

# Newsletter

April – May 2021

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## Harmonisation of payment systems at charging stations

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When discussing the practical implementation of electric mobility with consumers today, the existing problem of the charging infrastructure and the charging process comes up sooner rather than later. Those consumers who already own an electric vehicle criticise one thing above all: the payment system. The clear appeal: It must quickly become easier to fill up and pay for electricity at a publicly accessible charging station without a contract, without a charging card or smartphone application from an operator. This goal should actually be achieved by the amendment to the German charging station ordinance, which the German government has been working on for some time and is expected to be passed as early as the second week of May. The background to this is paragraph 4 of the amended charging station ordinance in the version for the cabinet vote. It stipulates that from July 2023, newly commissioned charging stations will offer spontaneous electricity tankers two payment options: a cashless payment process via internet-based payment service providers and, in addition, contactless payment with debit or credit cards, as is now also possible at supermarket checkouts or in retail stores - with consumers holding corresponding cards in front of a reader. The current regulation, on the other hand, leaves it up to charging station operators whether they offer exclusively internet-based payment methods or also accept card payments. This requirement has met with widespread criticism from business associations: the German Association of the Automotive Industry (VDA), the German Association of Energy and Water Industries (BDEW) and the German Electrical and Electronic Manufacturers' Association (ZVEI) recently criticised that this requirement would set back the expansion of the charging network by years and make it considerably more expensive. The price of the charging columns would rise considerably, which would ultimately have to be passed on to customers. Instead, the associations advocate mobile payment via

smartphone. This would be user-friendly, future-proof and compatible with Europe. This was agreed in September by the Federal Minister of Economics and Technology, Peter Altmaier, and the Federal Minister of Transport, Andreas Scheuer, in consultation with business representatives. But this common line has now simply been abandoned.

The German automobile club ADAC, on the other hand, is more in favour of the current position of the federal government: according to the automobile club, the solutions offered by the operators by means of QR code scans and app downloads are unnecessarily complicated or often do not work reliably. In addition, the spontaneous tariffs are usually significantly more expensive than charging with a contract. As a result, e-car drivers have to search for cheap offers and conclude charging contracts in an opaque tariff jungle consisting of almost 400 tariffs. Therefore, there must not only be better price transparency at the charging stations, but also simple payment using giro and credit cards at card readers.

### **What about Europe?**

Even if it is only about German regulations and requirements, this discussion also has a considerable European dimension that hardly receives any attention. Already nationally, consumers face enormous challenges in charging, as the discussion illustrates. However, it becomes even more complicated when one wants to travel Europe-wide with an e-vehicle. The best national systems and standardisations are of no use if they are not thought of in European terms. There is no need for national solo efforts, but rather binding European specifications that oblige providers to make charging systems compatible and connectable. Electromobility will only work in Europe if the charging process becomes as simple as refuelling a combustion engine. Giro and credit cards are globally recognised and widespread means of payment that will be around for many years or decades to come thanks to new approaches such as the use of the NFC interface on smartphones (e.g. Google Pay or

Apple Pay). What is needed is a mix of solutions that work now and solutions that are sustainable in the long term. Since consumers travelling in Europe rarely conclude contracts in advance, it must also be ensured that charging prices for spontaneous chargers are not unreasonably higher than with a charging contract. Higher prices would then discriminate against foreign drivers in particular.

### **ECA Special Report on "Electric Charging Infrastructure"**

In a recently published special report on electric charging infrastructure in Europe, the European Court of Auditors (ECA) found that the EU is still far from reaching its target of 1 million charging points by 2025. There was a lack of an overarching strategic roadmap for e-mobility.

The objective of the audit was to determine the effectiveness of the Commission's support for the development of an EU-wide publicly accessible infrastructure for charging electric vehicles.

The ECA found that despite successes such as promoting a common EU plug standard and improving access to different charging networks, barriers to electric vehicle travel across the EU remain. The availability of charging stations varies from country to country, payment systems are not harmonised with minimum requirements and there is insufficient information for users. In the absence of a comprehensive analysis of the infrastructure gap, the Commission has not been able to ensure that EU funding reaches where it is most needed. The EU is still far from its Green Deal target of 1 million charging points by 2025 and lacks an overarching strategic roadmap for e-mobility.

#### Further Links:

- [ECA: Special Report on "Electric Charging Infrastructure"](#)

### **EU Road Safety Policy Framework 2021-2030**

On 14 April, Elena Kountoura (GUE/NGL, Greece) presented the EU's new medium-term road safety strategy, the so-called EU Road Safety Policy Framework 2021-2030, to the European Parliament's Transport Committee (TRAN). The draft report addresses how the EU will implement the strategy and its "Safe System" approach at EU level by ensuring safe vehicles, safe infrastructure and safe road use, and formulates recommendations.

In her presentation, Kountoura stressed that the goal of reducing road deaths and serious injuries by 50 per cent by 2030 can be achieved if the political will is there. She stressed the importance of reducing speed in urban areas to a maximum of 30 km/h to protect drivers and vulnerable road users. She defended a zero tolerance policy on drink-driving and called for an appropriate enforcement mechanism at EU level for cross-border offences. The rapporteur recalled that it is crucial to assess infrastructure and prioritise investments in the most vulnerable parts of the network. She strongly advocated for a future EU road safety agency that could coordinate and support Member States' efforts and collect data. In the discussion that followed, TRAN members called for road safety to be an integral part of infrastructure plans in the future via minimum safety standards and the introduction of new technologies for data exchange. The MEPs also stressed the importance of investing in early driver education and addressing the issue of road safety in light of new mobility trends.

