Press release | 15.10.2010

Eurovignette

Heavy goods vehicles get easy ride as transport ministers agree on environmental road charging

EU transport ministers today reached agreement on revising European rules on the charging of heavy goods vehicles (Eurovignette). Green MEPs welcomed the introduction of environmental charging for the first time under EU legislation but expressed disappointment that the agreement fails to take account of the true environmental impact of heavy goods vehicles.

Commenting on the decision, UK Green MEP **Keith Taylor**, Greens/EFA transport spokesman, said:

"Today's decision is an important step towards introducing the 'polluter pays' principle into EU road transport legislation for the first time, by including the environmental costs of heavy goods vehicles into road charging. However, while this is a welcome first step, the Greens believe these measures fall sort of what's really needed. The maximum cap on road charges remains too low, with only effects on air and noise pollution - and in certain circumstances, congestion - being taken into account. No attempt has been made to factor in climate change or accident-related costs."

Green MEPs and transport spokespersons **Eva Lichtenberger** (Austria) and **Michael Cramer** (Germany) added:

"If we are serious about achieving a more sustainable transport system across the European Union, we need prices which reflect the true environmental costs of transportation – and fair competition between different modes of travelling. The new legislation is a step in this direction of showing customers the real cost to the environment of the way they travel, enabling them to make more informed choices and, hopefully, opt for the most efficient transport mode. However, it falls far short of reflecting the true costs and, as such, is a weak signal. The Greens believe more needs to be done to achieve a more meaningful implementation of the 'polluter pays'-principle."

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Responsible MEPs



Michael Cramer

Member



Keith Taylor

Member

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