

Support kilometre pricing wavers

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Will Dutch car drivers be paying per kilometre in 2012? The car lobby is threatening to withdraw its crucial support to the Transport Minister's plans.

[N180 image 1](#)

The Netherlands are planning a road pricing scheme, to be implemented for passenger cars as of 2012. Mr Camiel Eurlings, Dutch Transport Minister, confidently presented the definite outlines last November. Broad support in society was the key pillar under his plans: the Dutch car lobby, mainly the Royal Dutch Touring Club (ANWB), environmental organisations and employers' organisations VNO-NCW and MKB (SME) pronounced themselves in favour of payment per kilometre.

A special commission of commercial, governmental and social organisations (the Alternative Payment for Mobility Platform) investigated various alternatives to the current plans in 2005 and has since been advising the minister. The platform was headed by a former director of ANWB. No wonder ANWB supports the plans, one would think.

Threat

But that same ANWB is now threatening to withdraw its support altogether. It has been threatening to do so once before in these last months, but never as outright as today.

Reasons for ANWB to be in favour of the plans were, according to an [explanation](#) (in Dutch) on the organisation's website:

- equal treatment of all road users (not just charging those using urban ring roads during peak hours);
- equal government revenues (in previous plans revenues rose);
- and the promise that all revenues will be used for road infrastructure, public transport etc.

The first and second points are at stake now.

Tax compensation

Fixed car taxes, consisting of an extremely high purchase tax in comparison to other countries, an annual motor vehicle tax and provincial surtaxes, will disappear with the introduction of the road pricing scheme. Running up to 2012 the vehicle purchase tax will already be phased out, but as compensation the motor vehicle tax temporarily rises. As of January first, it has risen by 6.4 per cent.

Purchase taxes cannot simply be abandoned at once in 2012, because that would severely disrupt the car market (people would postpone buying new cars) and it would bring down the second hand car market.

When presenting his plans, Mr Eurlings' explicitly promised that all car drivers together wouldn't be paying more than they would under the current system. 59 per cent of car drivers would even be paying less and 25 per cent would be paying the same as at that time.

Complaint

But today in Dutch newspaper *Algemeen Dagblad* ANWB complains that for many drivers car driving has already become more expensive. ANWB members are apparently complaining that they are paying for someone else's future benefit (and we wouldn't want that, now would we? It's a miracle people are still paying insurance money...)

The organisation also states that it has yet to decide whether to support the scheme or not. "If the road towards it leads through this deep a gorge, there will be no levy whatsoever," a spokesman is quoted.

A firm statement. Will the minister put the power of ANWB to the test?

Source

- [Car drivers complain about higher costs](#) (in Dutch) - *Algemeen Dagblad*