

Thursday 6 May 2010

Electric cars

P7_TA(2010)0150

European Parliament resolution of 6 May 2010 on electric cars

(2011/C 81 E/17)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the EU Recovery Plan, particularly the ‘Green car initiative’ of November 2008,
 - having regard to Directive 2009/28/EC of 23 April 2009 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources, which sets a minimum threshold of 10 % for energy from renewable sources in transport,
 - having regard to Regulation (EC) No 443/2009 setting emission performance standards for new passenger cars,
 - having regard to the Action Plan on Urban Mobility of 30 September 2009,
 - having regard to the informal Council meeting held in San Sebastian on 9 February 2010,
 - having regard to the Commission Communication ‘Europe 2020 – A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth’ of 3 March 2010,
 - having regard to the Commission Communication on a European strategy on clean and energy-efficient vehicles of 27 April 2010,
 - having regard to the questions of 16 February 2010 to the Council and to the Commission on electric vehicles (O-0019/2010 – B7-0016/2010, O-0020/2010 – B7-0015/2010),
 - having regard to Rules 115(5) and 110(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the challenges posed by climate change, CO₂ emissions and other pollutants, and volatility of fuel prices have led to the technological development of batteries and energy storage systems, and to a greater market awareness of these matters, all of which have created a positive climate for the world-wide development of electric vehicles,
- B. whereas the electric vehicle is a significant innovation with high market potential, particularly in the long term, and whereas the capacity to enter quickly into this market, with high-quality products and a generalised degree of standardisation, will determine its future leaders,
- C. whereas electric vehicles are contributing to the Europe 2020 priorities of developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation and promoting a more resource-efficient, greener and more competitive economy,
- D. whereas at the informal Council meeting held in San Sebastian on 9 February 2010, EU competitiveness ministers agreed with the Commission on the need for the EU to pursue a common strategy on electric cars,

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- E. whereas there are several political reasons to innovate in propulsion systems (electric or hybrids), namely:
- (i) reduction in CO₂ and pollutant emissions,
 - (ii) reduction of noise pollution,
 - (iii) improvement of energy efficiency and potential uptake of renewable energy sources,
 - (iv) the scarcity and fluctuating economic cost of fossil energy sources,
 - (v) the promotion of innovation, based on technological leadership, which could enable European industry to recover from the current economic situation and ensure its general industrial competitiveness in the future,
- F. whereas the EU average energy-mix for the generation of existing electric energy in Europe makes electric vehicles and plug-in hybrids one major option in the broader strategy to curb CO₂ emissions, and whereas the shift towards an efficient energy and sustainable transport system must be a priority of the EU if we want to reach the goal of a largely decarbonised transportation system by 2050,
- G. whereas there are a number of challenges that need to be addressed in order to support successful market introduction of electric vehicles, in particular:
- (i) the high cost of electric vehicles, caused mostly by the cost of batteries,
 - (ii) the need for further R&D to improve the characteristics, and reduce the costs, of electric vehicles,
 - (iii) customer acceptance, with regard to cost, range and recharging time,
 - (iv) an adequate recharging infrastructure,
 - (v) European and global standardisation, such as of interfaces between vehicles and recharging infrastructure,
 - (vi) well-to-wheel emissions of electric vehicles,
- H. whereas there is a confirmed potential offered by electric cars in terms of storage capacity, allowing improvements in the use of renewable energy sources in the light of benefits offered by the smart grids,
- I. whereas the Clean Cars Communication briefly mentions the industry's needs for emerging skills when shifting from conventional to electric vehicles, whereas it does not address the effects on employment caused by that shift, and whereas a coordinated approach will be necessary to meet the challenges faced by the automotive sector's workforce,
- J. whereas there are already several countries and regions which have begun to introduce charging infrastructures for electric vehicles,

