

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004137/25
to the Commission
Peter Agius (PPE)
(21 October 2025)

Subject: Diesel particulate filter regeneration in small Member States

Some diesel particulate filters (DPFs) regenerate only after sustained high-speed driving needed for DPF regeneration. In Malta there are no motorways, so many vehicles never reach the conditions needed for DPF regeneration, leading to repeated clogging, higher maintenance costs and avoidable emissions.

The proposed revised vehicle registration tax directive now also includes increased testing for vehicle software and emissions.

Practical compatibility of DPF technologies in small or island road networks is relevant to the application of Regulation (EU) 2024/1257 (Euro 7) ⁽¹⁾ and the forthcoming implementing/delegated acts setting type-approval tests and durability requirements for vehicles.

In this context:

1. Has the Commission assessed whether Euro 7 type-approval and refuse derived fuel/particulate-number procedures adequately reflect real-world use in Malta, which has no motorways, in particular with regard to the regeneration needs of DPFs?
2. Will the Commission require manufacturers to provide alternative regeneration strategies or technologies (e.g. active or scheduled regeneration, or designs that regenerate at lower loads and speeds) for markets where continuous high-speed driving is not possible?
3. Will the Commission include, in the implementing acts, flexibility mechanisms or technical adaptations allowing Member States to address specific infrastructural constraints while preserving their environmental ambitions?

Submitted: 21.10.2025

Answer given by Executive Vice-President Séjourné on behalf of the European Commission
(11 December 2025)

The type-approval procedures for Euro 7 light-duty vehicles, in particular the Real-Driving Emissions (RDE) on-road test and the Worldwide Harmonised Light Vehicles Test Procedure (WLTP), were designed to cover a broad range of operating conditions likely to be encountered by vehicles across the EU.

Regional adaptations would be contrary to the principles of internal market harmonisation underpinning the emission type-approval.

The Euro 7 Regulation ⁽¹⁾ does not prescribe how diesel particulate filter regenerations are managed. It is standard engineering practice to allow 'passive' regeneration when sufficient soot has accumulated and exhaust temperatures are high, such as during highway driving.

Where this is not achieved, manufacturers use 'active' regeneration, heating the filter during sustained medium-load operation.

If driving patterns never permit regeneration, manufacturers may trigger a warning via the on-board diagnostics system, prompting the driver to visit a workshop for a forced regeneration as part of maintenance.

The Euro 7 Regulation ensures that all vehicle types placed on the EU market, regardless of fuel and powertrain, comply with the same environmental standards.

It is up to consumers to choose the most appropriate vehicles according to their driving patterns and mobility needs, taking into account that diesel engines may not be the most suitable and economical option for predominantly short or low-speed urban use.

¹ 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), amending Regulation (EU) 2018/858 of the European Parliament and of the Council and repealing Regulations (EC) No 715/2007 and (EC) No 595/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Commission Regulation (EU) No 582/2011, Commission Regulation (EU) 2017/1151, Commission Regulation (EU) 2017/2400 and Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2022/1362 (OJ L, 2024/1257, 8.5.2024).

⁽¹⁾ 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>.

Member States may also communicate and incentivise the purchase of vehicles that perform best in terms of environmental sustainability.
