

Eurovignette (Directive 1999/62/EC) and electronic tolling (Directive 2004/52/EC)

Express industry supports harmonisation and interoperability but calls for earmarking of all charges

The European Express Association (EEA) supports the European Commission's proposed harmonization and interoperability in the Eurovignette Directive and the Directive on the interoperability of electronic road toll systems (EETS). This will trigger more harmonisation and interoperability in the existing patchwork of charging schemes and incentivise the greening of road transport (in line with the polluter and user-pays principle). The EEA keeps insisting, however, that the collected revenue should be integrally re-invested in road transport and that double taxation should be avoided.

Harmonized, interoperable, green

Introducing the much-needed harmonisation and interoperability of charging schemes in the EU, while incentivising the greening of the transport fleet through distance rather than time-based charging, supports the EEA's calls for action to increase the economic growth and competitiveness of road transport in the EU. The EEA also welcomes the monitoring and reporting of heavy-duty vehicle emissions using the VECTO tool, as long as this system remains transparent for its users.

Earmarking

The Commission introduced the notion of earmarking for revenues raised through congestion charging – progress which is welcomed by the EEA. However, the EEA is of the opinion that all charging revenues should be earmarked and re-invested in road transport in order to contribute to a better and more competitive infrastructure. This would be a powerful tool to help and remove bottlenecks and reduce the external costs of transport.

No double taxation

In order to avoid double taxation, no other cost elements than air pollution and noise should be considered in determining the level of the infrastructure charges. The external costs of transport should be tackled by applying a balanced approach that prioritises technological improvements, operational measures and infrastructural improvements over economic instruments.

Congestion charging

Congestion charging will inevitably lead to an increase in cost (including an additional administrative burden) for economic operators. This being said, the EEA notes that the Commission proposes to apply congestion charging to all road users. The EEA considers that – if congestion charging is introduced – it should apply to all road users.

The European Express Association (EEA) is the representative organisation for the express industry in Europe. The industry specialises in time-definite, reliable transportation services for documents, parcels, and freight. It allows European business to rely on predictable, expeditious delivery of supplies, thereby enabling them to attain and maintain global competitiveness. The express industry employs over 250,000 people across the EU and supports a further 175,000 indirect jobs in Europe through the supply-chain. The express industry's employees are widely spread across the EU.