

To:

Frans Timmermans, Executive Vice-President, European Green Deal

Thierry Breton, Commissioner for Internal Market

Virginijus Sinkevičius, Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries

Adina-Ioana Vălean, Commissioner for Transport

Stella Kyriakides, Commissioner for Health and Food Safety

Kerstin Jorna, Director-General Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs

Florika Fink-Hooijer, Director-General Environment

Copy to:

Karima Delli, Transport Committee Chair

Pascal Canfin, Environment, Public Health and Food Safety Committee Chair

Brussels, 5th February 2021

Future vehicle emission standard, Euro 7-joint letter

Dear Vice President Timmermans, Commissioner Breton, Commissioner Sinkevičius, Commissioner Vălean, Commissioner Kyriakide, Director-General Jorna, Director-General Fink-Hooijer,

To improve air quality in European towns and cities¹ and achieve the European Green Deal's 'Zero Pollution' ambition, reduction and elimination of pollutant emissions from road transport is an urgent priority. According to the 2020 report by the European Environmental Agency (EEA)², within the European Union around 400,000 premature deaths occur annually due to air pollution, to which road transport is a large contributor. Besides premature mortality, air pollution causes cardiovascular diseases and stroke, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, lower respiratory infections, lung cancer, diabetes, neonatal deaths, and asthma in children, thus resulting in large societal and healthcare costs. Air pollution also affects mainly disadvantaged populations and therefore widens inequalities in Europe.

While pollutant emissions of the latest Euro 6d/VI vehicles appear to finally respect the Euro 6/VI emission limits on the road, these limits were set over a decade ago and are now outdated. There is a solid body of evidence on the adverse health effects of air pollution that emerged over the last decade showing that air pollution is more dangerous than it was in the 2005 World Health Organization (WHO) Global Air Quality Guidelines, which are up for revision this year. Technological progress means that much lower emissions than current limits are already achievable. In cities, new low emission zones are set up on an ongoing basis to increase the level of ambition on air quality. In order to drive further reductions in road transport emissions for the protection of people's health and the environment and to ensure the EU automotive industry's transitions towards zero emission technologies, as a next step, an ambitious new emission standard for light and heavy-duty vehicles, Euro 7, is required.

The signatories are increasingly concerned by the continuing negative reaction of the automotive and fuel industries to the preliminary CLOVE proposals as presented at the Advisory Group on Vehicle Emission Standards (AGVES) on the 27th of October 2020. These were based on a broad consultation and represent the evidence-based recommendations based on the best available technology today. As such Transport & Environment (T&E), POLIS, EURO CITIES, European Public Health Alliance (EPHA), European Respiratory Society (ERS) and the European Environmental Bureau (EEB) would like to

¹ For more details on local authorities' concerns and proposed solutions see POLIS' position submitted to the AGVES group in October 2020: 'A new approach for post Euro 6 standards: Enabling European cities & regions to improve air quality by reducing vehicle [emissions](#)'.

² <https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/air-quality-in-europe-2020-report>

reaffirm their commitment to the Euro 7 process. We call on the European Commission to develop an ambitious Euro 7 proposal and to include the following key aspects within the proposal:

- The latest evidence from studies on the health effects of air pollution show clearly that there is no safe level of air pollution³, and as such, incrementally lowering vehicle emission limits is only a temporary plaster on the problem of pollution from internal combustion engines. Therefore, as a priority, alongside reductions of emissions limits to the lowest possible level, Euro 7 must set out a clear technology neutral roadmap to a zero emission standard. This must come no later than 2035 for cars and vans, and 2040 for trucks. Such a roadmap will provide ample lead time for the automotive industry to prepare as well as ensuring that the EU automotive industry leads globally in the transition to zero emission mobility while improving citizens' health and quality of life in cities.
- Testing, approval and certification of vehicles must ensure that emission limits apply under all possible driving conditions. In particular, on-road tests must cover all conditions that vehicles are capable/designed to drive in, including in urban settings. This will ensure that vehicles are not just designed to pass the test.
- Vehicles must be required to meet the emission limits throughout the entire lifetime of the vehicle, this must also include vehicles in Member States such as Poland and Greece where many are much older than the EU average. Otherwise, the problem of air pollution will unfairly be shifted to less affluent Member States when all Europeans have an equal right to breathe clean air.
- All pollutants which are harmful to human health and the environment must be regulated at the tailpipe. This includes all pollutants that can be measured either on the road or in the laboratory, such as small particles and ammonia. The inclusion of non-exhaust pollution from brakes should also be assessed.

We urge the Commission to honour its commitments under the European Green Deal and hope it will lead in the transition to zero emission mobility through delivering an ambitious Euro 7 proposal, including a clear roadmap to a zero emission standard thereby aligning vehicle emission standards with its 'Zero Pollution' ambition.

We remain at your disposal for any further assistance.

Yours Sincerely,

Transport & Environment



POLIS



European Public Health Alliance



EUROCITIES



European Respiratory Society



European Environmental Bureau



³Air pollution and health: recent advances in air pollution epidemiology to inform the European Green Deal: a joint workshop report of ERS, WHO, ISEE and HEI. Barbara Hoffmann, Nathalie Roebbel, Sophie Gumy, Francesco Forastiere, Bert Brunekreef, Dorota Jarosinska, Katherine D. Walker, Annemoon M. van Erp, Robert O'Keefe, Dan Greenbaum, Martin Williams, Michal Krzyzanowski, Frank J. Kelly, Michael Brauer, Hans Bruyninckx, Hanna Boogaard. European Respiratory Journal Nov 2020, 56 (5) 2002575; DOI: 10.1183/13993003.02575-2020