

Opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee on the ‘Communication from the Commission on the monitoring and reporting of data on the registration of new passenger cars’

COM(2010) 657 final

(2011/C 218/11)

Rapporteur: **Mr MANOLIU**

On 10 November 2010 the Commission decided to consult the European Economic and Social Committee, under Article 304 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU, on the

Communication from the Commission on the monitoring and reporting of data on the registration of new passenger cars

COM(2010) 657 final.

The Section for the Single Market, Production and Consumption, which was responsible for preparing the Committee's work on the subject, adopted its opinion on 5 April 2011.

At its 471st plenary session, held on 4 and 5 May 2011 (meeting of 4 May), the European Economic and Social Committee adopted the following opinion by 148 votes with four abstentions.

1. Conclusions

1.1 The EESC considers that *sustainable mobility* is about moving people and goods across Europe in the most efficient way, cutting emissions and saving fuel. That means information and access to the most appropriate transport mode or modes and investing in the technology, infrastructure, and management systems that encourage *free and sustainable movement*.

1.2 In the opinion of the EESC, sustainable mobility means *designing a regulatory framework that allows Europe's auto industry to thrive* and to go on innovating and delivering the technologies and low-emission vehicles for a sustainable future.

1.3 The EESC emphasised that the legislative framework for implementing the average new car fleet target should ensure competitive neutral and socially equitable and sustainable reduction targets in line with the diversity of the European automobile manufactures and to avoid any unjustified distortion of competition between automobile manufacturers.

1.4 The Committee is pleased that, *in the spirit of better regulation*, the European Commission is aiming 'to promote coherent interaction between different policy areas, provide predictability and seek the protection of public interest (e.g. environment and safety) while attempting to reduce the regulatory burden on industry'.

1.5 The Committee welcomes the commitment to a holistic approach and the willingness to take on board the different dimensions of *industry development and competitiveness and the different stakeholders involved*.

1.6 In setting emission standards the EESC considers that it is important to take into account the implications for

consumers, markets, and manufacturers' competitiveness, stimulating innovation and reducing energy consumption. It is important to provide planning security for vehicle manufacturers.

2. Background

2.1 The EU market for new passenger cars declined by 5.5 % in 2010, with a total of 13 360 599 new units registered throughout the year according to figures provided by the European Automobile Manufacturers' Association (ACEA). The 2010 results were marked by the ending of government fleet renewal schemes in many EU countries. Registrations in December amounted to 1 009 638 units, down 3.2 % year-on-year.

2.2 In December (- 3,2 %), demand for new cars declined significantly in Spain (- 23,9 %), Italy (- 21,7 %), and the UK (- 18,0 %). The French market remained stable (- 0,7 %) while the German market expanded by 6,9 %.

2.3 The passenger car segment encompasses a larger array of models than ever before. Versatile new vehicle types like sport wagons, and wagon/SUV crossovers compete with sedans, coupe, convertibles, hatchbacks and wagons for market share. And these new body styles are well distributed among vehicle segments, from compact cars to luxury vehicles.

2.4 This is good news for buyers, who have more choice in terms of price, as well as style and functionality. Consumer behaviour has an effect on overall emissions from passenger cars. Consumers should be provided with information regarding whether new passenger cars meet the emission targets.

2.5 Sustainable mobility is about ensuring consumers have real choices, but also encouraging them to buy the most suitable vehicle for their needs and educating them in eco-driving techniques to cut unnecessary pollution and save money.

2.6 In the manufacture of vehicles, it means finding more sustainable materials, improving logistics in the supply chain to cut unnecessary waste and emissions, and designing more parts to be recycled at the end of their lives.

2.7 Government policies must also involve more cost-effective means of driving down CO₂, joined-up fiscal incentives and the development of alternative fuels and renewable energies as well as their infrastructure.

2.8 A new methodology should therefore be designed through which fair consideration may be given to the CO₂ savings from bi-fuel and flex-fuel vehicles capable of running on alternative fuels.

2.9 Industry will need to invest even more in emission reduction technologies, including smart traffic management technologies and further improve engine efficiency.

2.10 The EU has set out an ambitious strategy to reduce CO₂ emissions from road vehicles and much has been achieved already. Regulation (EC) No 443/2009 setting emission performance standards for new passenger cars⁽¹⁾ requires a fleet average emission of 130 g CO₂/km for new passenger cars to be achieved by 2015.

2.11 Auto makers are working towards tough 2012 targets on CO₂ for new cars and further goal set for 2020. The industry will actively engage in the debate about sustainable transport.

2.12 In the last twenty years, CO₂ emissions from cars and commercial vehicles have come down dramatically, a drop of about 20 % since 1995. The European Commission has acknowledged this progress and the fact that investment in vehicle technology has been its primary driver; to achieve further significant cuts the EESC consider that society must look beyond vehicle technology.

2.13 In the EESC's opinion this is called the integrated approach, ensuring the competitiveness and sustainability growth of the automotive industry to safeguard automotive manufacturing in Europe, and to provide an efficient framework for the development and market update of clean and energy efficient vehicles.

2.14 Member States should monitor the number of vehicles registered in order to assess the impact on monitoring process

and the attainment of the EU's average CO₂ emissions target for new passenger car fleets in accordance with the opinion of the Climate Change Committee.

2.15 The EESC considers that Community targets for new passenger cars are necessary to prevent fragmentation in the internal market resulting from adoption of different measures at Member State level.

2.16 Common targets provide manufacturers with more planning certainty and more flexibility to meet the CO₂ reduction requirements than would be provided by separate national reduction targets.

3. Data, data transmission, data sources, data maintenance and control

3.1 According to Article 8 of Regulation (EC) No 443/2009 Member States must every year record and transmit certain data to the Commission about new passenger cars registered in their territory in the previous year⁽²⁾.

3.2 Those data are to serve as basis for determining the specific CO₂ emissions target for manufacturers of new passenger cars and for the assessment of whether manufacturers comply with those targets; *it is necessary to harmonise these rules on collection and reporting of those data.*

3.3 In order to assess fully whether each manufacturer complies with its specific CO₂ emissions target and to gain the necessary experience of the application of the regulation, the Commission needs detailed data. Member States should ensure that such data are recorded and transmitted to the Commission.

3.4 Irrespective of the data source used by each Member State to prepare the aggregated monitoring data and the detailed monitoring data, these data shall be based upon information contained in the certificate of conformity of the relevant passenger car.

3.5 The main data sources to be used by the Member States to collect the data are *the certificates of conformity* or the type approval documentation. The registration certificate may not replace the certificate of conformity for the purpose of registering a vehicle. The registration certificate is issued only after the vehicle is registered.

3.6 It is important that the data on the registration of new passenger cars are accurate and can be processed effectively for the purpose of establishing the specific emission target. Member States should record and report information about newly registered vehicles that are designed to use alternative fuels, including the proportion of filling stations in their territory.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 140, 5.6.2009, p. 1.

⁽²⁾ Commission Regulation (EU) No 1014/2010 on 'Monitoring and reporting of data on the registration of new passenger cars pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 443/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council', OJ L 293 of 11.11.2010, p. 15.

3.7 The Member States shall ensure the maintenance, collection, control, verification and transmission of the aggregated monitoring data and the detailed monitoring data.

3.8 Data have to be monitored and recorded in relation to a manufacturer, as a result it is important that the manufacturer is identified and distinguished from the trade name of the manufacturer.

Brussels, 4 May 2011.

The President
of the European Economic and Social Committee
Staffan NILSSON
