



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Senát for its Reasoned Opinion on the proposal for a Regulation on the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure {COM(2021)559} and its observations on the proposal for a Regulation as regards strengthening the CO₂ emission performance standards for new passenger cars and new light commercial vehicles in line with the Union's increased climate ambition {COM(2021)556}.

These proposals, which aim to accelerate the transition towards a more sustainable transport sector, form part of a broader package, the 'Fit for 55' package, published on 14 July 2021. The package includes ambitious measures designed to reduce net greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030 and pave the way to achieve climate neutrality in the EU by 2050, in accordance with the binding objectives set out in the European Climate Law.

Where the strengthened CO₂ emission performance standards for new passenger cars and new light commercial vehicles aim to get more zero-emission vehicles on the EU's roads, the proposed alternative fuels infrastructure regulation aims to ensure that these vehicles can benefit from an EU-wide recharging and refuelling network. However, the scope of the newly proposed alternative fuels infrastructure regulation is wider, as it aims to support the transition to more sustainable alternatives also beyond passenger cars and vans, both in other segments of road transport and in other modes of transport generally.

*To allay the Senát's concerns, set out in the Reasoned Opinion on the **proposal on the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure**, regarding a breach of the subsidiarity principle, the Commission would like to provide the following clarifications.*

The Commission would like to recall that the aim of this proposal is to ensure the availability and usability of a dense, widespread network of alternative fuels infrastructure throughout the EU. All users of alternative fuel vehicles (including vessels and aircraft) need to be able to move through the EU at ease, enabled by key infrastructure such as motorways, ports and airports. The specific objectives are:

*Miloš VYSTRČIL
President of the Senát
Valdštejnské náměstí 17/4
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- i. ensuring sufficient infrastructure to support the required uptake of alternative fuel vehicles across all transport modes and in all Member States to meet the EU's climate objectives;
- ii. ensuring the infrastructure's full interoperability; and
- iii. ensuring full user information and adequate payment options to support the efficient and on-time implementation of the trans-European transport core network (TEN-T).

The quick delivery of high-quality and state-of-the-art transport infrastructure of European importance is a pre-requisite for the achievement of the overall goals of the European Union's transport policy, such as decarbonisation, digitalisation and deployment of innovative solutions. It is a key deliverable under the European Green Deal and the Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy.

It should be noted that the binding targets for the recharging infrastructure dedicated to heavy-duty vehicles only target the European core highway network (the TEN-T network), the transnational and European-wide importance of which is clear. Only by equipping the whole TEN-T network can the European Union gain all of its benefits. This requires that all parts of the network be treated with appropriate attention. Thus, only action at EU level can bring the appropriate results.

The Commission would also like to highlight that the proposal introduces binding targets for infrastructure supplying other alternative fuels for heavy-duty vehicles than electricity, namely hydrogen (Article 6) and LNG (Article 8). These are the only alternative fuels to power heavy-duty vehicles that have distinct infrastructure requirements – in other words, are in need of new refuelling infrastructure. The proposal therefore respects the technology-neutrality principle.

As regards the costs of deploying such a network, the Commission would like to point out that the Regulation leaves it to the discretion of the Member States to determine the means to achieve the targets. Where (co-)funding by the State is envisaged, Member States can make use of the funds provided by the Recovery and Resilience Facility and must always respect applicable State aid rules.

The Sénat asks the Commission to prepare an impact assessment describing the specific feasibility of the proposed measures and quantifying the effects of the planned changes. In this regard, the Commission would like to draw the Sénat's attention to the Impact Assessment accompanying the proposal on the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure (SWD(2021) 631 final) and the Impact Assessment accompanying the proposal on CO₂ emission performance standards for cars and light commercial vehicles (SWD(2021)613 final).

*With regard to the Sénat's observations on the **proposal to revise the CO₂ emission performance standards for new passenger cars and new light commercial vehicles** in line with the Union's increased climate ambition, the Commission would like to highlight the following:*

A key objective of the proposal is to contribute to the EU's 2030 greenhouse gas emission reduction target of at least 55% compared to 1990 levels, and to the 2050 climate neutrality objective, by cost-effectively reducing CO₂ emissions from new cars and vans. At the same time, the revision aims to provide benefits for consumers from the wider deployment of zero-emission vehicles, in terms of better air quality and lower energy expenditure and stimulate innovation in zero-emission technologies, thus strengthening the technological leadership and competitiveness of the EU automotive value chain and stimulating employment.

The Commission has taken particular consideration of the impacts on consumers in the revision of the standards. The impact assessment accompanying the proposal shows the clear benefits for consumers and society. Strengthened CO₂ emission standards will drive the penetration of zero-emission vehicles in the whole European market. This will accelerate achieving economies of scale, reduce costs and increase affordability of these vehicles, also making them attractive for consumers with lower incomes. Also, the faster the penetration of zero-emission vehicles driven by the CO₂ standards, the sooner these vehicles reach lower income consumers in the second-hand market, thus allowing them to reap the benefits of zero-emission vehicles sooner.

The Commission hopes that the clarifications provided in this reply address the issues raised by the Senát and looks forward to continuing the political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Maroš Šefčovič
Vice-President*

*Adina-Ioana Vălean
Member of the Commission*