

WEEK IN BRUSSELS

Week ending Friday 27 April

EU commercial vehicle registrations down 9.6% in Q1 2012

Figures published by ACEA, the European Automobile Manufacturers' Association, show that in March 2012 demand for new commercial vehicles in the EU dropped by 11.8%, totaling 184,235 units. With the exception of Germany (+0.3%), all other significant markets shrank, from -7.0% in the UK to -11.2% in France, -22.1% in Spain and -45.4% in Italy. Over the first quarter of 2012, demand was down 9.6%, compared to the same quarter a year earlier. New registrations fell by 1.0% in Germany, 5.8% in France, 8.9% in the UK, 22.6% in Spain and 36.1% in Italy. In total, the EU recorded 451,244 new commercial vehicles. (Source: ACEA)

http://www.acea.be/index.php/news/news_detail/commercial_vehicles_registrations_down_9.6_in_first_quarter

Draft 2013 EU Budget focuses on investing in growth and jobs

The EU's draft Budget for 2013 has been presented by the European Commission, and reflects the European Council's statements that growth and employment in the EU can only be achieved by combining fiscal consolidation and investment into future growth. The EU budget concentrates investment on the priority areas defined in the EU's growth strategy Europe 2020, while at the same time taking into account the difficult economic context and pressure on national budgets. The draft budget 2013 freezes future expenditure: the increase of commitments (i.e. tomorrow's payments) is at the level of inflation (2%). It also freezes the Commission's administrative budget at well below inflation level, while cutting its staff by 1%, the first step towards the goal of a 5% reduction of staff in 5 years. At the same time the draft Budget proposes a 6.8% increase in the level of payments. €62.5 billion in payments are devoted to job friendly growth in Europe, with a particular effort being made towards the Research

framework Programmes (€9.0 billion, 28.1% increase on 2012), the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme (€546.4 million, 47.8 % increase), structural and cohesion funds (€ 49 billion , 11.7 % increase), and life long learning (€1.2 billion, 15.8 % increase). (Source: European Commission)

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/12/393&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>



EU consultation backs carbon cuts from HDVs

A summary of last years 2012 EU stakeholder consultation on reducing emissions from road transport has shown that there is support for action to cut carbon dioxide from heavy duty vehicles (HDVs). The findings, published by the European Commission's climate department, show over 80% of the 137 respondents agreed that measures are needed to cut HDV CO₂ emissions. They also show that two thirds believe cuts in the sector should be made through legislation rather than voluntary industry measures. A target for vans of 147 grams of CO₂ per kilometre for 2020, envisaged in rules adopted last year, was supported by 63% of respondents, with 26% undecided. But some suggested that a fuel or energy efficiency standard would be more appropriate, accompanied by a standard for the carbon content of fuels. The responses reveal widespread support for vehicle emissions targets beyond 2020, regardless of improvements made by taxation, road charging and vehicle designs. In addition, clear support was shown

for including non-CO₂ greenhouse gas emissions – methane, nitrogen oxides and black carbon – in future targets. (Source: European Commission)

http://ec.europa.eu/clima/consultations/0012/summary_en.pdf

2012 European Business Summit highlights investment in skills as key

Investment in skills topped the agenda at the 2012 European Business Summit in Brussels, attended by Italian Prime Minister Mario Monti, Belgian premier Elio Di Rupo, European Commission President José Manuel Barroso and more than 1,000 European business leaders and policymakers. The summit heard that 86% of European employers cut or froze their investments in training last year despite ongoing skills shortages and must take urgent remedial action. However, less than a fifth (18%) of 500 European business and government leaders polled planned to increase spending on skills and training over the next 12 months, with 43% admitting that they themselves faced a skills shortage and 72% stating that increased investment was needed for skills. (Source: EurActiv)

<http://www.euractiv.com/specialreport-jobs-growth/survey-skills-investment-slashed-despite-dearth-news-512364>



EU Commission joins Climate and Clean Air Coalition

The European Commission has joined the Climate and Clean Air Coalition, a new international initiative to accelerate the reduction of emissions of short-lived climate pollutants such as methane, black carbon (soot) and hydrofluorocarbon gases (HFCs). The announcement was made at a meeting of the Coalition in Stockholm on 24 April and takes the number of Coalition partners to 13. The Stockholm

meeting approved five actions that are to be implemented rapidly: Fast action on diesel emissions from heavy duty vehicles; upgrading old brick kilns (a significant source of black carbon emissions); accelerating reduction of methane emissions from landfills; speeding up cuts in methane and other emissions from the oil and gas industry; accelerating the take-up of alternatives to HFCs. Further initiatives are to be developed over the coming weeks.

Commenting on the initiative, Connie Hedegaard, European Commissioner for Climate Action, stated: “This initiative should complement the efforts needed under the UN climate change convention to cut global greenhouse gas emissions to a level that will limit global temperature increase to below 2°C. The Commission is willing to consider further support to concrete projects in developing countries to reduce emissions from short-lived climate pollutants. Action on these pollutants will not, however, replace the need for continued action by all major economies to reduce CO₂ emissions, which needs to be stepped up”.

(Source: European Commission)

http://ec.europa.eu/clima/news/articles/news_2012042502_en.htm

Week ahead

European Commission

No relevant activity

Council of Ministers

No relevant activity

European Parliament

Constituency Week