

Late last week, the Hungarian government announced that cars with foreign license plates will no longer be allowed to buy fuel at capped prices at Hungarian gas stations as of 27 May.

In the past months, petrol tourism has been booming in Hungary. Citizens of neighboring countries crossed the border from neighboring countries to buy fuel at a much lower price than available in other EU countries.

The decree also states that vehicles with foreign license plates coming from a country where the price of gasoline is also capped can continue to fill up at the official capped price. This effectively means that the measure is aimed at Austrian and Slovakian citizens, since cars with Slovenian, Croatian or Serbian license plates can still fill up at Hungarian petrol stations.

However, this measure may be in violation of several EU regulations. It is a fundamental EU rule that any discrimination between consumers is prohibited. The dual pricing of fuel is in breach of EU rules on discrimination. Austrian car associations already announced that they will file a complaint with the European Commission.