

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001368/25
to the Commission
Alex Agius Saliba (S&D)
(2 April 2025)**

Subject: The use of diesel particulate filters by consumers and businesses in small EU Member States

This question follows an exchange with the former EU Commissioner for Consumer Rights, Didier Reynders, in April 2023 during a meeting of Parliament's Internal Market Committee. The issue is the use of diesel particulate filters (DPFs) by consumers and businesses in small Member States.

DPFs do not have the same benefits when used in countries where only short distances are covered, such as Malta, because they do not have the technology to be clean themselves automatically, as they do when vehicles are used over longer distances. This reduces the engine's efficiency significantly and results in additional costs for the owners of these vehicles, who have to periodically replace these expensive filters.

1. Given that the overwhelming majority of these filters cannot even be cleaned, thus obliging consumers to buy new ones, are there possibilities in EU law to make it mandatory for it to be possible to open filters in diesel engine cars for regular cleaning?
2. When setting diesel vehicle norms, such as the Euro standards, does the Commission take into consideration that there are Member States in which consumers do not drive long distances?
3. More specifically, could the cleaning of DPFs be enforced as part of the circular economy initiatives, such as the directive on common rules promoting the repair of goods?

Submitted: 2.4.2025

**Answer given by Executive Vice-President Séjourné on behalf of the European Commission
(2 July 2025)**

The stringency of the Euro standards pushed most advanced filter technologies to be commonly used for diesel vehicles ⁽¹⁾. To ensure continued performance of diesel particulate filters (DPFs), regeneration strategies are incorporated in vehicles with DPFs.

Filter regeneration cleans the DPF by temporarily increasing exhaust temperatures to burn accumulated soot. While highway driving provides optimal conditions, regeneration can also be triggered during short-distance trips.

All vehicles, including those circulating mostly in urban conditions, can therefore provide a good level of environmental protection throughout their lifetime, as required by the roadworthiness regulations.

Current vehicle emission regulations ⁽²⁾ have been developed to reflect real-world driving conditions, including short-distance trips. Such short trips are common all across the EU, particularly in cities, considering that approximately 50% of urban car trips are shorter than 6 km ⁽³⁾. Urban conditions play important role in the determination of real-driving emissions ⁽⁴⁾.

Directive (EU) 2024/1799 ⁽⁵⁾ on common rules promoting the repair of goods aims at incentivising consumers to repair their defective goods and imposes an obligation on manufacturers of certain goods to offer repair services at a reasonable price.

However, the problem at hand concerns the maintenance, i.e., activities to keep the DPFs in a condition where they are able to fulfil their intended purpose which are outside the scope of the directive.

⁽¹⁾ See particle numbers ('PN') and particle matters ('PM') limits requirements in Euro 5 and Euro 6 standards (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 — <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2007/715/oj>) and in Euro 7 standards (Regulation (EU) 2024/1257 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 April 2024 on type-approval of motor vehicles and engines and of systems, components and separate technical units intended for such vehicles, with respect to their emissions and battery durability (Euro 7) — <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1257/oj>).

⁽²⁾ Particularly above-mentioned Euro 6 Regulation and Euro 7 Regulation.

⁽³⁾ Vlachos, T., Bonnel, P., Weiss, M., Paffumi, E., Clairotte, M. et al., Including cold-start emissions in the Real-Driving Emissions (RDE) test procedure: An assessment of cold-start frequencies and emission effects, Publications Office, 2017, <https://doi.org/10.2760/70237>.

⁽⁴⁾ See Annex IIIA to Commission Regulation (EU) 2017/1151 of 1 June 2017 supplementing Regulation (EC) No 715/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council 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⁾ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=OJ:L_202401799.