

Mrs Ursula von der Leyen
President of the European Commission

Strasbourg, 8 October 2024

Dear Madam President,

I would like to draw your attention to the worrying situation of the automotive sector and its competitiveness. In 2023, the Union adopted revision of the regulation setting CO₂ performance limits for new passenger cars and new light commercial vehicles in line with its ambitious climate targets. The Regulation requires that the annual average CO₂ emissions of the EU fleet for new cars and vans be reduced compared to 2021 while manufacturers who exceed the specific emissions targets will have to pay penalties.

As these targets for reductions are approaching, the issue of CO₂ emission limits for new passenger cars and vans has been recently reintroduced into public discourse. Moreover, European Automobile Manufacturers' Association (ACEA) published a statement pointing out that manufacturers will not be able to meet the 2025 CO₂ limits given the slow uptake of electric vehicles. They call for urgent action facing risks of multi-billion-euro fines, unnecessary production cuts, and job losses - issues already raised publicly by the European vehicle manufacturers and trade unions.

Therefore, our collective aim as co-legislators is to maintain the competitiveness of the European automotive industry, which is one of our key pillars of strategic autonomy and economic prosperity. We must avoid barriers that could hinder the affordability of environmentally friendly vehicles and even the freedom that individual mobility offers. Otherwise, the EU market risks falling into the so-called 'Havana effect,' with some Member States already struggling as the average age of vehicles reaches over 17 years. We need to ensure regulatory framework that supports, rather than stifles, market adaptability and consumer accessibility for a smooth transition to sustainable mobility.

One of the most immediate threats is that the EU's 2025 CO₂ emission targets do not reflect the current social and economic conditions. This puts manufacturers at risk of financial challenges and penalties, which could limit investment in innovation and weaken Europe's global market position. Ironically, this happens as the EU discusses clear lack of competitiveness and growing strategic dependency on third countries. Therefore, **the review of the Regulation to assess its impact should take place as soon as possible, ensuring that the reduction set targets reflect current realities and do not undermine the shift to clean mobility by imposing excessive penalties on vehicle manufacturers.**

We as co-legislators call on the Commission to review the Regulation and realistically reassess the timing and conditions needed to achieve the ultimate final goal of reducing CO₂ emissions from new passenger cars and new light commercial vehicles.

Furthermore, the focus must shift from relying solely on battery electric vehicles (BEVs) toward a more diversified strategy, incorporating CO₂ neutral fuels, hybrid vehicles with increasing electric range, and other potentially viable technologies. This would drive innovation, strengthen the economy, and accelerate the transition to cleaner mobility.

If we are serious about reducing emissions, we must strategically support the industry's long-term sustainability. The EU needs to create competitive conditions for the industry and address key challenges highlighted in the Draghi Report, such as high energy prices, excessive regulatory burdens or the lacking supply chain for electric mobility.

As the Commission prepares to review the regulation on CO₂ emissions, it is essential to consider these factors and ensure a stable and predictable path for manufacturers during this critical transition.

We trust that the Commission will give this matter the attention it deserves and look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

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