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- K. whereas the EU Member States have begun to introduce national support programmes for electric vehicles with a view to their entry onto the Community market,
- L. whereas the industry and research in competing countries have received considerable support, and whereas in the EU this example should be followed,
- M. whereas the review of EU infrastructure investment policy in 2010 provides an excellent opportunity to move towards infrastructure investment in cleaner, advanced technologies, notably smart grids,
- N. whereas in Europe the high number of cities and urban areas with high population density offers suitable conditions for a rapid launching of the electric car, offering European manufacturers the possibility of becoming early market leaders,
- O. whereas the production of electric vehicles could contribute to economic recovery and ensure long-term viability for the European automotive industry, based on low-emission vehicles,
1. Notes the priority given to the development of electric vehicles by the Spanish Presidency in the context of the fight against climate change, supports the decision of the Competitiveness Council to invite the Commission to set up an action plan for clean and energy-efficient vehicles, including the improvement of smart grids, and welcomes the Commission's Communication on a European strategy on clean and energy-efficient vehicles of 27 April 2010;
 2. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to establish the necessary conditions for the existence of a single electric vehicle market, while guaranteeing efficient coordination of policies at EU level, in order to avoid the negative social and employment impacts of the shift to a decarbonised system of transport and in order also to avoid the existence of incompatible schemes and standards that are not interoperable;
 3. Underlines that the development of electric vehicles should be well balanced and conceived within the frame of a future sustainable mobility policy, where *inter alia* reduction of accidents, space use, reduced congestion, total energy consumption, CO₂ emissions, noise and gaseous emissions are crucial, while emphasising that the development of electric mobility should include e-cars, e-bikes, trams, trains etc.;
 4. Calls on the Commission and the Council to take joint action on:
 - (i) international – wherever possible – or at least European standardisation of infrastructures and charging technologies, including smart grids, open communication standards and on-board metering technology and interoperability; these imply the use of new technologies in the development of the necessary interoperable infrastructure in Europe for cross-border electric mobility,
 - (ii) support for research and innovation, with a priority focus on the improvement of battery and engine technology,
 - (iii) improvement of electric networks by introducing smart grids, and the introduction of sustainable generation capacity with low carbon intensity, particularly through renewable energy sources,

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- (iv) support for initiatives that ensure the existence of a single market and develop regulations for type approval in the area of energy-efficient clean cars and, above all, in the field of road safety,
 - (v) coordination of national support measures and incentives for the electric vehicle,
 - (vi) promotion of measures to ensure the competitiveness of the energy-efficient, clean vehicle industry,
 - (vii) strong provisions on anticipatory measures as regards social and employment issues;
5. Calls on the Commission to provide a comprehensive calculation of overall CO₂ emissions of electric vehicles, taking into account the predicted changes in the production of electricity and storage capacities up to 2050;
6. Stresses that electric vehicles represent a technology break-through requiring integrated innovation and technology development strategies via adequate funding and promotion of R&D and innovation in an ever increasing range of key areas, such as batteries, infrastructure (including integration with power grids); welcomes in this context the eco-innovation measures available to manufacturers, but is concerned by the difficulties experienced in their implementation;
7. Recalls the Council of Competitiveness conclusion of 1 March 2010 referring to the upcoming Commission proposal for a business-oriented European Research and Innovation Plan that would complement national innovation strategies, including the promotion of tools and initiatives with strong potential, such as lead markets and pre-commercial public procurement, and better access to finance, particularly for SMEs, by better mobilisation of venture capital instruments;
8. Asks the EU institutions and the Member States gradually to replace their public services fleet of combustion vehicles with electric vehicles, thus stimulating demand through public procurement; calls on the EU institutions to roll out the infrastructure as soon as standards are in place;
9. Recalls that under the Recovery Plan, the Green Car Initiative is supporting the development of new and sustainable forms of road transport, where electric cars have been identified as a priority;
10. Supports the Commission's intention of setting a European standard by 2011 for recharging electric vehicles, which will guarantee interoperability and the safety of infrastructures, and defends the setting of technical standards for charging systems, including different vehicle categories; calls on the Commission to strive for global standards wherever possible and to ensure that the charging standard encourages modern technologies, such as smart charging and opened communication standards, and is consistent with mandates on smart metering architectures;
11. Is convinced that standardisation will enable a simple and straightforward approval process and contribute to accelerating the market introduction and dissemination of low-carbon vehicles in the EU, enhancing the competitiveness of the EU mobility industry through the reduction of development costs for manufacturers and the decarbonisation of road transport;
12. Emphasises that standardisation of electric vehicles, infrastructures and charge methods should not hinder further innovation, particularly in the fields of electric mobility or conventional vehicle engines;

