

Charging of heavy goods vehicles

In May 2017, the European Commission adopted a legislative proposal for a directive amending Directive 1999/62/EC on the charging of heavy goods vehicles for the use of certain infrastructures (known as the Eurovignette Directive) that would substantially modify the existing legislation. The European Parliament is due to vote during its October II plenary session on the May 2018 report on the proposal, from its Committee on Transport and Tourism.

Background

Presented within the context of the Commission's first 'Europe on the move' package, this initiative is linked to the [energy union strategy](#), which inter alia envisaged a road transport package, including more efficient infrastructure pricing, and the Commission's [strategy for low-emission mobility](#). It is also in line with the Commission's 2011 [white paper on transport](#) that called for a move towards full application of 'user pays' and 'polluter pays' principles as a means to achieve a competitive and resource-efficient transport system. It was presented along with a second [proposal](#) to amend Directive 1999/62/EC, focusing on certain provisions on vehicle taxation, as well as the [revision](#) of the European Electronic Tolling Service (EETS) Directive.

European Commission proposal

[Directive 1999/62/EC](#) on the charging of heavy goods vehicles for the use of certain infrastructures, only applies to HGVs, i.e. trucks or lorries over a certain laden weight. The evaluation of the current [legislation](#) highlighted a number of shortcomings and problem areas that road charging could tackle, in particular the disparities in national road-charging policies and the lack of harmonisation when it comes to the type of charges and type of charge-collection technologies used; the fact that time-based charges – authorised by the directive – do not seem to be effective in covering infrastructure costs, incentivising cleaner, more efficient operations, or reducing congestion; the fact that the directive covers HGVs only, implying notably that other vehicles do not benefit from any rules guaranteeing non-discriminatory road charging, nor does it cover CO₂ emissions, although it addresses other externalities such as air pollution and noise.

On 31 May 2017, the Commission adopted a [proposal](#) 'to make progress in the application of the "polluter pays" and "user pays" principles'. It proposes to substantially amend the existing directive, in particular by extending its scope to all heavy duty vehicles (HDV) and light duty vehicles (LDV); by gradually phasing out the use of time-based user charges (vignettes) first, for HGVs and buses and coaches and then for passenger cars and vans; by modifying the rules regarding external-cost charging, mark-up, variation of charges, reporting requirements and use of revenues.

European Parliament position

On 24 May 2018, Parliament's Committee on Transport and Tourism (TRAN) adopted its [report](#) on the proposal. It supports the Commission's approach but seeks to reinforce further the 'user pays' and 'polluter pays' principles in a number of areas. During the June 2018 plenary session, Parliament had confirmed the TRAN committee's decision to enter into interinstitutional (trilogue) negotiations. With the Council yet to reach its position, the TRAN committee report is to be debated during the October II 2018, plenary session, with a view to consolidating Parliament's position.

First-reading report: [2017/0114\(COD\)](#); Committee responsible: TRAN; Rapporteur: Christine Revault d'Allonnes Bonnefoy (S&D, France). For further information see our 'EU Legislation in progress' [briefing](#).

