

# Strategy for an electronic toll service and a vignette system on light private vehicles in Europe

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**PURPOSE:** Commission Communication on the Implementation of the European Electronic Toll Service (EETS).

**CONTENT:** in accordance with **Commission Decision 2009/750/EC** defining the European Electronic Toll Service, the Commission presents this Communication on the state of advancement of EETS deployment. After putting the EETS in the broader context of European transport policy, the communication presents the progress achieved in its implementation and gives the Commission's assessment of the next steps to be taken for making the EETS operational.

The Commission recalls that in its [2011 White Paper](#) "Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area", it outlined possible measures to accelerate the development and the harmonisation of road use charging. It stressed that the European Electronic Toll Service can be instrumental in the promotion of road charging strategies that contribute to a sustainable transport system and in facilitating road charging acceptance by users.

Similarly on the occasion of the recent amendment of the ["Eurovignette" Directive](#) on the charging of heavy goods vehicles, the European Parliament and the Council asked the Commission to monitor progress made to implement within the agreed dates a genuine European Electronic Toll Service and to promote cooperation between Member States that may prove necessary to ensure the interoperability of electronic toll collection systems at European level.

The Commission notes that **European industry is at present a global front-runner in road charging and tolling equipment**. European companies keep winning tolling contracts over the world. EETS can facilitate the introduction and roll-out on a global scale of new products such as interoperable on-board units, combining the digital tachograph and tolling with other intelligent transport systems applications. This in turn may give rise to completely new services and applications, again with a potentially global market, which will contribute to the creation of growth and jobs in the European economy.

**Progress achieved in deployment:** the progress achieved in the advancement of EETS deployment is **disappointing**. Despite the adoption of Decision 2009/750/EC which sets out the necessary technical specifications and requirements as well as contractual rules relating to EETS provision, the efforts of the Commission, and the maturity of tolling technologies, the **European Electronic Toll Service is not yet a reality in everyday life of road users**. Not all Member States and stakeholders have demonstrated the full commitment necessary to finalise the regulatory and operational context of the service at their level.

**Next steps:** in order to facilitate the timely introduction of EETS by Member States and the industry and to promote the necessary cooperation as requested by the European Parliament and the Council, the following actions are necessary:

## 1. Accelerate a uniform implementation of the decision:

- the Commission and Member States will intensify the works of the Toll Committee set up by Directive 2004/52/EC. Member States should fulfil as a matter of urgency their obligations provided for by Decision 2009/750/EC regarding in particular the **designation of their national Conciliation Body**. The Commission will launch infringement procedures where appropriate;

- the Commission will monitor the implementation of EETS by Member States in the light of its Guidance Note on the interpretation of concepts referred to in Annex I of Decision 2009/750/EC. Member States and national conciliation bodies should use the note in their contacts with Toll Chargers and potential EETS providers. The latter should also use it in their contractual negotiations. Furthermore the Commission will create a **European network of national Conciliation Bodies** which would contribute to securing an EU-wide level playing field for the EETS professional stakeholders;
- Member States shall see to it that **contractual clauses** automatically ending the contract if an EETS Provider does not reach full European coverage within 24 months are not allowed. Such clauses go against the intended useful effect of Decision 2009/750/EC. If such a practice is kept, the Commission will launch infringement proceedings;
- the Commission will take an initiative using the structure established by the current EETS legislation to develop a **uniform set of protocols for “suitability for use” tests**, including on the security aspects, in order to limit the discrepancy of these protocols between toll Chargers, which would in turn contribute to reducing the costs charged to EETS Providers;
- the Commission will set-up with the stakeholders a **comprehensive information sharing resource platform**, providing up-to-date information on EETS through a single point of access on the Internet. This platform will also contribute to the exchange of best practice and dissemination of up-to-date information on EETS among professional stakeholders.

## 2. Adoption of a stepwise approach:

- as a first step towards full European interoperability, Member States with significant volume of traffic on the trans-European network should encourage the cross-border interoperability of their electronic road toll systems. These early deployment project(s), on a regional basis, will be promoted in a way so that they can be extended to cover all the electronically tolled road infrastructures in the EU as soon as possible at a later stage and can provide concrete experiences in solving practical EETS issues.
- attention should be paid to the involvement of a sufficiently wide set of Toll Chargers and Member States to ensure these projects are scalable to the entire Union. The knowledge gained in implementing these regional projects fully complying with the single contract/single on-board unit principle should be shared effectively across all the stakeholders. The Commission is willing to provide **technical assistance to such regional initiatives and is ready to examine the provision of possible financial support to large scale regional projects in the context of the TEN-T programme.**

## 3. Closely monitor development and take new initiatives:

- Member States when starting new projects or renewing concessions should systematically check and ensure compliance with EETS requirements. When adopting its opinion on new tolling arrangements which are notified in the framework of the Eurovignette Directive, the Commission will issue a negative opinion if they do not include a fully EETS compatible system.
- If disputes between toll chargers and EETS Providers cannot be solved by the Conciliation Body, the Commission will examine the points of contention and whether the arrangements between toll chargers and their existing local/national service providers are discriminatory in comparison with those proposed to EETS providers.

Lastly, it can be noted that the White Paper on transport has indicated that if, despite all these efforts, its assessment shows that no substantial progress has been achieved by mid-2013, with no availability of an interoperable electronic toll service on a substantial scale, **the Commission reserves its right to present a new initiative** to the European Parliament and the Council.