Road transport: the charging of heavy goods vehicles for the use of certain infrastructures, Eurovignette

1996/0182(COD) - 10/07/1996 - Legislative proposal

OBJECTIVE: the proposal for a directive has four objectives: a) to develop further the internal market in road transport; b) to ensure better coverage of costs associated with use of road infrastructure; c) to enable charges to be more closely adjusted to costs; d) to ensure that the principle of territoriality plays a larger role in the recovery of costs arising from use of the road infrastructure. CONTENT: the proposal for a directive is intended to replace directive 93/89/EEC, which was annulled by the Court of Justice in July 1995 on the grounds of procedural irregularities, while preserving its effects pending the adoption of new legislation by the Council in order to prevent a legal lacuna. The main provisions of the new proposal are as follows: - rates of annual vehicle taxes and user charges for each category of vehicle to be more closely adjusted to costs. This adjustment will involve increasing the weighted average of annual user charges, which will rise from ECU 1,020 to ECU 1,258; in future, user charges applied for a given period should range from ECU 750 to 2000 per annum, taking account of the degree of damage to the roads which the heavy goods vehicle may cause (not less than 12 tonnes maximum permissible gross laden weight) and its emissions; - changes to the rules governing vehicle taxes, user charges and tolls in order to take greater account of the "use" factor (mainly user charges and tolls) and make greater use of the principle of territoriality in road user charges; - additional harmonization of the structure and rates of vehicle taxes and charges in the Community; - the possibility of incorporating a proportion of external costs in tolls and user charges; - the concept of "sensitive" routes for which a higher proportion of external costs can be imposed because they have higher external costs; - specific requirements for user charges over shorter periods.