

**Question for written answer E-002121/2011  
to the Commission  
Rule 117  
Mathieu Grosch (PPE)**

**Subject:** Sector-specific ban on lorries using Tyrol motorway

In the interest of reducing emissions, the Austrian *Land* of Tyrol has adopted an order under which, since 2008, lorries and articulated vehicles exceeding a total permissible weight of 7.5 tonnes, and lorries towing trailers with a total permissible weight of 7.5 tonnes (both vehicles combined), have been subject to a sector-specific ban on using the Inntal motorway for the transport of waste, stones and earth. This ban was extended in 2009 to cover the transport of wood, cars, steel and tiles, and in 2010 to non-ferrous and ferrous ores, marble and travertine.

The compatibility of this ban with European law is currently under investigation: the Commission opened infringement proceedings before the European Court of Justice in 2008.

Many hauliers are affected by this ban, including the Belgian hauliers who transport wood via Austria to Italy. Accordingly these firms rely on the railways on the section in question from Kufstein to Zirl. That being so, haulage firms should be offered a rail service which is attractive in terms of both quality and quantity, so as to create an efficient goods transport chain despite the ban on using the motorway. The reality is rather different. Haulage firms complain not only of considerable delays on these rail links – eight hours in some cases – but also of insufficient capacity on the trains, which means that it is sometimes not even possible to accept bookings. The cost is also high: for example, the Austrian rail cargo operator Ökombi charges EUR 199 to transport a lorry of up to 20 000 kg from Wörgl to Trento; for a 44 000 kg cargo the price is EUR 359. This means that hauliers not only suffer considerable financial losses as a result of delays but also have to bear the higher costs arising from the interruption in the delivery chain, which in some cases – particularly with smaller firms – can threaten their viability.

What concrete measures will the Commission take to improve this untenable situation for haulage firms pending the Court's ruling?