Key Points – Updated 10 Jan 2024

- **There is a mandate for Datalink <u>equipage</u> for flights above FL285 throughout Europe. There are various different exemptions for this.**

- **This mandate only applies to aircraft with ATN Datalink. If your aircraft only has FANS 1/A, you don't need to comply – but you also won't be able to get CPDLC across most of Europe.**

- **There are also some places where Datalink <u>logon</u> is mandatory.**

Datalink in Europe can be bamboozling – multiple chunks of airspace, all in close proximity to each other, all with varying levels of operating capability when it comes to CPDLC. Plus there's a Logon List to consider. And a Datalink Mandate. And different considerations depending on what kind of Datalink you've got onboard…

So here's a simple guide on how it all works, and what the rules are.

Is there a Datalink mandate in Europe?

Yes. The European Datalink mandate is for **Datalink <u>equipage</u> for flights above FL285** throughout Europe. *(<u>Equipage</u> – not necessarily for <u>logon</u>! More on that later…)*

Is my aircraft exempt?

Quite possibly – many aircraft are exempt from the equipage mandate, the main ones being:

1. Aircraft with a certificate of airworthiness first issued before 1 Jan 2018 and fitted prior to this date with FANS 1/A.

2. Aircraft with 19 seats or less and a MTOW of 45359 kg (100000 lbs) or less, with a first individual certificate of airworthiness issued before 5 Feb 2020.

3. Aircraft in this list (Annex I)

4. Aircraft in this list (Annex II) with a CofA issued before 5 Feb 2020

You can find these rules and exemptions in this EU doc (updated in Sep 2023).

The Logon List

This is what you need to get registered on to get CPDLC service when flying in:

- **Switzerland**

- **Germany**

- **Maastricht UAC** (i.e. the upper airspace above FL245 over Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg – one of Europe's busiest and most complex airspace areas.)

- **Poland** from some time around November 2024.

If you get your aircraft added to the Logon List, that means you'll be able to use CPDLC in these areas and will probably get better directs and faster climbs. However, if your avionics are **not eligible to be on the Logon List, ATC will not restrict you** to the flight levels below FL285.

The Logon List is basically to ensure that aircraft with buggy avionics don't ruin the network for everyone else – including ATC.

For more info, including details of **how to get your aircraft registered on the Logon List**, check Eurocontrol's dedicated page here.

Important to note: **the Logon List only applies to ATN aircraft – not FANS 1/A.** So essentially, if your aircraft only has FANS 1/A, you don't need to register – but you also won't be able to get CPDLC across most of Europe *(more on that below...)*

Where can I get CPDLC in Europe?

As of Jan 2024, these places:
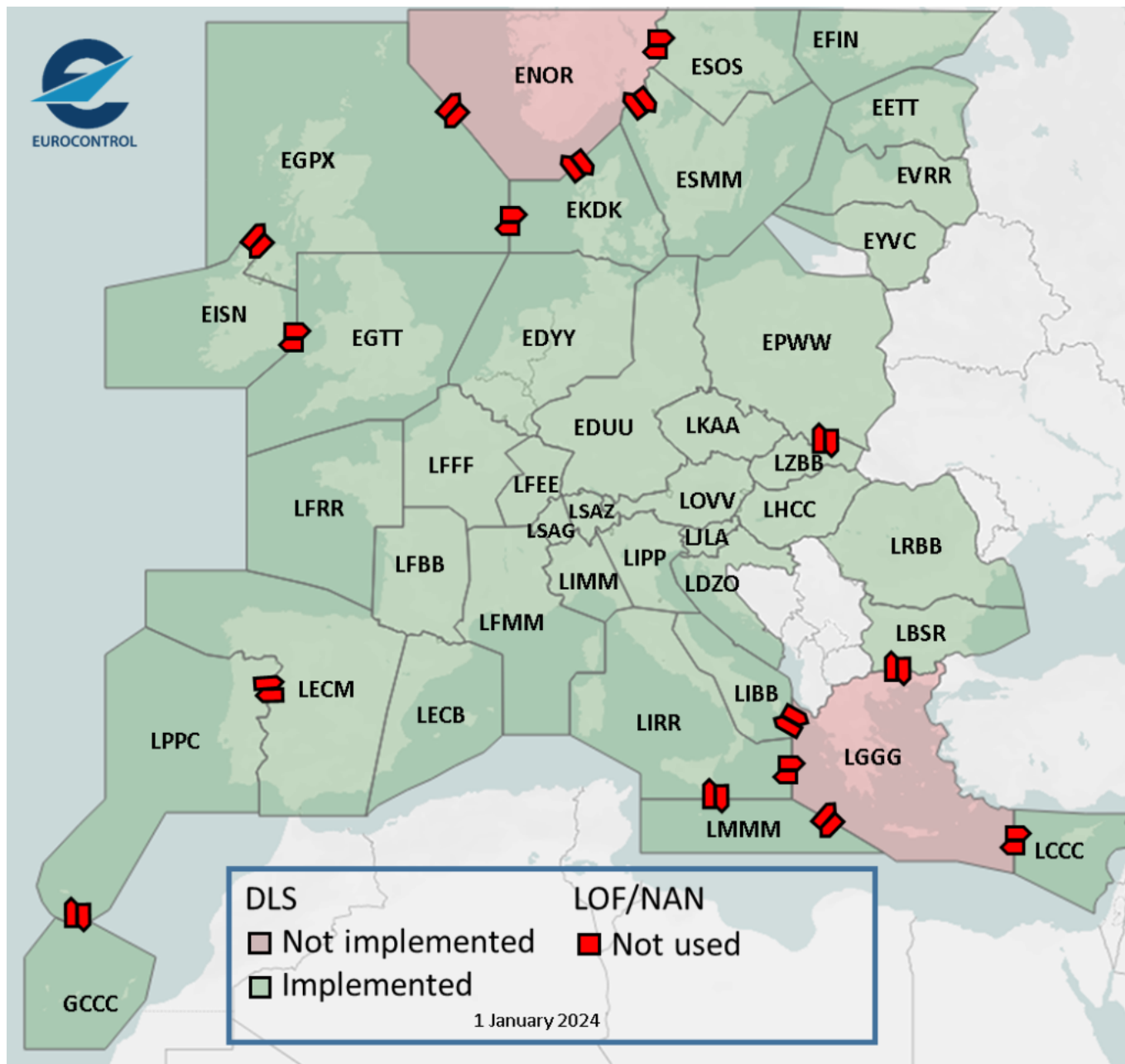
For more info about which FIRs provide Datalink, and at what flight levels, check here.

