



## Differentiated infrastructure charging: a comparison of theory and practise

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### Abstract

In the European Union, the infrastructure charging regimes that can be observed are often far from internalising external costs and are rarely based on efficiency principles. In this situation differentiation of existing charges appears to be a sensible intermediate step.

In this paper we study the empirical evidence of the different aspects that affect infrastructure pricing as described by theory. In order to do so information was collected from a number of case studies, and a set of indicators was defined, not only to allow for the analysis of price differentiation practise with respect to the degree of differentiation, but also to account for the level of ambition of the price setting actors.

The cross-case analysis was based on a number of hypotheses that were drawn from the theoretical framework. Testing for the hypotheses using the case study information allowed us to establish an overview of the current state of differentiated infrastructure charging.

*Keywords:* Price differentiation; Infrastructure; Special interest groups; Normative economics; Positive economics.

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### 1. Introduction

In the European Union, levels and structures of transport infrastructure charges vary strongly across transport modes and countries. Some degree of convergence exists on the intention to apply the principle of marginal cost pricing in various transport sectors, but, in the presence of unsolved difficulties in funding transport investment and even serious concerns about marginal social cost pricing in several countries, any such

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