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## **Press Release**

### **German road toll: Agreement between Commission and German Government does not meet expectations**

Brussels/Berlin, 02 December 2016 – After years of disputes, on Thursday finally white smoke rose from the Berlaymont in Brussels: In a meeting between Commissioner Violeta Bulc and Germany's Federal Minister of Transport and Digital Infrastructure, Alexander Dobrindt, last questions regarding amendments to the German road toll could be resolved.

The infringement procedure following concerns related to discrimination of foreign drivers that has been launched by the European Commission in June will now be frozen due to two alterations: First, Dobrindt agreed on changes to the short-term vignette pricing. Instead of three, there will be five categories, starting at a minimum fee of 2.50 euros for a 10-day pass and a maximum fee of 20 euros, depending on environmental criteria.

Secondly, based on this scheme, compensations of German drivers have been altered likewise: Germans with more fuel efficient cars will pay less and those with more polluting vehicles will be refunded pursuant to their toll payment.

All's well that ends well? Not according to EAC President Bernd Opolka: „The agreement has to be considered as Dobrindt's contribution to the German election campaign. A model causing overweening bureaucracy shall be presented as a success. However it is even more critical, that despite of the amendments regarding the short-term vignette, the launched agreement remains discriminatory against foreign drivers: German citizens get reimbursed whereas foreign drivers have to pay tolls without compensations – and in the most expensive category even higher fees than originally planned.”

Against this background, Opolka remains rather reluctant to approve the approach to refund German drivers of clean cars even above the amount of their toll payment: “Neither is the concept, to close the arising financial gap via higher payments of foreign drivers, in line with the European idea, nor is it mathematically plausible. Of course people should be encouraged to purchase clean cars. However, the compromise that was reached by Brussels and Berlin is not a suitable instrument to reach that goal.”

*The European Automobile Clubs (EAC) association represents the interests of around three million road users. As a partner for mobility, our vision is to promote mobility and open up Europe’s roads. To achieve this aim, it is necessary to harmonise the road traffic provisions between EU states and encourage innovative technologies – for greater road safety and sustainable mobility solutions.*

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