

Procedure file

Basic information	
INI - Own-initiative procedure	2008/2240(INI)
Greening transport package and the internalisation of external costs	Procedure completed
Subject	
3.20 Transport policy in general	
3.70.02 Atmospheric pollution, motor vehicle pollution	
3.70.20 Sustainable development	

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	TRAN Transport and Tourism		23/06/2008
		PPE-DE JARZEMBOWSKI Georg	
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	ENVI Environment, Public Health and Food Safety	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
European Commission	Commission DG	Commissioner	
	Energy and Transport	TAJANI Antonio	

Key events			
23/09/2008	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
11/02/2009	Vote in committee		Summary
17/02/2009	Committee report tabled for plenary	A6-0055/2009	
10/03/2009	Debate in Parliament		
11/03/2009	Results of vote in Parliament		
11/03/2009	Decision by Parliament	T6-0119/2009	Summary
11/03/2009	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2008/2240(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Strategic initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 54

Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	TRAN/6/66808

Documentation gateway					
Committee draft report		PE414.008	07/10/2008	EP	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE415.142	20/11/2008	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A6-0055/2009	17/02/2009	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T6-0119/2009	11/03/2009	EP	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary		SP(2009)3244	06/10/2009	EC	

Greening transport package and the internalisation of external costs

The Committee on Transport and Tourism adopted an own-initiative report by Georg JARZEMBOWSKI (EPP-ED, DE) on the greening of transport and the internalisation of external costs in response to the three Commission Communications on these subjects.

Greening transport: the Commission communication on greening transport is welcomed as an important first partial step. Members regret that the Commission has failed to produce an integrated plan to green transport, that is to say, covering every transport sector, and has so far instead:

- adopted a piecemeal approach by submitting a first basic set of guidelines for estimating the external costs of transport and for their internalisation in individual sectors;
- again opted for a 'stepwise solution' by starting with a specific proposal for immediate application for higher road tolls for heavy goods vehicles by amending Directive 1999/62/EC (Eurovignette Directive) which is intended to permit Member States to charge for external costs, and even this would apply only in Member States that so wished, and,
- as regards rail noise abatement, listed a range of options and future measures.

The committee calls on the Commission, therefore, to provide for the measures and instruments required to make transport greener. It wants the Commission to conduct scientifically sound assessments of the impact of the individual measures and their competition implications in terms of modes as well as their impact on the costs of mobility and competitiveness. Proceeding from that basis, the Commission should submit an integrated plan for the greening of transport, together with specific legislative proposals.

Internalisation of external costs: the report notes that the Commission has failed to fulfil the obligation imposed on it by the Eurovignette Directive, since it has not put forward a generally applicable model for the assessment of external costs as a whole, given that it has not analysed the impact on every mode of transport. It expresses disappointment that the positive effects of transport in terms of economic growth and competitiveness ('positive externalities') have not been researched to any significant extent and have not been taken into account in the Commission's calculations, unlike external costs which have been the subject of extensive work. The committee recognises the role of the 'Polluter Pays Principle' and expects the Commission to develop this pragmatic approach. It recognises the contributions made to date by the various modes of transport in the form of general taxation, vehicle and oil taxes, and road tolls to balance out real infrastructure building and maintenance costs and views this as the starting point for future work.

Members also note the fact that the Commission has not attempted to assess the impact that its proposed method for internalising external costs might have on competition among the various modes of transport and on the costs of mobility and calls on the Commission to do so. They also deplore the fact that the Commission has not proposed measures to mitigate the effects of increased remoteness arising from EU enlargement and has not made any forecasts regarding the consequences of its application, in particular in those Member States with geographical barriers and for those which do not as yet have multimodal alternatives. The Commission should do so as part of the forthcoming review of the trans-European transport networks (TENs).

The committee feels that the Commission is behaving inconsistently on several counts in that it maintains that the internalisation of external costs should also apply to cars, but does not even supply related calculations, preferring instead to maintain the freedom of Member States to charge passenger cars as they see fit. It therefore asks the Commission to publish a methodology for internalising the external costs of individual vehicles in order to provide Member States with guidelines in compliance with the principle of subsidiarity.

Lastly, the Commission is asked to produce specific proposals for all modes of transport and to perform the task deriving from the Eurovignette Directive by submitting a comprehensive plan for calculating and charging external costs and assessing their impact on the basis of a comprehensible model.

