

PRESS RELEASE

MEPs from the Transport Committee and Transport Ministers missed an opportunity to address failure to comply with parking regulations.

On 27 November 2023, the European Parliament's Transport Committee adopted its report on the revision of the Directive on Cross Border Exchange of information on road safety-related traffic offences. EU Transport Ministers followed suit with a General Approach adopted on 4 December 2023.

The European Parking Association (EPA) and POLIS deeply regret that MEPs and Transport Ministers failed to address the fact that the current inability to enforce parking regulations on foreign licence plate holders leads to both impunity of nonresident offenders and to local resentment against foreign drivers. On the contrary, it should have been an occasion to consider such failures to comply as an offence triggering Cross Border Exchange (CBE) of information. The lack of CBE allows foreign drivers to infringe these regulations with impunity. Non-respect of parking regulations leads to higher levels of congestion on the roads, higher emissions, more accidents and for many municipalities, especially in bordering regions, a loss of legitimate revenue from visiting motorists.

The current patchwork of bilateral agreements between bordering Member States as regards cross-border exchange of information is not up to the current challenges as it is increasingly easy for foreign drivers to avoid the consequences of non-compliance.

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Nigel Williams, EPA President:

'As EU institutions are simultaneously debating the revision of the rules on the European Disability and Parking Cards, it would seem extremely damaging for ministers to effectively send a message to non-resident drivers that says: Don't worry, you don't need to respect parking regulations such as not parking in spaces reserved for disabled drivers or paying your parking fees. If you receive a penalty notice you won't have to pay it as your foreign licence plate gives you total immunity!'

The European Parking Association and POLIS therefore continue to call on Transport Ministers and MEPs to be tougher on those failing to abide by basic UVAR and parking rules and clarify that failure to comply with UVARs and parking regulations should indeed be considered as dangerous driving behaviour.

Karen Vancluysen, POLIS Secretary General:

'Most European cities have parking strategies that require fair and efficient enforcement. Making sure foreign vehicles follow the same rules as locals should be without question. We regret that European legislation once more is about to miss a unique opportunity to solve this problem. We fear that solutions outside the CBE Directive framework will be technically complex and cumbersome for European cities to implement.'

EPA and POLIS will therefore keep working with the European Commission, Parliament and Council to raise awareness of the real-life impacts of failure to comply with Urban Vehicle Access Regulations, including parking regulations. These must be taken into account in all ongoing and upcoming legislative initiatives!

For information on EPA and POLIS, check [Note to editors](#).

Note to editors

The European Parking Association (EPA), founded in 1983, is the umbrella organisation for parking associations in Europe. The 24 national member associations represent the entire parking sector, consisting of public and private bodies that are operating and managing on- and off-street parking structures and services. The associate members represent the supply industry that offers all related products and services concerned with parking and urban mobility. EPA aims to facilitate cooperation between the national parking organisations of all European countries, as well as the exchange and mutual support of professional experience among its members relating to parking management and sustainable urban mobility.

POLIS is a registered international non-profit association under Belgian law with its secretariat based in Brussels. POLIS is the leading European network of cities and regions on urban transport innovation, where European local and regional authorities have been working together since 1998 to promote sustainable mobility through the deployment of innovative transport solutions. Its aim is to improve local transport through integrated strategies that address the economic, social and environmental dimensions of transport. To this end, POLIS supports the exchange of experiences and the transfer of knowledge between its members and facilitates the dialogue with mobility stakeholders from the industry and research sector, as well as other levels of government. POLIS also acts as the voice of its members towards the European institutions to help shape EU mobility policy.