

# PRESS RELEASE



## EAC Parliamentary Evening: Sustainable and affordable mobility

EAC calls for technological openness and solutions for the existing vehicle fleet.

Brussels, 12.03.2024

All new cars registered in Europe will be zero-emission by 2035, by 2050 all vehicles are to be zero emission. The current EU regulation focuses exclusively on tailpipe emissions. In fact, this means a ban on internal combustion vehicles and a focus on electric vehicles. This decision is to be reviewed in 2026.

What does this mean for consumers' individual mobility?

How can sustainable mobility be affordable for everyone?

How do we achieve the ambitious climate targets in the transport sector?

What role do alternative fuels play in this?

These questions were the focus of the parliamentary evening organised by the interest group EAC European Automobile Clubs (EAC) on March 6, 2024, in Brussels.

In the premises of the Representation of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia to the European Union, EAC President Holger Küster discussed with MEP Jan Christoph Oetjen (RENEW), MEP Thomas Rudner (S&D), Algara Caste (eFuel Alliance e.V.), and Mitja Schulz (Association of the Automotive Industry - VDA) whether the ambitious goals can be achieved with an exclusive focus on battery-electric vehicles.

Ulrich Selzer, automotive expert and member of the Commission Mobility, presented the results of an independent mobility study by the Commission Mobility of the "Senat der Wirtschaft" in an opening statement. The expert study, based on miles driven, calculated and analyzed the real possibilities of CO2 reduction in road transport until 2035 in an evidence-based manner. The study concludes that a reduction in CO2 emissions of up to 68 percent by the year 2035 is possible. However, this can only be achieved with a mix of different propulsion technologies such as electric, hydrogen, e-fuels, and conventional fuels.

In the subsequent constructive and lively debate about the path Europe should take to achieve the climate goals in the transportation sector, different positions and approaches were evident. Jan-Christoph Oetjen advocated for technological neutrality in the transportation sector, while Thomas Rudner applied the brakes. However, everyone agreed on one thing: Urgent action is needed.

*"We lose sight of our goals if we don't find solutions for the existing fleet. Over 280 million cars with combustion engines are driving on Europe's roads, while globally there are approximately 1.5 billion. With a global annual manufacturing capacity of nearly 90 million vehicles and an immediate halt to the sale of vehicles with combustion engines, it would take over 16 years to replace the entire vehicle fleet. Realistically, the electrification of the global vehicle fleet will take much longer, as vehicles with combustion engines will continue to be produced and sold until 2035, and with a European average lifespan of over 12 years, they will not be replaced until much later. Therefore, we need all technologies and options for the existing fleet to achieve the ambitious climate goals. Climate-*

neutral mobility cannot be achieved without technological openness," explains EAC President Holger Küster.

*"Mobility must remain affordable in the future. A successful transformation of the transport sector requires social acceptance. That's why we need solutions instead of bans for a sustainable and affordable transformation that takes economic, social and ecological aspects into account in a balanced manner in order to promote trust and acceptance in society. Otherwise, we risk losing the people without whom this transformation is not possible,"* urges Holger Küster.

#### **Quotes:**

##### **MEP Jan-Christoph Oetjen:**

*Climate neutrality and technological openness only work together. We need alternative fuels to decarbonize the existing fleet and should utilize already available climate-neutral fuels to achieve climate effects and CO2 reduction in road transport. The environmental impact of electric vehicles must be holistically assessed and evaluated through a life cycle assessment, rather than solely focusing on tailpipe emissions. A corresponding categorization of vehicles based on their environmental footprint could create clarity for consumers."*

##### **MEP Thomas Rudner:**

*"E-Fuels should primarily be used where no other options are available, such as in aviation or maritime transport. At present, I do not see E-Fuels as a solution to make road transport CO2-neutral. Reversing the phase-out of combustion engines would be a disastrous decision for the automotive industry, which is preparing for the transition to electric mobility and could unsettle businesses and consumers. The expansion of charging infrastructure is crucial to achieving climate goals."*

##### **Mitja Schulz, Verband der Automobilindustrie (VDA):**

*„The main contribution to climate-neutral mobility comes from the electrification of propulsion systems. In addition to electromobility, we need synthetic fuels, such as E-Fuels, and advanced biofuels (alternative fuels), for the existing fleet - currently around 1.5 billion vehicles worldwide - to be able to travel in a climate-neutral manner. The EU Commission must develop a legally secure and technically feasible framework so that vehicles fueled exclusively with CO2-neutral fuels can still be registered after 2035.“*

##### **Algara Castle, eFuel Alliance e.V.:**

*"Using road transport as a driving force to produce sustainable fuels in a resource- and cost-efficient way would benefit the entire transportation sector. Revenues from the sale of renewable fuels in road transport would be reinvested in the expansion of corresponding production facilities. This would not only promote the availability of renewable fuels for aviation and maritime transport but also lead to lower production costs due to economies of scale. So far, the politically necessary incentives are lacking for this."*

---

»EAC European Automobile Clubs«

Die Interessengemeinschaft EAC European Automobile Clubs vertritt die Interessen von 3 Millionen Verbrauchern gegenüber europäischen Institutionen und politischen Akteuren. Der EAC setzt sich für grenzenlos erfahrbare Mobilität, für Technologieoffenheit, für die Harmonisierung verkehrsrechtlicher Verordnungen, für klima- und sozialgerechte Mobilität und für mehr Sicherheit im Straßenverkehr ein.

»Contact«

Martin Filzen  
T +49 152 346 375 61  
E [filzen@eaclubs.org](mailto:filzen@eaclubs.org)