

(English version)

Priority question for written answer P-002703/24
to the Commission
Silvia Sardone (PFE)
(30 November 2024)

Subject: Crisis in the automotive industry and review of the ban on diesel and petrol cars from 2035

Stellantis has announced yet another shutdown of its Mirafiori plant: demand for electric cars is so slack that it cannot even ensure their continuous manufacture. Suffice it to say that just 2 000 units of its flagship model, the electric Fiat 500, were sold in the first ten months of the year, equivalent to less than ten shifts at the Turin plant. Ford plans to make 4 000 workers redundant in Europe by 2027. Volkswagen has announced the closure of three plants in Germany, wage cuts of 10% and at least 15 000 redundancies. The crisis is also hitting the auto parts sector, which is experiencing the most serious job losses since the COVID-19 pandemic. Northvolt, Europe's leading producer of electric-car batteries, has declared bankruptcy

Can the Commission therefore say:

1. What it intends to do to address the comprehensive crisis in Europe's automotive industry?
2. Whether it is not time to reconsider the obligation to sell only electric cars from 2035 in view of their evident unpopularity among consumers in many European countries?
3. What action plans it will implement to address the many redundancies both in the automotive and the auto-parts sectors?

Submitted: 30.11.2024

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

The Commission wants to ensure that the EU remains a long-term global leader in the automotive industry, preserving jobs and manufacturing in Europe.

Therefore, the President of the Commission has decided to convene a Strategic Dialogue on the Future of the Car Industry in Europe. The Commission will also develop an industrial action plan for the automotive industry, covering the entire value chain.

The revised Regulation setting carbon dioxide (CO₂) emission standards for new cars and vans ⁽¹⁾, including a 100% emission reduction target from 2035 onwards provides a clear framework for the transition to zero-emission vehicles, essential to deliver on the EU's climate objectives.

It creates legal certainty for manufacturers and investors and supports the EU industry's competitiveness, in a global vehicle electrification context, while allowing sufficient lead time for a fair transition.

The sales of zero-emission cars in the EU have steadily increased since 2020. Several European manufacturers will launch cheaper electric car models in the coming months.

In 2025, the Commission will prepare a progress report on the transition to zero-emission mobility ⁽²⁾. In 2026, the Commission will review the effectiveness and impact of Regulation (EU) 2019/631 ⁽³⁾.

The main instruments to support workers affected by restructuring are the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) ⁽⁴⁾, providing support for skills development and job search, and the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund for Displaced Workers (EGF) ⁽⁵⁾ which is intended to support active labour market policy measures and personalised services aimed at supporting workers' job transitions, helping them to reintegrate into decent and sustainable employment as quickly as possible.

The EGF complements ESF+ and national measures.

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EU) 2023/851 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 April 2023 amending Regulation (EU) 2019/631 as regards strengthening the CO₂ emission performance standards for new passenger cars and new light commercial vehicles in line with the Union's increased climate ambition, OJ L 110, 25.4.2023, p. 5-20, <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2023/851/oj>

⁽²⁾ Article 14(a) of Regulation (EU) 2019/631 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2019 setting CO₂ emission performance standards for new passenger cars and for new light commercial vehicles, and repealing Regulations (EC) No 443/2009 and (EU) No 510/2011, OJ L 111, 25.4.2019, p. 13-53, <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2019/631/oj>

⁽³⁾ Article 15 of Regulation (EU) 2019/631.

⁽⁴⁾ <https://ec.europa.eu/european-social-fund-plus/en>

⁽⁵⁾ Regulation (EU) 2021/691 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 April 2021 on the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund for Displaced Workers (EGF) and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1309/2013, OJ L 153, 3.5.2021, p. 48-70, <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/691/oj>