#### Further Links:

- [Draft Report: EU Road Safety Policy Framework 2021-2030](#)

### **TRAN: Exchange of views with DG GROW on summer tourism**

On 15 April, the Parliamentary Transport Committee (TRAN) had an exchange of views with DG GROW Director General Kerstin Jorna

on the situation of the EU tourism ecosystem after 12 months of COVID-19 crisis and the outlook for the 2021 summer season.

The Commission reiterated that tourism is one of the 14 industrial ecosystems in the EU that has suffered the most. For example, the number of air passengers fell by 89 per cent in March and the number of air routes shrank significantly. Travel agents and tour operators are facing sharp declines in sales, while costs continue to rise. The airlines, short-term car rentals, tour buses, the hospitality industry, trade fairs, theme parks, music festivals and museums are also suffering. On a positive note, rural, nature and domestic tourism have been doing well recently. Many Europeans intend to spend more money on travel.

The Digital Green Certificate proposal adopted on 17 March is one of the measures that could help create an EU framework for the resumption of safe travel this summer. The certificate must be interoperable and secure, contain the same information and thus be accepted by all member states. It will require significant preparatory work by Member States' national authorities. The EU Emergency Support Instrument can be used for these preparations. Such a certificate is also important for the gradual return of international travellers.

Ongoing work to introduce a voluntary EU sanitary label for the hospitality sector is due to be completed in May. It will provide common rules for hygiene protocols and thus provide a degree of confidence for travellers using these accommodations.

The Commission will publish an update on industrial strategy at the end of April, which will include the tourism ecosystem as one of 14 industrial ecosystems.

TRAN members actively exchanged views on various topical issues, such as the impact of the pandemic on the whole tourism industry ecosystem, the Digital Green Certificate, access to EU funding for tourism and future trends within the sector. Overall, the main message from members was to do everything possible to avoid a return to the situation of a year ago, when

a total lack of coordination between member states led to a patchwork of often incompatible measures that did not serve the cause of tourism and the freedom of travel of EU citizens at all. Members expect the Commission to play an active role in coordinating horizontal measures and to take a leading role in providing support through EU funds.

Jorna pointed out that the online guidelines for EU funding will be ready in May, written in an accessible, easy-to-understand way. Applicant companies will first be asked to identify which category they fall into and what they are looking for to better guide them. The next opportunity for TRAN to discuss future actions for the tourism sector will be in May when Commissioner Breton will be heard at the launch of the updated Industrial Strategy.

Further Links:

- [TRAN Press Release](#)

TRAN: Exchange with Commissioner Adina Vălean

On 15 April, the Parliamentary Transport Committee also held an exchange with Transport Commissioner Adina Vălean, which focused on the implementation of the Commission's Work Programme for 2021, the general state of legislation in the Commissioner's area of responsibility and the presentation of the Commission's work on the upcoming legislative acts.

The Commissioner first outlined the severe impact of the crisis on the transport sector and the broader travel and tourism ecosystem, which is now entering its second year of the pandemic. Reduced mobility leads to shrinking economic activity and the loss of fundamental freedoms. She recalled that the EU has supported all transport sectors with emergency measures. Assistance was given to the aviation sector. Transport operators have been granted a flexible state aid framework and the Next Generation EU offers member states a historic opportunity to invest in a modern transport system through national RRF plans.

Looking ahead to legislative proposals in the current year 2021, Commissioner Vălean mentioned in particular the upcoming Fit for 55 package, with a series of proposals to implement the goal of achieving at least 55 per cent emission reductions by 2030, including initiatives for alternative fuels in aviation and maritime transport, the revision of the Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Directive (AFID) and a reform of the Emissions Trading Scheme, which will then include transport for the first time. There will also be a revision of the 2013 urban mobility package.

In the coming year 2022, the main focus will be on the strategy for sustainable and intelligent mobility. There will be a revision of the legal framework for intermodal transport, as well as an EU framework for harmonised measurement of transport and logistics emissions. In addition, the Commission will make a proposal for a European Mobility Data Space. The Driving Licence Directive will also be updated to reflect technological innovation.

TRAN members participated in an active debate and pointed out the areas where more work and commitment is needed from the Commission. Action is still needed on the introduction of a multimodal cross-border ticketing system. Several MEPs raised the need to strengthen the social rights of transport workers. The upcoming reform of the Emissions Trading Scheme is a sensitive area where several Members expressed concern about plans to include maritime transport or possibly even road transport in the ETS.

Further Links:

- [TRAN Press Release](#)

### Meeting Dates

#### Council

Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council 03/06/2021

Competitiveness Council 27/05/2021

Council of Justice and Home Affairs 07/06/2021

Council of Environment 21/06/2021

Plenary 17-20/05/2021 (Agenda)

#### Committees

Environment (ENVI) 26-27/05/2021 (Agenda, tba)

Internal Market / Consumer (IMCO) 27/05/2021 (Agenda, tba)

Justice & Home Affairs (LIBE) 26-27/05/2021 (Agenda, tba)

Transport (TRAN) 25/05/2021 (Agenda, tba)