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EUROVIGNETTE directive: mixed results from Committee vote for business organisations

Brussels, 11 February 2009 – European business organisations EUROCHAMBRES, EuroCommerce and UEAPME Transport Forum find today's vote at the European Parliament's Transport Committee on the EUROVIGNETTE Directive a step in the right direction: MEPs rightly rejected a number of questionable and over-complicated proposals on how to charge for the external costs of road transport, for instance on including CO2 emissions. However, the three organisations remain concerned about the proposal as a whole, in particular on the inclusion of congestion charges, and on its likely economic impact on operating costs for entrepreneurs in Europe – among them many SMEs – who depend on transport as a crucial link for their economic activities. The vote was a clear sign that the European Parliament is rather critical on many of the original elements of the Commission's text as well as additions proposed by some MEPs. The three organisations call upon the Parliament to continue discussions and reconsider its stance about congestion costs in the future plenary vote.

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EUROCHAMBRES, the Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry represents 45 national associations of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, a European network of 2000 regional and local Chambers with over 18 million member enterprises in Europe.

EuroCommerce

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EuroCommerce represents the retail, wholesale and international trade sectors in Europe. Its membership includes commerce federations and companies in 31 European countries. Commerce plays a unique role in the European economy, acting as the link between manufacturers and the nearly 500 million consumers across Europe over a billion times a day. It is a dynamic and labour-intensive sector, generating 11% of the EU's GDP. Over 95% of the 6 million companies in commerce are small and medium-sized enterprises.

UEAPME Transport Forum

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The **UEAPME Transport Forum** is a co-operation platform bringing together small and medium-sized enterprises operating in the transport sector as well as the transport branches of several members of UEAPME, the employers' organisation representing the interests of European crafts, trades and SMEs at EU level.