

WRITTEN QUESTION P-2608/03
by Peter Pex (PPE-DE)
to the Commission

Subject: Introduction of motorway tolls in Germany

The transport sector is becoming very concerned about the introduction of motorway tolls in Germany. That concern has been somewhat alleviated by a report that the Commission has recommended that the introduction of such motorway tolls should be deferred. In contrast to that report, I have read in the German press that the German Commissioner, Günter Verheugen, has stated that the German Government is fully entitled to introduce the tolls as scheduled. That contradicts statements made by his fellow Commissioner Mrs Loyola de Palacio. On 23 July 2003, she said that the investigation initiated by the Commission into the German compensation measures implied deferment of both the motorway tolls and the German compensation measures relating thereto.

What is the Commission's stance on the German motorway tolls? The Commission's left hand does not seem to know what its right hand is doing. Does the deferment apply solely to compensation or also to the levying of the tolls themselves? Can the Commission rapidly eliminate the equivocal nature of its stance that has resulted from the statement by the German Commissioner?

How will the Commission ensure that the introduction of these motorway tolls in Germany is not in breach of Community law with regard to the free movement of goods and to non-discrimination?