

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

on

# **“FAIR CHARGING FOR GREENER, SMARTER AND SAFER ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE”**

The concept of road charging, i.e. making users pay per kilometre, has, in recent years, been gaining momentum amongst Europe’s policymakers at national as well as European level. However, there is still a lack of consensus of what the true objectives of road charging should be, with opinions diverging significantly between advocates of a modal shift policy and those who view road charging an effective method of financing roads.

Overall, road transport related industries provide employment to more than 14 million people in Europe and directly contribute 11% to the European gross national product. In addition, the sector already pays a heavy fiscal burden through the multitude of taxes levied upon it, making it a net contributor to the coffers of Member States.

At the same time, investment levels in roads in most European countries have been decreasing in recent years, despite an increase in the share of users and enterprises choosing to circulate by road. The current economic crisis is expected to put further strain on the budgets of Member States, leading to a situation where governments can no longer afford expanding, let alone maintaining, the existing road infrastructure.

Against this backdrop, it is essential to devise a fair and reliable mechanism which can secure the funds needed to develop and maintain roads and which does not entail any additional tax burden for the sector. Road charging offers a potential solution to the idea of sustainable road financing provided that the objectives of the road charge are clearly defined.

In the view of ASECAP, IRU and ERF road charging should be based on the following fundamental pillars:

- 1. Road user charging should be seen as a means of a fair tolling scheme based on the pay-as-you-drive concept.**
- 2. The introduction of road user charging must be accompanied by the abolition of numerous current taxes (fuel tax, vehicle tax) in order to ensure that users don’t pay twice.**

3. The revenue generated from road charging **must** be channelled back in the road sector in the form of additional investment and research funds aimed at developing cleaner vehicle and infrastructure technologies.
  
4. To date, the earmarking of collected revenues (e.g. concession tolling) has proven to be a successful method of developing greener, safer and smarter road infrastructure i.e. a high quality road network, from the design to the construction, operation and maintenance phases.

Note to the editor:

ASECAP, ERF and the IRU, presented this policy statement at the occasion of a conference on future developments of road user charging hosted in the European Parliament by MEP Gesine Meissner (ALDE Coordinator of the Committee on Transport and Tourism) this Tuesday 09 November. Speaking at the rostrum were: Kallistratos Dionelis, Secretary General of ASECAP - Christophe Nicodème, Director General of the ERF - Michael Nielsen, General Delegate of the IRU Permanent Delegation to the EU.



ASECAP is the European Association of tolled road infrastructures operators. It gathers 2 networks. ASECAP mission is to promote tolling and the direct user-payer principle operation and effective maintenance of motorways and other major road infrastructure:

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The European Union Road Federation (ERF) is a non-profit association which coordinate dialogue and research on mobility issues. ERF Members represent a wide cross-section of equipment and operation of Europe's road network. Membership is open to national organisations.

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The IRU, through its national associations, represents the entire road transport industry trucks, from large transport fleets to driver-owners. In all international bodies that represent the industry's advocate. By working for the highest professional standards, the IRU improve road transport and ensures the mobility of people and goods.

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