

STATEMENT
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Express Industry considers Council agreement on Eurovignette a missed opportunity to reduce external costs of road transport

The European Express Industry considers that the political agreement reached on 15 October by the Transport Council on the proposal to revise the Eurovignette Directive is a missed opportunity in terms of the stated objective of the proposal: to reduce the external costs of road transport.

The current agreement internalises the external costs of heavy duty vehicles by only charging for air pollution and noise costs and introduces a maximum rate for variation of the infrastructure charge in order to tackle congestion. However, tackling road freight alone will have a very limited impact on congestion since it represents only 10% of road usage, even at peak hours. By not charging all road users, the Directive will be inefficient and discriminatory.

Commercial goods transport currently already pays for costs related to congestion through loss of time, additional fuel usage and engine wear. However, varying the infrastructure charge and making peak periods more expensive in order to fight congestion is not a serious alternative for the express industry. This is mainly due to the obligation of meeting customers' demands (e.g. delivery during working hours) and respecting regulatory patterns (e.g. night ban of deliveries). As currently drafted, the proposal would trigger significantly higher charges for demand-driven deliveries in congested time zones, without tackling the source of congestion and providing credible alternative solutions. The very complex issue of congestion should only be addressed by an integrated approach putting together all road users and the different stakeholders of the supply chain.

Furthermore, by not obliging Member States to invest the revenues in measures to reduce the external costs of road transport, the Council has gone against the objective of the proposal and, in the end, agreed on a compromise which will only make road freight transport more expensive.

The objective of the proposal is to reduce the external costs of transport. All Eurovignette-revenues should therefore be earmarked and used to reduce the external costs of, in particular, road transport. Without a strict earmarking provision, the proposal cannot be considered credible and implies that Member States are only interested in boosting their overall budgets rather than the transport sector's environmental performance.

Annette Meijer, Chair of the Transport and Environment Committee of the European Express Association (EEA) stated: "The Express Industry provides time-bound delivery services for almost all industries in Europe. We do not have a choice when we are going to deliver. Therefore, variable road charging will have a highly negative impact on our industry."



About EEA:

The European Express Association represents global and local express delivery companies. In the EU-25 alone, the express industry **currently employs 250,000 people** and delivers more than 450 million packages each year, constituting almost half of the intra-European air cargo market. It has been forecast that, **by 2013, the express industry will employ 550,000** people in the EU-27. The European, domestic and international markets for express services have significant scope for further expansion as companies increasingly adopt best international business practice with regard to time-definite, guaranteed delivery. Our Members provide guaranteed, fast, reliable, on-demand, world-wide, integrated, door-to-door movement of shipments which are tracked and controlled throughout the journey, both inside and outside the EU. The express industry is a fast-growing business sector which not only provides vital services for the European economy, but which also plays a large role in making the global marketplace a reality.

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