

## **CE DELFT PUBLISHES STUDY ON INTERNALISATION OF EXTERNAL COSTS OF TRANSPORT**

*European Commission follows recommendation for amendment of Eurovignet Directive*

Delft, 9 July 2008 – **Today CE Delft publishes the results of a major European study on internalising the external costs of transport. The study, known as IMPACT, shows that passing these costs on to transport users makes a lot of sense, with major benefits arising. Based partly on the conclusions and recommendations of IMPACT, the European Commission launches a policy package for ‘greening’ transport. Besides the strategy of cost internalisation for all modes of transport, the package also includes a legislative proposal for amending the Eurovignet Directive on infrastructure charges for heavy goods vehicles.**

### **The polluter pays principle**

Charging transport users for environmental and other external costs, usually referred to as ‘the polluter pays principle’, can help reduce the environmental impacts of transport. At present the external costs of transport, i.e. the costs of noise, air pollution, accidents, congestion and climate change, are not reflected in transport charges. Road tolls, for example, are based solely on infrastructure costs. CE Delft was asked by the European Commission to assess how the external costs of transport can best be internalised. Today, the final reports of the IMPACT study are to be made public.

### **Conclusions and recommendations**

IMPACT shows how to estimate the external costs of transport, how they can be used for pricing policy in EU Member States and what the impact of such policy is likely to be. The study also cites a range of concrete measures and actions at the EU level for enabling and facilitating internalisation of external costs.

The results show that road transport accounts for by far the greatest share of the external costs of transport. Charging transport users for these external costs brings important socio-economic benefits, including more efficient use of vehicles, emissions reduction and, in particular, alleviation of congestion.

The main recommendation of IMPACT is to amend the Eurovignet Directive on infrastructure charging for heavy goods vehicles. When it comes to charging transport users for external



costs, this Directive proves to be a major obstacle. The European Commission has followed this recommendation by presenting an amendment to the Directive which, if adopted, will enable Member States to use pricing measures to pass on external costs, on top of infrastructure costs.

IMPACT was carried out by CE Delft and four international partners. The deliverables can be downloaded from [www.ce.nl](http://www.ce.nl). The proposals of the European Commission can be found on: [http://ec.europa.eu/transport/greening/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/transport/greening/index_en.htm).

**Note for editors:**

CE Delft is an independent research and consultancy organisation specialised in developing structural and innovative solutions to environmental problems. CE Delft's solutions are characterised in being politically feasible, technologically sound, economically prudent and socially equitable. For the latest information on CE Delft check out our website: [www.ce.nl](http://www.ce.nl).

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