

# EU ENVIRONMENT COUNCIL DISCUSSION

## ON CO2 STANDARDS

9 OCTOBER 2018

EPHA BRIEFING | OCTOBER 2018

## Summary

During the 9th October Environment Council meeting in Luxembourg on 9 October, EU Ministers of Environment reached an agreement on the CO2 standards for cars and vans in the European Union. The agreement aims to reduce CO2 emissions from new cars by 35% in 2030, compared to 2021 levels. Denmark, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Slovenia and Sweden expressed their disappointment with this agreement.

Most countries were represented at ministerial level. The representatives of the governments of Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Greece and the United Kingdom highlighted the health dimension of CO2 standards.

## Country profiles

1. **AT:** recognises that it is an issue of high importance and urgency and acknowledges the need for infrastructure, retrofitting and cost savings by increasing fuel economy.

2. **SK:** car industry is crucial for the Slovakian economy. Strongly against any target of more than 30% as they are too ambitious due to high prices of the cars and costs of building required infrastructure. Being more ambitious diminishes positive outcomes, increases the usage of electricity thus increasing the level of emissions.

3. **CZ:** The Commission's proposal is already very ambitious and EU is already among the most ambitious. More ambitious targets would lead to a too radical shift to electromobility, while the Czech Republic advocates for doing it gradually. If we are too ambitious, cars will become accessible only to the rich people. It should be also taken into the account that there is an insufficient number of charging stations and the need for green energy in order to reduce the level of emissions. Therefore, the Czech Republic is strongly against malus and highlights that national actions should be taken, rather than at the European level.

4. **SE:** yesterday's IPCC report shows the urgency to act now in order to fulfil the Paris agreement, hence the targets need to be increased significantly, preferably 50% reduction by 2030. Sourcing of the batteries to China is worrisome, therefore the EU should take the lead in this.

5. **RO:** supports the Paris agreement and believes that the Commission's proposal provides the right balance. It also emphasised the need for realistic targets and that low carbon mobility must come at the affordable price, otherwise, it will become a privilege.

6. **LT:** supports the most ambitious targets as in this way we can solve climate and public health issues. We need to signal to the car industry that the shift to low emission mobility is urgently needed if we want to compete globally. We should also address the influx of second-hand cars in Eastern Europe.



7.**PT**: we need to tackle climate change and decarbonise the mobility. Starting in 2040, Portugal will only be selling zero emission vehicles. We need to be more ambitious, speed up decarbonisation and for the EU to show leadership in the fight against climate change. It is crucial for stimulating innovation. We should distinguish between zero and low emission vehicles and have different incentives for them.

8.**FI**: emission targets prove to be an effective way of reducing transport emissions. As we are on the verge of a technological breakthrough, we need to be more ambitious in order to attract investment, create jobs, lower the usage of energy. It should be borne in mind that the more we produce, the cheaper zero and low emissions cars will be.

9.**FR**: need to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emission significantly. Believes that being more ambitious would boost competitiveness. We also need incentives for investments in batteries and charging points, zero emission cars. Thinks that it is crucial to have targets for 2040 as well in order to enhance the development of zero emission mobility and is convinced that the bonus should only be focused on zero emission cars.

10.**SI**: as we need to protect the environment, having ambitious targets is a must. Thinks that transport cannot be an exception from the reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Status quo risks to result in significant job losses. Ambitious targets should be perceived as an economic opportunity.

11.**DE**: supports the Commission's proposal, but is concerned about the competitiveness. Germany also supports WLTP and highlights the need for real driving emissions.

12.**DK**: Denmark just adopted a very ambitious climate strategy this morning. Believes that bonus malus system is a must and by doing nothing we will lose jobs to China. In order to avoid it, we need right incentives and strong home market.

13.**BG**: only the Commission's proposal is acceptable. Highlighted that national specificities, purchasing power, development of technologies and local infrastructure should be considered. Also believes that no sanctions should be imposed.

14.**PL**: we shall not be overambitious and we should reward car industry for introducing zero emission cars. The influx of second cars to Eastern Europe is worrisome and it requires additional measures, otherwise, we will not meet our climate targets.

15.**IT**: we need to act with speed as we have a collective responsibility. Emphasised not reaching an agreement is detrimental to the environment and the health of our citizens. For this purpose, we need the right incentives.

16.**UK**: the main benefits of CO<sub>2</sub> reduction are meeting carbon targets as well as improving air quality, public health and environment. Fight against climate change happens globally, so we need to boost innovation, research and transition as in this way we will be sure that the jobs will be protected and it would also boost investments.

17.**EE**: cutting transport emissions is crucial for meeting our climate targets, however, we need to give enough time for the car industry to transition to zero-emission mobility.

8.**ES**: we need to act urgently as the climate change is already happening. Therefore, the sooner we start, the more opportunities we will have. The industry is undergoing major changes. Acknowledges



that we need to restore the trust in the car industry. Thinks that CO2 standards should be ambitious and progressive. Finally, Spain is convinced that the batteries should be produced in Europe.

19.**LU**: car industry for 25 years has been failing climate and public health and they invest more in China. Luxembourg is convinced that we need to be ambitious and to close loopholes in order to prevent emission frauds. Believes that the focus should be on zero emission cars rather than on plug ins.

20.**HU**: EU should consider the implications for the car industry and emphasized that citizens want jobs and accessibility to mobility. Noted that the car industry plays a key role in the development of the Hungarian economy. Concerned about the influx of second-hand cars. Having overambitious targets would weaken competitiveness and would lead to job losses thus harming the economy. Believes that the focus should be on the heavy-duty vehicles.

21.**IE**: we need more ambitious targets, preferably 50% by 2030. Believes that competitiveness might be lost by not doing enough and that the EU lose the momentum by not being ambitious enough. Convinced that zero-emission mobility is the future.

22.**CY**: agrees with being more ambitious and believes that the EU should show the direction for the car industry.

23.**BE**: is it is fundamental to adopt an ambitious target as we need to protect the climate and to improve air quality. Acknowledges the need of incentive system, real driving emissions and prevention of cheating with emissions.

24.**MT**: concerned about whether it is possible to reach ambitious targets. Convinced that the car industry must invest in Europe.

25.**EL**: believes that the car industry must take its own share of responsibility. Thinks that we need to show courage and ambition and that the EU must lead in tackling climate change. In this way, the health of our citizens will be improved.

26.**HR**: believes that the transition toward zero emission mobility should be done gradually in order to improve the competitiveness of the car industry.

27.**LV**: concerned that there will be an influx of second-hand cars in Eastern Europe. Believes that the financial compensation is needed and there is a need for goals that are achievable.

28.**NL**: just had a court ruling saying that governments must deliver on climate change. Therefore, we need to act now, so we could do that gradually. Ambitious targets help to create more jobs, as exemplified by China.

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