

Eurovignette Directive

Transport and logistics play an important role in the competitiveness of Finnish industries. Therefore, Finnish industries have concerns about road charging, as they already face a heavy tax burden. Paying more would harm the competitiveness in peripheral countries when transporting in, to and from central Europe. Member States should not be obliged to implement a charging system. Charging should be fair, simple and transparent and non-discriminatory, ensuring a level-playing field with other modes of transport.

1 Background

Eurovignette is a part of the Mobility package that is currently being prepared by the Commission. Eurovignette is also linked to the EU Energy Union and the EU climate targets, as transport sector is responsible for 30% of the EU CO₂ emissions and road transport is the biggest part of that. There is, therefore, a lot of pressure for using all possible means of decarbonizing transport.

2 Key content from industry perspective

The Eurovignette Directive sets equal principles for road charging in the Member States including costs for infrastructure, emissions and noise.

3 Current status

The Commission is currently preparing a new version of the Eurovignette Directive. It is expected to be published in May 2017 as part of the Mobility package, together with Post 2020 strategies on cars/vans and on lorries, buses and coaches, as well as European Electronic Toll Service (EETS) Directive.

4 Industry key messages

In Finland transport distances are long as the industry is scattered across the country, close to various natural resources. Efficiency in transport is achieved with the use of higher and longer vehicles and bigger masses on roads.

The amount of freight transport by roads per capita is nearly double compared to EU average. This is due to the heavy focus on export: Finland produces goods to be used in Europe and worldwide. Transport systems in bigger city areas rely on public transportation but as a whole road transport covers over 90%. In effect, there is no or very little congestion in Finnish cities.

The road transport is heavily taxed in Finland. While the state allocates 1.5 billion euros per year for the transport infrastructure it generates some 6 billion euros tax income from road transport. This is 15 % of the total tax income per year.

Concerning the revision of the Eurovignette Directive, the Confederation of Finnish Industries EK request the following principles to be taken into account:

- Member States should not be obliged to implement a charging system.

- A level -playing field is ensured in comparison with other modes of transport. The principles of charging for the use of infrastructure and for the external costs should be identical in all transport modes. This would ensure the efficiency of the transport system and give the correct price signal for the users.
- No double charging: taxes and charges already paid are taken into account.
- The revenues are ear-marked and reinvested into transport infrastructure.
- The revenues from road charging should not enable further reductions of public spending in the road infrastructure. (A win-win approach could be achieved if a Member State is required to raise its expenditure in the road infrastructure at least by the same amount as the revenues collected from road charging.)
- The revenues from internalising external costs aim at minimising the environmental footprint.
- Methodology for determining the amount to be charged is transparent and based on measurable costs that can also be verified.
- Infrastructure charging is done in a cost-efficient manner.

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