

Public debate: Regulation on CO₂ emissions standards for new passenger cars
Ljubljana, 28 August 2008 – *report*

The aim of the debate was to bring the legislative process of setting binding CO₂ emissions standards for new passenger cars closer to the public and to provide the public with the space and opportunity to influence the decision making on this issue.

After the introduction of the proposed regulation, views/positions of EP's ITRE member, car maker representative and NGOs were presented.

Romana Jordan Cizelj, member of the European Parliament's ITRE committee:

In her opening remarks Jordan Cizelj highlighted the importance of this legislation in view of climate change. She focused mainly on the Langen's opinion and presented her expectations towards the vote in the ITRE committee on 1 September. She stressed the need to adopt the amendments on eco-innovations to give the industry the necessary flexibility. In her opinion it is not realistic to expect that industry can reach the proposed target without the option to use the eco-innovations. She also pointed out that proposed penalties are quite high and can present the serious burden to the industry. Personally she did not think that the amendment postponing Commission's proposal for a review of test procedures to 2014 makes sense; in her opinion that should be done earlier, 2014 is too late.

Nevenka Bašek Zildžović, representative of Revoz (Renault's company in Slovenia):

Bašek Zildžović underscored that the proposed legislation can seriously harm the European car industry. She presented achievements and future plans of Renault and stressed that although Renault is already doing better than other car companies, major investments in technological development will be required to achieve the EU targets. Despite the Merkel-Sarkozy agreement, Renault does not support the weight as a parameter to base the CO₂ standards on as it would reward the producers that produce heavier cars and punish the others (like Renault). She also said that the proposed penalties for non-compliance are too high.

Nina Štros, Greenpeace Slovenia:

Štros presented views of Greenpeace and Focus Association for Sustainable Development. She stressed that 120 g/km target from 2012 is needed and it must be achieved with vehicle measures alone. It is also necessary to set long term targets, being 80 g/km by 2020 and 60 g/km by 2025. No eco-innovations should count into the target, since those are difficult to measure and have questionable effects on emissions. The parameter should not be the weight, but footprint, since footprint has been proven to be better in some important aspects (namely reducing the possibilities for gaming the legislation and perverse incentives). The weight parameter takes away most of the incentives for making cars lighter – weight is one of the most important methods to reduce

CO2. She also highlighted the need to set higher penalties – 150 EUR per exceeded gram per km. In the opinion of NGOs no credits for flex-fuel cars should be introduced and there should be no exceptions for small/niche producers.

After the presentations the floor was open for the debate. The debate resulted in:

- agreement that the proposed legislation is needed in order to fight climate change, oil dependency and high energy prices;
- long-term target should be set now in order to give the industry the perspective;
- the utility parameter to base the CO2 standards on should be footprint and not weight;
- the difference in opinions on proposed penalties for non-compliance (too high for industry, too low for NGOs) and eco-innovations (necessary for industry, not acceptable for NGOs) remain.

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