

## **EU ISSUES UPDATE**

**JANUARY 2020**



### **INFORMATION**

#### **Ireland joins the list of countries proposing to ban the sale of fossil-fueled cars**

Ireland has announcing a ban on the sale of fossil-fuel powered cars from 2030. In doing so, it joins Denmark, Sweden and the Netherlands which have already set the same deadline. France, the UK and Spain have announced similar plans with a 2040 date, while Norway plans to ban sales of petrol and diesel cars from 2025. While the European Commission has previously said that a ban of the marketing, import or registration of new petrol and diesel cars in a member state is not compatible with EU law, there are signs that momentum is building for changes to EU rules that would allow governments to set these deadlines in the absence of an EU-wide target date and the new European Green Deal strategy announced in December 2019 will set a pathway to zero emission mobility from 2025 onwards. The European car industry trade association has warned that these proposed bans on the sale of new petrol and diesel cars could increase emissions of CO<sup>2</sup> and other pollutants as they will lead to older vehicles being used longer.

#### **Italian car bans**

An Italian environmental group has criticized the recent emergency measures put in place in northern Italian cities (banning cars classified as Euro 5 diesel and below, or registered before 2013) as ineffective. The complaint is that the temporary vehicle bans, adopted every year, are decided when the situation is already critical. The Group's argument is that the temporary bans do not solve the problem and should be replaced by permanent measures banning the use of polluting cars. The Group has also noted that while Milan introduced a low emission zone and plans a diesel ban from 2025, air pollution problems are also caused by heating, biomass use in the surrounding area and intensive agriculture throughout the Po Valley, where the government has "zero" measures to curb pollution.

## **Tests continue to show problem car emissions**

The European Commission has said it is studying results of tests commissioned by the environmental group T & E which has shown emissions of harmful particles from new diesel cars peaking at up to 1,000 times normal levels and which has shown that two popular car models are emitting 32% and 115% over the legal limit for particles during the automatic diesel particle filters cleaning process (regeneration). The findings have led to calls from MEPs and environmental campaigners for more stringent EU emissions standards as the emissions made during the regeneration process are not measured in current EU emissions tests. The car manufacturers association has said that the results of the tests on two vehicles were “open to interpretation”, that emissions levels above the limit during regeneration are accounted for in the legislation and that filter regeneration ensures emissions stay below the limits for the rest of the time, so the results are meaningless as the results are ultimately average out. The research also revealed emissions increased up to 184% when the smallest, and most dangerous, ultrafine particles were measured – these are currently unregulated. The European Commission is thought to be working on new protocols to regulate smaller particles in the new Euro 7 standard.

## **Alternative fuels**

In advance of an anticipated amendment of the Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Directive (as noted in the announcement of the Commission’s new Green Deal) the car industry association and trade groups representing the LPG, ethanol, biodiesel and independent fuel sectors have called on the European Commission to keep biofuels and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) in its definition of ‘alternative fuels’ in legislation requiring governments to build up refueling infrastructure. The announcement also follows on from the environmental group T & E stating that the Directive is not fit for purpose as it classifies gas as a valid alternative fuel, has resulted in a fragmented market and is not aligned with recent policy developments such as new EU regulations on vehicle CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, which are expected to stimulate an increase in the number of electric vehicles from 5% of the vehicle park in 2020, to close to 20% in five years.

At the same time, T & E has published research showing that 1.3 million public car charging points are needed by 2025 and 3 million by the end of the decade and has called on the European Commission to set mandatory electric vehicle charging infrastructure targets for member states to meet the challenge. Currently there are around 185,000 charging points across the EU. T & E want money to be spent on public infrastructure for zero emission vehicles and for the definition to be updated so that it only includes technologies that pass the climate neutrality test.

## **Brake dust is more polluting than vehicle engine emissions**

The MRC Centre for Environment and Health at King’s College London has published research that shows that the metallic dust released into the air when cars brake is harmful to health as it stops immune cells from protecting lungs and leads to a greater risk of bacterial infections such as coughs, colds, pneumonia and bronchitis. This is the same concern raised against diesel fumes – but the research points out that while exhaust pollution makes up 7% of small particulate matter pollution (PM<sub>2.5</sub>), PM<sub>2.5</sub> from tyres, clutches and brake pads is responsible for 20% of particulates. The relevance of this data is that electric cars need to brake less than

fossil-fuel fueled cars so the findings may be used to further the merits of electric vehicles over fossil-fuel powered vehicles.

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The FIVA Legislation Commission members are: Lars Genild (Chairman), Giuseppe Dell'Aversano, Wolfgang Eckel, Carla Fiocchi, Laurent Heriou, Johann König, Stanislav Minářík, Bob Owen, Christos Petridis, Kurt Sjoberg and Andrew Turner of EPPA works with the Committee.