Press release | 02.12.2010

EU traffic rules

Transport ministers fall short of ensuring full cross-border enforcement of traffic rules

EU transport ministers today reached an agreement on new EU legislation on the cross-border enforcement of traffic rules. This agreement will now be subject to negotiations with the European Parliament. The Greens regretted that the agreed rules were not more effective and urged MEPs to work to strengthen the provisions in upcoming negotiations. Commenting on the outcome, Green transport co-spokesperson **Eva Lichtenberger** said:

"Strengthening the enforcement of traffic rules within the EU is a crucial measure in helping to improve road safety across Europe and we regret that transport ministers agreed on loopholes to the legislation which will weaken cross-border enforcement. Given driving across borders is a normal part of the life in the EU, it is important that the enforcement of road safety provisions does not stop at national borders (1)."

Green transport co-spokesperson **Michael Cramer** added:

"Regrettably, it has been effectively left up to national rules to determine ultimate liability for offenses committed with a vehicle from another member state. In Germany, for instance, the vehicle owner can still refuse to provide information about the responsible driver and thus effectively dodge punishment. This undermines the purpose of legislation on cross-border enforcement and will leave the door open for drivers to avoid prosecution for offenses in other EU member states. Furthermore, it is regrettable that only fines of more than €70 would be enforceable cross-border. Thankfully, this is not the last word. We will now work to ensure the EP strengthens the legislation by closing the loopholes agreed in Council today."

(1) Until now, offending drivers effectively evaded any punishment for traffic offenses committed in other EU member states. The negative impact of this on efforts to improve road safety was compounded by the fact that drivers from other EU member states account for a disproportionally high share of traffic offenses - for example although cross-border EU drivers account for only represent 5% of all drivers, they are responsible for 15% of all speeding violations.

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Responsible MEPs

Michael Cramer

Member

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