

**Question for written answer E-004657/2012
to the Commission**
Rule 117
Frieda Brepoels (Verts/ALE)

Subject: Tax exemption for combined transport

Council Directive 92/106/EEC of 7 December 1992 on the establishment of common rules for certain types of combined transport of goods between Member States is aimed at stimulating the use of combined transport.

Article 1 of this Directive defines combined transport as the combination of road and rail, road and maritime services and road and inland waterways. Nevertheless, Article 6 allows the Member States to grant tax benefits only for combined road-rail transport and not for other combinations (road-maritime services and road-inland waterways).

This seems to result in unfair competition to the detriment of the ferries: lorries using the Eurotunnel between Calais and Folkestone can potentially enjoy a tax benefit but not lorries using the Calais-Dover ferry.

In this context, I would like to ask the Commission the following questions:

1. Does the Commission recognise that this is a form of discrimination? Is the Commission prepared to eliminate this discrimination? If so, how and within what period? If not, why not?
2. Is the Commission prepared to extend the tax benefit to other forms of combined transport? If so, how and within what period? If not, why not?