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

1996/0182(COD) - 13/07/1998 - Modified legislative proposal

The Commission's amended proposal incorporates 10 of the 26 amendments adopted by the European Parliament at first reading. These amendments relate to the following areas: - modifying the third recital by deleting reference to maximum levels for the vehicle taxes; - deleting the recital allowing Member States to charge a lower road tax than the minimum rates provided that they apply to a user charge system; - deleting the requirement that vehicles taxes should not go beyond a certain ceiling proposed by the Commission; - authorising exemptions from minimum rates where a user charge system is in operation; - introducing a new recital referring to the Alpine Convention; - calling for a differentiation in rates instead of the limited differentiation proposed by the Commission; - adding reference to the territoriality principle; - making provision for regular review of vehicle taxes; - making provision for a 50% reduction in user charges for vehicles registered in peripheral regions; - calling for the information to be forwarded to the Commission to specify the degree to which road traffic costs are covered, by category of vehicle and road. Among those amendments rejected by the Commission, the following are worthy of particular note: - deletion of provisions relating to external costs and sensitive routes, which the Commission considers are extremely important aspects if a more differentiated system of taxes is to be introduced; - introduction of the concept of "sensitive areas"; - suggestion that substantial differentiation of charges according to infrastructure damage and air pollution may be undertaken initially only through user charges; - proposal for a differentiation of user charges according to two classes based on the number of the vehicle's axles; - modification of the existing structure for minimum vehicle taxes.