
CO2 targets for cars and vans: Auto industry urges MEPs to consider high stakes of plenary vote

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Ahead of Wednesday's European Parliament vote on future CO2 targets for cars and vans, the European Automobile Manufacturers' Association (ACEA) draws decision makers' attention to the importance of this plenary vote – not only for the environment, but also for the future of the EU auto industry.

“Our industry is committed to making the shift to zero-emission vehicles. But this transition should be assured in a gradual, rather than an abrupt way,” explained ACEA Secretary General, Erik Jonnaert.

Future CO2 reductions are strongly dependent on far greater sales of alternatively-powered vehicles. Electric powertrains, however, have fewer moving parts than the average combustion engine. Their production not only requires different skills but also less manufacturing labour.

“The more aggressive the CO2 reduction targets are, the more disruptive the socio-economic impacts will be, especially in member states and regions where the sector's share of industrial output is high,” explained Jonnaert. In four out of 10 EU regions, automotive accounts for more than 10% of manufacturing employment

While all manufacturers are investing heavily in alternatively-powered vehicles, their market uptake remains rather weak and fragmented across the EU for the time being. Indeed, electrically-chargeable vehicles represented just 1.5% of EU car sales last year.

Jonnaert: “Boosting electric car sales will also require more support from national governments to ensure an EU-wide roll-out of recharging infrastructure, as well as incentives to encourage customers to switch to such vehicles.”

“The stakes of Wednesday's vote are extremely high for the entire sector, which accounts for over 6% of the EU employed population and 27% of all private EU investment in research and development,” cautioned Jonnaert.

“We are calling on MEPs to be aware of the possible unintended implications of their vote. Reducing CO2 emissions from the transport sector is of course crucial – as is

affordable mobility for consumers and the long-term viability of the European automotive sector.”

(ACEA)