

To the **Commission President von der Leyen**
To the **executive Vice President Timmermans**

Copy to:

Vice President Sefcovic
Commissioner Ms Valean
Members of the European Parliament

Open letter of environmental, health and consumer organisations to the Commission urging to put all new trucks on a path to zero emission by 2035 and aligning road freight with the EU's climate commitments

Truck emissions pose a threat to the EU's climate goals. They are currently the most polluting vehicles on our roads, having adverse impacts on the climate and citizens' health. Although representing only 2% of the vehicles on the road, trucks' climate emissions account for more than a quarter of road transport emissions in the EU and have been increasing every year since 1990.¹ Over the past decade activity has been increasing continuously² and is expected to continue increasing over the next 3 decades, by 44% for trucks. Heavy-duty road transport is also one of the largest sources of air pollution, which the European Environment Agency estimates to cause 350,000 premature deaths per year in the EU.³

The upcoming proposal by the European Commission to revise the CO₂ standards for new heavy duty vehicles (HDVs) is the lever to make a turnaround and set trucks on a future-proof path to zero emission. Without policy action, trucks would eat up as much as 37% of the EU's shrinking carbon budget by 2050⁴. Trucks also burn massive amounts of oil. In 2021, they were responsible for 38% of the EU's diesel consumption in road transport, a large share of which is imported from Russia.

The solution to decarbonise trucking and tackle harmful air and noise pollution is rolling on our streets already today. Zero emission trucks (ZETs) are being operated by large hauliers across Europe, financially supported by several governments and are increasingly demanded by logistics operators across Europe. No wonder European truckmakers themselves have announced that half of their vehicle sales will be zero emission by 2030.⁵ But strong CO₂ standards are needed to leverage and accelerate that momentum, ensuring that ZETs become increasingly available and affordable for smaller and medium-sized companies.

¹ EEA (2022). Europe's growing transport demand increases emissions from heavy-duty vehicles. [link](#)

² UNFCCC (2019). GHG data from UNFCCC. [link](#).

³ EEA (2021). Sources and emissions of air pollutants in Europe. [link](#). Health impacts of air pollution in Europe. [link](#).

⁴ Transport & Environment (2022). 2035 end date for polluting freight trucks needed to put trucking on path to zero carbon. [link](#)

⁵ Transport & Environment (2021). Easy Ride: why the EU truck CO₂ targets are unfit for the 2020s. [link](#).

The time to set an end date for diesel trucks is now, requiring an ambitious midterm target of at least 65% in 2030 to be ready in time. We, the signatories, form a broad coalition of 39 environmental, health and consumer associations from across Europe, representing people in more than 14 European countries. **We call on the Commission to ensure that all new trucks are zero emission by 2035 at the latest.** A 100% zero emission target for trucks in 2035 is the minimum level of ambition needed if the EU is serious about reaching climate neutrality by 2050, given that on average most trucks stay on our roads for more than 18 years. Ambitious HDV CO₂ standards are needed to make zero emission for heavy-duty a reality and rapidly scale up the supply of clean trucks. In particular, we urge you to:

- Ensure each **and every new truck sold in 2035 is zero emission.**
- Increase the **2030 CO₂ reduction target to at least 65%**, thereby ensuring a rapid scale-up of ZET production.
- Start early enough and **move the 30% target from 2030 to 2027.**
- **Extend** the regulation **to all heavy-duty vehicles**, including small and medium lorries, vocational vehicles, buses and coaches as well as trailers.

We also strongly advocate not to include fuel credits in the revised HDV CO₂ standards. Biofuel production would produce more emissions than it would reduce as it is linked to deforestation especially as it is scarce in supply and high in demand. An inclusion of fuel credits would also mix different types of regulations, undermining their effectiveness.

Every new zero emission truck on the road will lower our transport emissions and foreign oil dependency immediately. The transition to zero emission road freight is a make-or-break moment for the European freight industry. To align trucks with Europe's climate commitments, with cleaner air for citizens and to ensure road freight remains a leading industry and place of employment, we call on the Commission to ensure road freight is up to speed for the zero emission transition.

Yours sincerely,
The signatories below



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Sum of Us

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