Is CPDLC <u>logon</u> mandatory?

The European Datalink mandate is for CPDLC <u>equipage</u>, not for logon.

<mark>But yes, provided you've got ATN CPDLC, there are some places where <u>logon</u> is mandatory:</mark>

- **Maastricht UAC** [EDUU] and **Karlsruhe UAC** [EDYY] above FL285 (source: Eurocontrol). *And from 1 Jan 2024, Maastricht UAC will start reporting aircraft which are not compliant with the mandatory logon to the relevant NSAs. We heard this issue is especially true for bizjets – around half of which are capable but don't log on!*

- **Cyprus** [LCCC] above FL285 (source: AIP GEN 3.4)

- **Hungary** [LHCC] above FL285 (source: AIP GEN 3.4)

- **Finland** [EFIN] above FL095 (source: AIP GEN 3.4)

- **Sweden** [ESMM Malmo, ESOS Stockholm] above FL285 (source: AIP GEN 3.4)

- **Romania** [LRBB] above FL285 (source: AIP GEN 3.4)

- **Serbia and Montenegro** [LYBA] above FL205 (source: AIP GEN 3.4)

- **Czech Republic** [LKAA] above FL195 (source: AIP GEN 3.4)

- **France** [LFFF Paris, LFEE Reims, LFMM Marseille, LFBB Bordeaux, LFRR Brest] above FL195 (source: AIC 10/23 and AIP GEN 3.4)

- **Switzerland** [LSAG Geneva, LSAZ Zurich] above FL145 (source: AIP GEN 3.4)

And some others coming soon:

- 18 April 2024: **Slovakia** [LZBB Bratislava] above FL285 (source: AIP GEN 3.4)

- May 2024: **Bulgaria**

- Mid 2024: **Croatia**

- Mid 2024: **Slovenia**

- Mid 2024: **Spain**

- Late 2024: **Poland**

For the countries listed above where we don't quite know the exact dates yet – these will be in the AIRACs which haven't been published yet. *Know of anywhere else that should be in this list? Let us know.*

As of Feb 2024 *(after some issues with the new LYBA logon code for Serbia and Montenegro which you can read about here)* Eurocontrol are asking operators to **make sure their aircraft avionics ATN addressing database is up to date**, to include all the right codes as per the latest version of ICAO EUR Doc 028.

My plane only has FANS 1/A. Can I get CPDLC in Europe?

The only bits of airspace in Europe where you can still get CPDLC using FANS 1/A are:

- **EGTT/London, EGPX/Scottish, EISN/Shannon FIRs.**

- **GCCC/Canarias FIR.**

- **LRBB/Bucaresti FIR.**

Everywhere else in Europe is only capable of working with ATN.

As of Aug 2021, **Maastricht Upper Airspace (MUAC)** no longer supports FANS 1/A. Dual stack aircraft in MUAC airspace must be reconfigured to logon via ATN, and aircraft with only FANS 1/A will continue to supported by conventional VHF.

What should I put in my FPL?

Got ATN Datalink? Put **J1** in field 10 of the flight plan.

Exempt from the mandate? Put **Z** in field 10 and **DAT/CPDLCX** in field 18 of the flight plan. If you don't, ATC won't know you're exempt, and you may struggle to fly above FL285!

One other thing – you should either file J1 or DAT/CPDLCX, not the two together. Flight plans with this wrong filing will be rejected.

Any more questions?

This EASA Q&A site is a good place to try.

Failing that, send us an email at news@ops.group, and we'll do our best to get it answered for you!