



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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*Mr Liviu DRAGNEA
President of the
Camera Deputaților
Palace of the Parliament
Str. Izvor, nr. 2-4, sector 5
RO - BUCHAREST*

Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Camera Deputaților for its Opinion on the Communication on a European Strategy for Low-Emission Mobility {COM(2016) 501 final}.

The Commission welcomes the Camera Deputaților's broad support for the objectives of the communication. The Commission is pleased to have this opportunity to provide a number of clarifications regarding the Communication and trusts that these will allay the Camera Deputaților's concerns:

As regards standardisation of charging devices for electric motor vehicles at the EU level, the Commission has given a mandate M/533 to the European Standardisation Organisations to support the Commission in the implementation of Directive 2014/94/EU on the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure¹. The mandate requests the European Standardisation Organisations to develop and adopt appropriate European standards, or to amend existing European standards for a wide range of alternative fuels in different modes of transport, including for electricity supply for road transport.

With respect to European river transport, the Commission's constant position has been to support inland waterways as a green transport mode that contributes to the goals of the EU sustainable growth, serves the needs of river cities and industries along the rivers and contributes to regional development purposes. The policy objectives and strategy are detailed in the NAIADES II action programme². The Commission is engaged in a major effort to revitalize river transport infrastructures. This is done in the context of the implementation of the Trans-European Transport Networks³ and, in the particular case of Romania, with the implementation of the Rhine-Danube Core Corridor. The Commission is aware of the difficult

¹ OJ L307/2014.

² COM (2013) 623 final.

³ Regulation 1315/2013 (OJ L348/2013).

navigability conditions in some key sections of the Danube during certain periods of the year. By means of the call for applications under the Connecting Europe Facility⁴, the European Union is providing funding support to important infrastructure and works projects improving the navigability of the Danube.

As regards advance in alternative methods of air transport, the Strategy on low-emission mobility recognises the particular challenge faced by the aviation sector. Already in the Aviation Package of 2015, decarbonisation and innovation are part of a comprehensive strategy for the whole EU aviation ecosystem. The EU is also supporting operational improvements (optimising EU air traffic through SESAR development) and research and innovation efforts beyond state of the art (especially jet engines efficiency under the CLEAN SKY Joint Undertaking). A Strategic Transport Research and Innovation Agenda (STRIA) is being set up to define more ambitious long-term research and innovation agendas and targets, also for alternative propulsion for aviation.

As regards vehicle emission testing, the Commission has proposed⁵ a strengthening of the type approval framework⁶ to improve market surveillance, including that of the CO₂ and fuel consumption performance of vehicles on the road, and the quality and independence of testing. A new laboratory test procedure, the Worldwide Harmonised Light Vehicle Test Procedure will enter into force next year. This procedure will deliver more realistic and reliable CO₂ and fuel consumption values.

In this context, providing relevant and comprehensive information to consumers is essential. The Commission is preparing guidance on how to introduce the Worldwide Harmonised Light Vehicle Test Procedure for car labelling purposes which will provide for more realistic and reliable CO₂ and fuel consumption values. The Action Plan accompanying the Low-Emission Mobility Strategy foresees a review of the car labelling Directive⁷. This review, building on the results of the evaluation of the Directive which was completed in 2016, should also assess how to improve consumer information in order to support consumers to take an informed car purchase decision.

With respect to territorially balanced use of 'Horizon 2020' resources, the Commission wishes to reassure the Camera Deputaţilor that dissemination and exploitation of research and innovation results, including in the area of low-emission mobility, form an important part of the work supported by Horizon 2020 for the benefit of the whole Union. At the same time, the Commission recognises the need to unlock the untapped research and innovation potential in all parts of the Union. For this reason, Horizon 2020, which is driven solely by excellence, allocates over 800 million euros to the Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation part. In particular, with its actions Teaming, Twinning and European Research Area Chairs, Horizon 2020 supports the setting up of centres of excellence, favours institutional networking and brings excellence to the so-called widening countries (including Romania). In

⁴ Regulation 1316/2013 (OJ L348/2013).

⁵ Proposal for a new Regulation, COM (2016) 31 final.

⁶ Directive 2007/46 (OJ L 263/2007).

⁷ Directive 1999/94 (OJ L 12/2000).

addition, synergies with the Connecting Europe Facility, the European Fund for Strategic Investment and the Structural Funds (including Commission initiatives such as the Seal of excellence) complement Horizon 2020 resources for the deployment of low carbon solutions.

Finally the Commission recalls that on 30 November 2016, in the context of a package of measures to deliver the Energy Union Strategy⁸ and in line with the Action Plan accompanying the Low-Emission Mobility Strategy, it presented initiatives to improve links between the transport and energy sector and to encourage the use of alternative energy for transport⁹.

The Commission hopes that these clarifications address the issues raised by the Camera Deputaților and looks forward to continuing the political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Frans Timmermans
First Vice-President*

*Miguel Arias Cañete
Member of the Commission*

⁸ COM (2015) 85 final.

⁹ COM (2016) 860 final and accompanying initiatives.