

WEEK IN BRUSSELS

Week ending Friday 25 March

Brussels wants no oil-fuelled cars in cities by 2050

The European Commission plans to halve the urban usage of oil- and gas-fuelled cars by 2030 and “phase them out by 2050”, according to an EU road map on transport to be published on Monday 28 March. The Commission believes these objectives will play a role in achieving the target of cutting CO₂ emissions from transport by 60% by 2050. The Commission is therefore proposing a plan with reductions of emissions especially in road transport, while it intends to increase rail traffic, as it believes it is cleaner and a more environment-friendly than road transport. The objective of car-free cities by 2050 is to be pursued through fiscal measures, promotion of alternative transport systems, and building of the necessary infrastructure to move to a widespread use of electric and clean cars. Brussels suggests a review of national rules and practices accordingly, where it is not already the case. The Commission aims at achieving “CO₂ free city logistics in major urban centres by 2030”. The Commission is also considering the joint public procurement for low emission vehicles in commercial fleets, for example of delivery vans or taxis. The Commission also wants to shift 30% of road freight over 300 km to other modes, such as rail or waterborne transport by 2030, and this target is likely to be raised to more than 50% by 2050. Cross-border road transport is likely to be the first segment affected by the application of such a measure. (Source: Euractiv)

www.euractiv.com/en/transport/brussels-wants-oil-fuelled-cars-cities-2050-news-503404

FIA publishes report advising ways to boost EV uptake

The Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) has published a report outlining the ways in which to boost electric vehicle (EV) uptake. The FIA believes it will be difficult persuading consumers to buy EV's and it will require a broad range of policies and technological measures to do so. The report recommends seven actions to bring about a change in

consumer perceptions of EV's. For example, the FIA is calling for standardised approaches to battery technologies and charging, something the EU is already addressing. Other recommendations in the FIA report include more research to develop batteries' life spans and cut their costs. Consumers may also be put off buying second-hand electric cars if there is no standard testing procedure for their batteries. However, the FIA warns governments against backing particular technologies. Plug-in hybrids and battery vehicles will be niche products for the next 15 years, so policymakers must continue to encourage more efficient internal combustion engines. In conclusion, the report warns that countries developing vehicle taxes and traffic management policies should base them on the carbon emissions of particular vehicles rather than their technology. (Source: FIA)

www.fiabrusseles.com/download/emobility/emobility_full_text_fia.pdf

Majority of Europeans embrace green travel – European Commission

A survey conducted by Euro-barometer in all 27 EU member states has shown that most Europeans are willing to compromise on the price and the features of their car in order to reduce harmful emissions. For instance, about two-thirds of EU car users said it was likely they would compromise on a car's speed in order to reduce emissions. In addition, 53% of motorists agreed with existing car charges being replaced by new charging schemes based on the actual use of their vehicle. While most users choose to drive a car because of its convenience, nearly three quarters of EU citizens (71%) said they would consider using public transport more frequently if it would be possible to buy a single ticket covering all transport modes. Vice-President Siim Kallas, Commissioner responsible for transport, said: "These results are a great boost to the EU's efforts to make transport more sustainable. It shows people understand the stakes and are willing to do their bit to reduce their impact on the environment. Smart initiatives such as pay-as-you-drive schemes and a single ticket covering all possible transport modes

make use of the latest technology and enable people to make a well-informed choice about how they choose to travel." The survey was conducted among 25,570 people in all 27 Member States at the request of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport. (Source: European Commission)

europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/11/360&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&quietLanguage=en



UN calls on governments to maintain momentum

Ahead of the UN Climate Change Conference in Bangkok, the UN's top climate change official has called on governments to maintain momentum to ensure that the timelines agreed at the recent Cancun Conference in December of 2010 are met. New institutions agreed in Mexico last year include a Green Climate Fund to house the international management, deployment and accountability of long-term funds for developing country support; a Technology Mechanism to promote clean technologies; and an Adaptation Framework to boost international cooperation to help developing countries protect themselves from climate change impacts. Christina Figuerer, UNFCCC Executive Secretary said: "The world was at a

crossroads in Cancun - and took a step forward towards a climate-safe world, now governments must move purposefully down the path they have set, and that means maintaining momentum at Bangkok in order to take the next big climate step in Durban at the end of the year." (Source: UNFCCC) unfccc.int/files/press/press_releases_advisories/application/pdf/pr20112403mexico.pdf

European Parliament resolution on Japan

The Parliament has adopted a resolution on the situation in Japan, in relation to the state of alert at the nuclear power stations. The European Parliament has expressed its most complete solidarity with the Japanese people and government and presents its sincere condolences to the victims of the disaster, bearing in mind that the human losses and material damage have not yet been fully assessed. The EU Calls on the Union and its Member States, as a priority, to give Japan and the disaster regions all necessary humanitarian, technical and financial aid and support and welcomes the fact that the Union immediately activated its Civil Protection Mechanism to coordinate its emergency aid and instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the Japanese authorities. (Source: European Parliament)

www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=MOTION&reference=B7-2011-0224&language=EN

Week ahead

European Commission

Wednesday 30 March

Enhanced cooperation in the area of unitary patent protection - DG – Internal Market and Services

The two proposals will 1) set-out the provisions necessary for the establishment of unitary patent protection and 2) stipulate the translation arrangements for the future EU Patent.

Council of Ministers

No relevant activity

European Parliament

Thursday 31 March

ITRE – An effective raw materials strategy for Europe – consideration of draft report

Thursday 31 March

BUDG – Preparation of 2012 budget – exchange of views