

WRITTEN QUESTION P-6352/07
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to the Council

Subject: Initial car registration taxes

In July 2005 the Commission submitted a proposal for a directive on passenger car related taxes (COM(2005) 0261) providing, among other measures, for the elimination of car registration taxes by the Member States by 2015, the creation of a system based on vehicles' real carbon dioxide emissions, and the introduction of a system for the reimbursement of taxes paid in other Member States in order to avoid double taxation.

Parliament approved the proposal for a directive on 5 September 2006, and on 17 May of that year the Economic and Social Committee also delivered a favourable opinion on the Commission's text. The Council has yet to express its position on this initiative. Meanwhile, a number of Member State governments have introduced arbitrarily calculated registration taxes and are charging enormous sums at the expense of car buyers. Hungary and Poland have already been condemned by the European Court of Justice, while the Romanian government, ignoring this precedent, is demanding as much as EUR 8000 in registration taxes whereas in countries like Italy and the UK the average sum is less than EUR 200.

The form in which registration tax is being applied in the Member States in question amounts to a significant obstacle to the free movement of goods in the EU, and discriminates between locally manufactured and imported cars. In addition, the method of calculation of the initial car registration tax discriminates between vehicles which are of different ages but have the same gas emission levels. In view of all the above, it appears essential that the Council should adopt a position on the proposal for a directive.

1. When will the Council pronounce on the matter?
2. Has the text of this proposal for a directive been discussed at the level of the groups within the Council (Coreper) which prepare the meetings of the EU finance ministers, and, if so, what was the position adopted?