Rail noise abatement: the Commission is asked to draw up a proposal for a directive with a view to introducing noise-related track access charges for locomotives and wagons in order to provide incentives as quickly as possible for railway undertakings to re-equip their fleets rapidly with low-noise vehicles by replacing brake blocks. If necessary, short-term measures may also be considered and no legislative measure should have a negative impact on the rail sector in intermodal competition.

The report looks to the Commission to provide for a practicable way of ensuring, through earmarking of revenue, that upgrading of this kind will not be confined to wagons belonging to railway undertakings, but will also extend to wagons of other companies carried by railway undertakings.

Greening transport package and the internalisation of external costs

The European Parliament adopted by 452 votes to 108, with 134 abstentions, a resolution on the greening of transport and the internalisation of external costs in response to the three Commission Communications on these subjects.

Greening transport: the Commission communication on greening transport is welcomed as an important first partial step. Members regret that the Commission has failed to produce an integrated plan to green transport, that is to say, covering every transport sector. They observe that the Commission has already taken preliminary initiatives which should ultimately lead to a comprehensive strategy for the internalisation of external costs in all modes of transport; but has so far instead:

- adopted a piecemeal approach drawn up in a Handbook for estimating the external costs of transport and for their internalisation in individual sectors (see the 'Handbook on estimation of external costs in the transport sector'),
- has submitted a proposal to amend Directive 1999/62/EC (the Eurovignette Directive), which is intended to permit Member States to charge for the external costs arising from heavy goods vehicles, in line with Article 11 of that Directive,
- proposed taxing the external costs caused by rail noise via noise-differentiated infrastructure charges.

The Commission is invited to: (i) where every mode of transport is concerned, provide for the measures and instruments required to make transport greener, taking into account the international conventions in force and the measures already implemented in the various transport sectors; (ii) with reference to those proposals, conduct scientifically sound assessments of the impact of the individual measures and their competition implications in terms of modes as well as their impact on the costs of mobility and competitiveness; and, proceeding from that basis, (iii) submit an integrated plan for the greening of transport, together with specific legislative proposals.

Internalisation of external costs: the report notes that the Commission has failed to fulfil the obligation imposed on it by the Eurovignette Directive, since it has not put forward a generally applicable model for the assessment of external costs as a whole, given that it has not analysed the impact on every mode of transport.

Parliament notes that the Commission, in its communication, has put forward scientifically coherent justifications for the charging of individual external costs to various modes of transport, and has adopted what it terms a "pragmatic approach based on the average cost". MEPs generally support the Commission's basis of marginal social cost pricing, in line with the White Paper on Transport of 2001. The Commission is asked to explicitly take account of the "polluter pays" principle. Parliament calls on the Commission, however, in further steps with regard to the internalisation of external costs, to take account of all forms of internalisation of external costs which already exist, such as oil taxes and road tolls.

Parliament calls on the Commission, when putting forward further proposals to green the transport sector, to include assessments of the impact of competition between transport modes and associated social and environmental impacts and to include the costs of mobility and competitiveness.

Parliament regrets the fact that the Commission has not proposed measures to mitigate the effects of increased remoteness arising from EU enlargement and has not made any forecasts regarding the consequences of its application, in particular in those Member States with geographical barriers and for those which do not as yet have multimodal alternatives. The Commission is called upon to (i) remedy these shortcomings as part of the forthcoming review of the trans-European transport networks (TEN-T); (ii) submit a supplementary proposal for multimodal mobility corridors ('green corridors') as part of the review of the TEN-T, offsetting the burdens imposed by the present proposal by enabling accessibility and mobility without obstacles.

Lastly, the Commission is asked to produce specific proposals for all modes of transport and to perform the task deriving from the Eurovignette Directive by submitting a comprehensive plan for calculating and charging external costs and assessing their impact on the basis of a comprehensible model.

Rail noise abatement: the Commission is asked to draw up a proposal for a directive with a view to introducing noise-related track access charges for locomotives and wagons in order to provide incentives as quickly as possible for railway undertakings to re-equip their fleets rapidly with low-noise vehicles by replacing brake blocks. If necessary, short-term measures may also be considered and no legislative measure should have a negative impact on the rail sector in intermodal competition.

Parliament looks to the Commission to provide for a practicable way of ensuring, through earmarking of revenue, that upgrading of this kind will not be confined to wagons belonging to railway undertakings, but will also extend to wagons of other companies carried by railway undertakings.