

## Road charges in the EU: a fairer and environmentally friendlier system

**New rules on road use charges will ensure fairer rates across Europe and help reduce CO2 emissions of vehicles.**

On 25 October MEPs voted in favour of new rules on road use charges in the EU to guarantee equal treatment of road users and to help member states reach CO2 emission reduction targets in the transport sector. French S&D member [Christine Revault D'Allonnes Bonnefoy](#) is the MEP responsible for steering the legislation through Parliament.

According to the new regulation, all light and heavy duty vehicles in the EU will be charged depending on their actual road use and the pollution generated. To this end, EU countries using time-based charges (vignette) will switch to distance-based charges (tolls) from 2023 in the case of trucks and buses, and from 2027 for vans and minibuses.

The changes will apply only to the 136,706km of roads and motorways making up the EU's [trans-European transport network](#) and only where road charges already apply. Member states will still have the option not to levy tolls.

### Why road charges exist

- To cover or contribute to the cost of constructing new roads and maintaining existing infrastructure
- To reduce peaks of traffic, for example applying higher prices in more congested times and areas
- To reduce environmental and noise pollution, for instance by applying cheaper rates to greener vehicles.

### More environmental-friendly vehicles

EU countries will have to set different road charging rates depending on the level of CO2 emissions. Charges for zero-emission vehicles would be 50% below the lowest rate, to encourage the use of vehicles that are less harmful to the environment.

Parliament also proposes to introduce, or maintain where they already exist, extra traffic congestion charges. Member states may, however, decide to exclude buses and coaches from

these extra charges in order to promote public transport.

## **Fair treatment of road users**

Current EU rules on road charges only apply to trucks of more than 12 tonnes and don't include buses, coaches or vans. MEPs back the idea of applying road charges to all vehicles carrying goods or passengers from 2020, to ensure hauliers and drivers are treated fairly.

Countries would be allowed to set discounts and reductions for frequent users of cars, minibuses and vans, to boost mobility from remote areas and the outskirts of cities.

The new rules will also set price limits to the short-term vignettes that some EU countries impose on drivers of passenger cars. MEPs also want vignettes to be available for shorter periods of one day and one week in all countries using this system.

## **Next steps**

Once the Council has voted on its position, the Parliament can start negotiations with member states.

## **What is the difference between tolls and vignettes?**

- Tolls are road charges based on distance or area, typically paid at physical road barriers and toll gates. They might vary according to vehicle type or time of the day and can be electronic.
- Vignettes are time-based charges. Road users have to buy a sticker or document to be placed on the vehicle's windscreen, allowing use of the infrastructure for a fixed period.

## **Find out more**

[Press release](#)

[Legislative procedure](#)

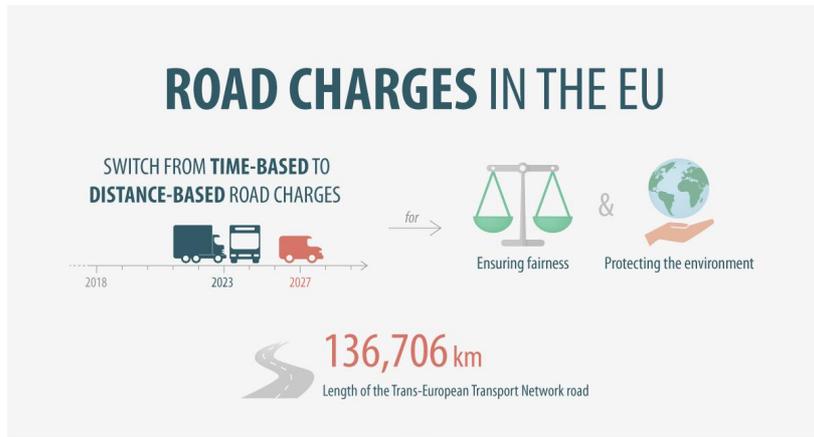
[Briefing: revision of the Eurovignette Directive \(October 2018\)](#)

[Briefing: road charges for private vehicles in the EU \(May 2016\)](#)

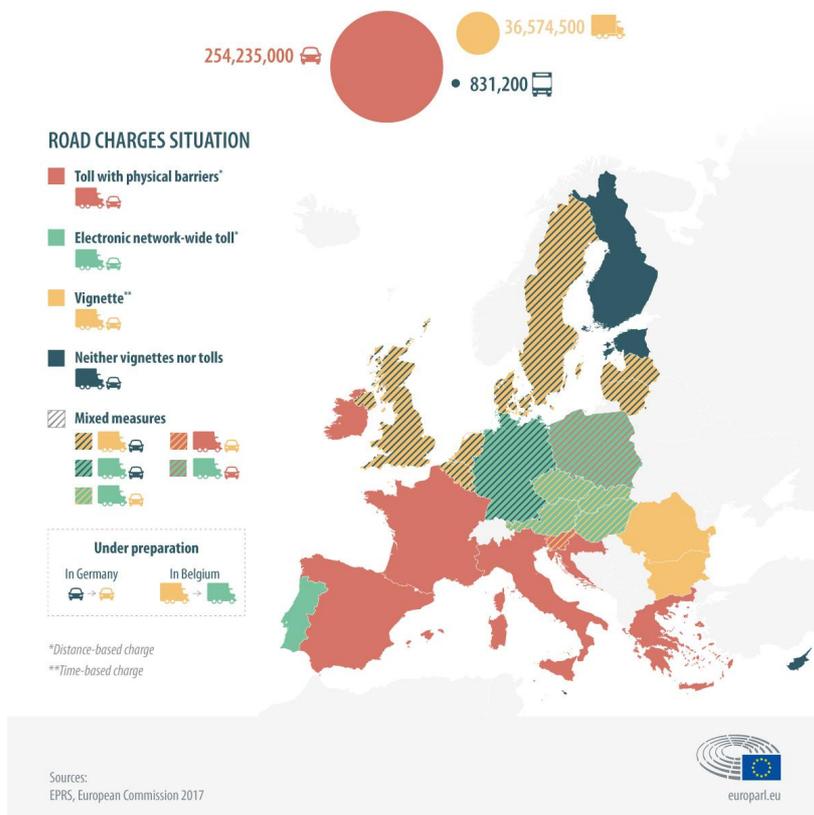


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MEPs are calling for a fairer road charges system ©AP Images/European Union-EP



### CURRENT SYSTEM



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