
Introduction to the Dutch solution of roadpricing

In May 2004 the Minister of Transport in the Netherlands asked mr. Paul Nouwen, the former president of the Dutch ANWB, where in Denmark this is the FDM (Forenede Danske Motorejere), to help the minister to make a plan in which all the Dutch organisations in regard to car traffic were involved.

Mr. Nouwen asked me to help him, and together we organised the Platform Anders Betalen voor Mobiliteit (Platform "Paying differently for the use of the road").

In this Platform 17 different organisations were involved, only on the highest level, and after 9 months we did agree on a selection of around 14 different measures.

What were the features of the proposed national Dutch scheme?

Then and now, people pay in the Netherlands for car ownership in four ways:

- 1 the luxury tax on car purchases;
- 2 the road tax;
- 3 surtaxes by provincial authorities; and
- 4 V.A.T. on petrol.

Under the envisioned system of "Paying different for the use of the road," there would be a very low car tax. The road tax and surtaxes of provincial authorities would be abolished, although V.A.T. on petrol would remain.

In total it was a shake up for around 10 billion euro's yearly that would not (directly) go to the State.

The new system was based on paying per kilometre travelled on all Dutch roads by every motor vehicle, with prices varying according to time, place and environmental factors. The level of charges has not yet been determined. There would be exceptions for fire brigades, police, ambulances, motorcycles and cars not subject to existing taxes.

The Parliament had decreed that no more than 5% of system revenues could go toward its operation.

In 2006 we had our regular elections and a new crew of Statesman came to power. The new government's position on "Paying different for the use of the road," (expressed in the letter of 30 November 2007 to the Dutch House of Representatives) announced that an irreversible step would be taken within the government period towards achieving a Road Pricing System. This, because of the fact that it was not yet possible to introduce the system all at once.

To achieve this irreversible step, the Dutch House of Representatives did agree to preliminary realisation decision on "Paying different for the use of the road," (before the proposed road pricing act was discussed) so that tendering could take place for a number of critical and time-critical components needed to be able to carry out the operational tests (including a large-scale practice test, the

Proof of Concept) and to be able to start road pricing in time for goods and other motor vehicles.

Developing and building system components up to the time of the tests required approximately € 167 million. These systems could then be expanded after successful testing.

The preliminary realisation decision was part of a series of decision-making times regarding the road pricing system. Decisions would be made as follows:

- ✚ *Preliminary realisation decision further to the road pricing system implementation plan – before summer 2008;*
- ✚ *Further elaboration of the role of private service providers in collecting road pricing fees – after summer 2008;*
- ✚ *Proposed road pricing act – early 2009;*
- ✚ *Realisation decision – late 2009;*
- ✚ *Implementation decision – 2011;*
- ✚ *Delivery decision – 2016.*

The preliminary realisation decision provided a go moment for achieving system components of the Road Pricing System such that its operation could be determined in a large-scale practice (of operational) test. Once this was successful, it would have been possible to further expand the system after the realisation decision. The system would have taken effect after the implementation decision was made (2011).

After complete implementation, the delivery decision would have been made, determining whether the system had to be fully compliant with the requirements.

There were in effect two parts to the implementation plan. Part 1 covered the choice of organisational model on which the technical system was based and outlined the road pricing system in the operational phase (including technical aspects) on the basis of that model. Part 2 addressed implementation of the system, i.e., how the Road Pricing System would have been achieved and what steps had to be taken.

The preliminary realisation decision provided a go moment for achieving system components of the Road Pricing System such that its operation would have been determined in a large-scale practice (of operational) test. Then too it could have been possible to further expand the system after the realisation decision.

The system would have taken effect after the implementation decision was made. But.....then the government collapsed and we in the Netherlands had new elections. (2010).

In this elections, the subject of "Paying different for the use of the road," was a key issue when mobility came in the discussions. At the end, two parties who were against the new system, the Dutch Liberal Party (VVD) and an right wing party called the PVV, together with the Christian democrat party (CDA) where able to form the new government and immediately closed down all the preparations for the introduction of Paying different for the use of the road,". The main reason, and this is an personal opinion, was that the VVD and the PVV where more enthusiastic in building more roads than, in there opinion, bullying the roaduser and having him paying for the use of the road.

To what extent did technological challenges influence the decision to cancel the plans to introduce road pricing in the Netherlands, you could ask.

In my opinion this influence was very little.

I wrote earlier on that there were two mainstreams of operation to the implementation plan. The industry from all over the world did participate in a open dialog with the Ministry in regard to the (technical) problems that could emerge, but all the way, the technical system was in all extend feasible all parties agreed.



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