

# Road transport: ecopoints for heavy vehicles transiting through Austria for 2004

2001/0310(COD) - 08/05/2003 - Commission communication on Council's position

The Commission wishes to stress, as it has already done before the Council, that the text of the common position differs significantly from the European Parliament's position. Consequently, it will be necessary to make major efforts to arrive at a final agreement. In the context of the functions incumbent upon it in the co-decision procedure under the Treaty, the Commission will continue to work towards an overall agreement which complies with the fundamental principle of the free movement of goods in the single market in conformity with the objective of promoting sustainable development in the European Union. The Commission appeals to the responsibility of the Member States and the institutions to achieve a satisfactory agreement for the majority of the parties concerned at the end of the procedure. It should be noted that there is a significant difference of opinion between the co-legislators on the type of system proposed following the expiry of the current ecopoints system on 31 December 2003. The common viewpoints concern the duration of the system (at most three years) and the elimination of the 108% clause. The Commission notes that the common position differs significantly from its initial proposal. However, it should be stressed that the text of the common position: - will make it possible for the Community legislative process to advance, which is important since, without a new legislative act, the system of ecopoints in force will expire on 31 December 2003; - is limited in time (three years at most) in accordance with the recommendations of the Heads of State and Government in the conclusions of the Copenhagen European Council; - takes environmental considerations into account, since EURO 0 vehicles are virtually completely banned and very considerable incentives for the use of EURO 4 vehicles are provided for.