

WEEK IN BRUSSELS

Week ending Friday 2 May

EU commercial vehicle registrations grow 11.1% in March

Figures published by ACEA, the European Automobile Manufacturers Association, show that in March 2014 demand for new commercial vehicles in the EU increased for the seventh consecutive month. Total commercial vehicle registrations grew by 11.1%, totalling 185,520 units. Growth was sustained across all segments of commercial vehicles. Out of the most significant markets, Spain recorded the highest upturn (+26.8%). Italy (+16.3%) and the UK (+11.0%) also posted double-digit growth, while demand in Germany (+9.8%) and France (+0.3%) also increased. In the first quarter of the year, the EU market expanded by 9.8%, totalling 443,038 units. During the same period, Spain (+39.0%), Italy (+14.1%), Germany (+10.5%) and the UK (+10.4%) all posted double-digit growth, while France was the only major market recording a decline (-0.6%).

(Source: ACEA)

<http://www.acea.be/press-releases/article/commercial-vehicle-registrations-9.8-in-first-quarter-11.1-in-march>



EEA report shows car CO₂ emissions continue to fall

Figures published by the European Environment Agency have shown that average passenger car fleet emissions decreased from 186g CO₂/km in 1995, to 127g CO₂/km in 2013 – a decrease of 31.7% over this

period, reaching the legal target for 2015 of 130g CO₂/km two years early. Whilst this report highlights the progress being made in the industry to cut emissions, it also notes that the amount of CO₂ emissions from light commercial vehicles and passenger cars needs to continue on this downward trend, an issue that becomes increasingly difficult as most of the cost-effective measures have already been taken. Commenting on these results, ACEA, the European Automobile Manufacturers Association stated that delivering the target of 95g CO₂/km by 2020 will require ever greater technical advancements to achieve this goal.

(Source: ACEA)

<http://www.acea.be/press-releases/article/co2-emissions-from-cars-and-vans-continue-on-downward-trend>

Japan PM calls for swift progress in EU trade talks

During a visit to Germany Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe urged for a rapid conclusion of talks with the European Union to implement a free-trade pact. At an industry forum in Berlin, the Prime Minister stated “we’re putting all our strength into achieving an economic partnership accord with the EU. To advance the negotiations for a quick conclusion of the agreement, we’d like all your active support.” The EU and Japan launched trade talks a year ago, aiming for a tie-up that would account for 40% of all global trade. The key issue for Tokyo is that Brussels dismantle customs duties on Japanese autos, whereas the EU wants progress on non-tariff barriers in certain Japanese markets. German Chancellor Angela Merkel later voiced her hopes that the deal could be completed next year, saying that it could drastically improve the two countries’ trade relationship. Brussels is due to decide next month whether to continue or to suspend the negotiations with Tokyo, which in parallel is seeking a Pacific-wide free trade deal in talks with the United States.

(Source: EU Business)

<http://www.eubusiness.com/news-eu/germany-japan-trade.v2o/>

Environmental taxes on the rise in EU

Recent data from the statistical office Eurostat shows that revenues from environmental taxation in EU member states grew by 2.5% to €311.7bn in 2012. However, compared with 2011, the average taxation level on activities and sectors including transport, resources and pollution as a proportion of GDP was roughly the same (2.4%). The share of green taxation as a proportion of revenues from all taxes and social contributions decreased to 6.05%, from 6.11% the year before. Environmental taxation relative to GDP was highest in Denmark and Slovenia at 3.87% and 3.82% respectively, and lowest in Spain at 1.57%. Slovenia saw the highest year on year increase with a change of 0.37%, while the biggest falls were in Cyprus and Portugal, down 0.22% and 0.18% respectively.

(Source: ENDS)

<http://www.endseurope.com/>

EU road deaths halve in a decade

The European Transport Safety Council (ETSC) has released figures showing that the number of road deaths within the European Union and Switzerland have more than halved, from the 28,000 deaths seen in 2001, to over 12,000 in 2012. The Council has credited stricter safety measures for the improvement. Spain and Latvia have recorded the most progress, cutting road deaths by two-thirds from 2001 to 2012, whereas Poland is cited as the worst, with 11 people killed in cars per every billion kilometres travelled. The ETSC is calling for EU-wide action to enforce seatbelt reminders and tougher measures against drink-driving. The ETSC estimates that mandatory reminders for all seats could prevent an additional 900 deaths per year. The Council is also calling for mandatory alcohol interlocks to address the issue of drink-driving, which accounts for some 5,600 fatalities annually. Introducing mandatory alcohol interlocks would prevent a car from starting if the driver fails a breathalyser test, for repeat drink-drivers.

(Source: EurActiv)

<http://www.euractiv.com/sections/transport/report-eu-road-deaths-halve-decade-301813>



Week ahead

European Commission

No relevant activity

Council of Ministers

No relevant activity

European Parliament

The parliament is no longer sitting due to the upcoming European elections. The UK elections for the European Parliament will take place on 22 May.