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'I' ITEM NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
dated: 9 September 2025
To: Permanent Representatives Committee (Part 1)

Subject: Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 1999/62/EC as regards the extension of the period in which zero-emission heavy-duty vehicles can benefit from significantly reduced rates of infrastructure or user charges or from exemptions to pay them
- Mandate for negotiations with the European Parliament

1. On 27 June 2025, the Commission submitted its proposal for amending Directive 1999/92/EC (the “Eurovignette Directive”) as regards the extension of the period in which zero-emission heavy-duty vehicles can benefit from significantly reduced rates of infrastructure or user charges or from exemptions to pay them.
2. The aim of the proposal is to postpone the end date, from 31 December 2025 to 30 June 2031, of a provision allowing Member States to temporarily exempt zero-emission heavy duty vehicles from road charges.
3. The initiative, announced by the Commission’s Industrial Action Plan for the European automotive sector¹, is linked to the 2022 reform of the Eurovignette Directive. That reform introduced an obligatory modulation of road charges according to the CO₂ emissions of the vehicle.
4. In particular, Article 7ga of the Eurovignette Directive introduces five CO₂ emission classes,

¹ ST 6843/25, p.7.

the highest category being reserved for zero emission vehicles. They can benefit from reductions on road charges between 50 and 75% compared to the baseline charge for a vehicle in the lowest class. However, until end of 2025, Member States may further reduce those charges for zero emission vehicles or fully exempt them.

5. According to the Commission, the heavy-duty road transport sector is responsible for 27,5% of road transport CO₂ emissions, equivalent to 6,9% of all CO₂ emissions in the EU. The road transport sector being highly competitive with low profit margins, the life-time costs of vehicles are of utmost importance for decisions on their purchase. Differentiated road charges can help to build a stronger business case for investing in zero emission heavy duty vehicles, which represented 3,9% of all new heavy-duty vehicles in 2024.
6. However, the deadline for phasing out the possibility to exempt those vehicles is considered too short to have a significant impact, while at the same time the manufacturers are making efforts to comply with the target of reducing CO₂ emissions from new heavy-duty vehicles by 43% starting from the reporting period 2030. The new end date for applying the maximum flexibility on charge reduction would coincide with the end of the reporting period 2030, namely 30 June 2031.²
7. The Commission presented its proposal at the meeting of the Working Party on Land Transport on 4 July 2025. Delegations expressed support, while several scrutiny reservations were entered. No delegation submitted written comments.
8. In the European Parliament, the proposal is dealt with by the TRAN Committee. In its meeting on 16 July 2025, the TRAN Committee adopted a request to ask the Plenary for applying the urgent procedure (rule 170 of the Parliament's Rules of Procedure). The political groups supporting that request supported also the Commission's proposal. On 10 September 2025, the Plenary decided to use the urgent procedure and to submit the file for first reading in the first October Plenary session.
9. In view of the support at technical level and considering the need to adopt the Directive well before 2026, as it would impact the fiscal planning of those Member States wishing to use the larger flexibility for reducing road charges, the Presidency proposes to accept the Commission's proposal without amendments.
10. Therefore, the Permanent Representatives Committee is invited to agree on the Commission's proposal as set out in document ST 10936/25, subject to revision by the lawyer-linguists of both institutions, and to agree that the Presidency informs the European Parliament by letter that, should it adopt its position at first reading on the proposal as set out in document ST 10936/25, without amendments, and subject to revision of that text by the lawyer-linguists of both institutions, the Council will approve the European Parliament's position and the act will be adopted in the wording which corresponds to the European Parliament's position.

² Annex I point 4.3.1. in conjunction with Art. 3(3a) of Regulation (EU) 2019/1242, OJ L 198, 25.7.2019, p. 202.