

**Question for oral answer O-000152/2016
to the Commission**

Rule 128

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Subject: Commission's approval of Germany's revised plan to introduce a road toll

A key requirement for non-discriminatory road charges is that all users pay the same charge for using roads. One of the Commission's fundamental concerns regarding Germany's initial legislation on a road toll was that it discriminated against foreign drivers because it allowed German residents to obtain a tax bill reduction corresponding to the exact amount of the toll cost. So the deduction of the road charge from the vehicle tax would have led to a de facto exemption from the charge, exclusively for cars registered in Germany. Since this concern had not been addressed, the Commission launched an infringement procedure, eventually referring Germany to the European Court of Justice. However, the Commission will now put the infringement procedure on hold because it reached an agreement with Germany on 1 December 2016. Both Commissioner Violeta Bulc and Germany's Transport Minister Alexander Dobrindt are convinced that the new system is 'non-discriminatory' and 'fully in line with EU law'.

The amended proposal would nonetheless ensure that only vehicles registered in Germany benefitted from a deduction of the road charge from their annual vehicle tax bill. De facto – and this was again publicly reaffirmed by the German Transport Minister – still only foreign users will actually pay the German road charge.

Could the Commission clarify to what extent this political understanding removes any discrimination based on nationality?

The Commission considers this revised charging scheme to be 'an important first step towards its plans to create an EU-wide road charging system'.

Why exactly is the Commission convinced about this system, since its objective is to charge primarily foreign users?

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