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13. Calls for harmonised requirements for the approval of electric vehicles, with specific requirements with regard to health and safety, for both workers and end-users, and for those requirements to be included in the EU vehicle type-approval framework by mandating UNECE Regulation 100; strongly supports the Commission's proposal for a review of the crash safety requirements for electric cars and the attention it is giving to the question of the safety of electric cars for vulnerable road users;
14. Welcomes the Commission's proposal to present by 2010 coordinated guidelines on purchasing incentives for electric vehicles; calls on the Commission and the Council, furthermore, to provide for an adequate incentive package for the implementation of an extensive charging network, with harmonised electric mobility models;
15. Stresses that public aid packages provided for companies must be linked to a clear set of social, technological, economic and environmental efficiency criteria, and calls on the Commission to carry out effective ex-post evaluations of such financial support;
16. Calls on the Commission to enable a European sectoral structure to manage the social transition involved in a low-carbon mobility policy and to coordinate anticipation measures to ensure sustainable recovery in the car industry and reduce any social impact; demands that effective steps be taken to anticipate change in the automotive sector and supply chain, in coordination with all stakeholders, notably through the re-launching of the CARS 21 platform with a specific social issues working group;
17. Calls on the Member States to ensure full use of the globalisation fund and other structural funds such as the European Social Fund, to provide incentives for re-skilling and well-targeted training efforts, and the further reorientation of sectoral training and education structures to meet the emerging skills needs resulting from this technology;
18. Welcomes the Commission's intention to establish a European Sectoral Skills Council, aiming at creating a network of Member State national observatories;
19. Defends the setting up of a shared information platform and coordinating effort among European players, projects and initiatives and the setting up of an international (global-level) observatory on electric mobility, focusing on business models, vehicle and charging technologies and integration with smart electric networks and bringing together the most relevant stakeholders, industry- and/or policy-led initiatives;
20. Calls on the Member States to develop the necessary long-term fiscal policy for the promotion of energy-efficient clean vehicles, and asks the Commission to set a long-term common vision on issues such as CO₂-related policies, anticipating structural changes that result from the shift from conventional fuels to electricity and the promotion of the use of renewable energy;
21. Calls on the Commission, the Member States and the electric mobility industry to consider the resources, energy and environmental balance of electric vehicles throughout their life cycle, from production to disposal, including recycling and reusing of batteries;
22. Draws attention to the availability of raw materials needed for battery and component production, which raises the questions of increased production costs and EU dependency; calls on the industry to endeavour to make better use of the available resources, and calls on the Commission to finance applied research under the current and future Framework Programmes on the raw materials used for electric batteries, to encourage better networking among EU geological surveys and to promote skills and technologies in this sector which will boost exploration for new raw material deposits;

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23. Supports the Commission's proposal to set up information campaigns for consumers on the advantages, possibilities and practical aspects of electric vehicles;
24. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the social partners and the industry.

Motor Vehicle Block Exemption Regulation

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European Parliament resolution of 6 May 2010 on the Motor Vehicle Block Exemption Regulation

(2011/C 81 E/18)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to having regard to Article 3(3) of the Treaty on the European Union, Article 101(1) and (3), Article 103(1) and Article 105(3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (hereinafter the 'TFUE'),
- having regard to Regulation No 19/65/EEC of 2 March 1965 of the Council on application of Article 85(3) of the Treaty to certain categories of agreements and concerted practices ⁽¹⁾,
- having regard to Council Directive 86/653/EEC of 18 December 1986 on the coordination of the laws of the Member States relating to self-employed commercial agents ⁽²⁾,
- having regard to Commission Regulation (EC) No 2790/1999 of 22 December 1999 on the application of Article 81(3) of the Treaty to categories of vertical agreements and concerted practices ⁽³⁾ (the general vertical agreements block exemption regulation, hereinafter the 'current GBER'),
- having regard to Commission Regulation (EC) No 1400/2002 of 31 July 2002 on the application of Article 81(3) of the Treaty to categories of vertical agreements and concerted practices in the motor vehicle sector ⁽⁴⁾ (the motor vehicles block exemption regulation, hereinafter the 'current MVBBER'),
- having regard to Regulation (EC) No 715/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2007 on type approval of motor vehicles with respect to emissions from light passenger and commercial vehicles (Euro 5 and Euro 6) and on access to vehicle repair and maintenance information ⁽⁵⁾; and to Regulation (EC) No 595/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 June 2009 on type-approval of motor vehicles and engines with respect to emissions from heavy duty vehicles (Euro VI) and on access to vehicle repair and maintenance information ⁽⁶⁾,
- having regard to Draft Commission Regulation on the application of Article 81(3) of the Treaty to categories of vertical agreements and concerted practices (the new general vertical agreements block exemption regulation, hereinafter the 'new GBER'), published on 28 July 2009 for consultation on the Commission's website,

⁽¹⁾ OJ 36, 6.3.1965, p. 533.

⁽²⁾ OJ L 382, 31.12.1986, p. 17.

⁽³⁾ OJ L 336, 29.12.1999, p. 21.

⁽⁴⁾ OJ L 203, 1.8.2002, p. 30.

⁽⁵⁾ OJ L 171, 29.6.2007, p. 1.

⁽⁶⁾ OJ L 188, 18.7.2009, p. 1.