



“Fit for 55” Package II: Proposals regarding Transport

COM (2021) 556
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Executive summary

AK supports the ambitious European climate policy since it serves to ensure a liveable future for current and future generations. Attention must be paid to the democratic participation of all people and **fair sharing of the costs and benefits** when designing and managing the undoubtedly necessary transformation. AK therefore views it as a pressing political challenge to take active steps to shape this transformation in line with the interests of workers.

Mobility is a prerequisite for prosperity, quality of life and social participation. Motor vehicles in particular have been and are a key component of everyday mobility and mobility for business. Given the foreseeable social, economic and environmental consequences of climate change, the EU has resolved to reduce carbon emissions overall by 90% by 2050. However, transport is the sector in which CO₂ emissions have actually risen in recent years. That trend needs to be reversed. However, here too, it is important for the principle of fairness to be observed in the change processes ("just transition"). **Professional and financial prospects must be in place for all those affected by the structural change.**

AK notes as a general point that all the transport measures in the "Fit for 55" package are geared towards achieving the climate target by using new technologies to increase efficiency. However, this basic assumption is inconsistent with experiences in recent decades. **The growth in transport has more than outweighed any progress made by technical efficiency.** This structural problem, however, is not taken into consideration in the proposals and the extensive annexes.

The aforementioned **growth in transport** was and is spurred on by a **worsening of labour conditions for workers in the transport sector based on a destructive ideology of competition** that has primarily made road transport, aviation and shipping cheaper to the detriment of people and the climate. A revaluation of work with clear provisions and improvements in working conditions (deployment times, possibilities for overnight accommodation,

time away from family etc.), pay (same pay for the same work in the same place) and training (duration, harmonisation) needs to be part of the "Fit for 55" strategy and finally taken into consideration by the Commission.

Measures to **prevent traffic and the increased use of energy-efficient modes of transport (rail, bus, cycling and walking) are of prime importance** and are particularly suitable in more densely populated regions, where space is limited in any case. Measures in peripheral regions that ensure suitable forms of affordable public transport (e.g. micro public transport or demand-based services as part of an integrated overall system) and thereby serve as a comprehensive guarantee of public mobility should receive greater emphasis as part of a sustainable, smart transport strategy. The shift from road freight transport to rail transport should be consistently pursued and regulations must also be applied effectively.

In AK's view, transport must cover all its resulting costs. Currently those external costs are borne by the public and later generations, rather than by the users. AK recognises that the proposals presented can serve to reduce those costs. However, in the interest of transparency and fair competition between the various modes of transport, this should be shown in the impact analyses and communicated accordingly by the Commission.

In addition, AK has [analysed in detail](#) other Commission plans relating to transport that are designed to enable the medium-term attainment of the climate targets.

The AK's position

“Fit for 55” package in general

AK supports the goal of EU-wide decarbonisation by 2050. The associated exit from fossil fuels will also lead to far-reaching economic and social change comparable to the Industrial Revolution. This process must be designed to be fair and in the interest of workers (“just transition”). Therefore, it is vital that, as far as possible, all measures are designed in such a way that they ensure high employment and a fair distribution of wealth. Otherwise, there is the risk that necessary changes will not be sufficiently supported by the population, resulting in failure to meet the climate targets. AK recognises that the Commission included the aspects of justice, distribution and employment when drawing up the “Fit for 55” package.

In this paper AK sets out its position on legislation primarily geared to reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the transport sector:

- COM (2021) 556: [Regulation to strenghten CO₂-emission standards for new passenger cars and light commercial vehicles](#)
- COM (2021) 559: [Regulation on the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure](#)
- COM (2021) 561: [Regulation on ensuring a level playing field for sustainable air transport](#)
- COM (2021) 562: [Regulation on the use of renewable and low-carbon fuels in maritime transport and amending Directive 2009/16/EC](#)

The package of legislative proposals is a key part of implementing the European Green Deal, which is aimed at making Europe climate neutral by 2050, i.e. with zero net greenhouse gas emissions, and at reducing environmental pollution and the consumption of raw materials, while simultaneously allowing for greater prosperity and ensuring no-one is left behind.

To attain the goal of climate neutrality with respect to greenhouse gases by 2050, a consistent path of

reducing emissions must be taken. That requires an ambitious interim target in 2030. The “Fit for 55” package helps to achieve this goal by proposing specific legislation resulting directly or indirectly in a 55% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions compared to 1990.

1. Strengthening of carbon emissions standards for new cars and light commercial vehicles

New specifications will be laid down for [CO₂ emissions standards for manufacturers of new cars and light commercial vehicles \(LCVs\)](#) in 2030 and 2035. For all their newly registered vehicles in the EU single market in a year they must achieve an average CO₂ emissions target, also referred to as the fleet-wide target, which is based on the EU type approval. The proposal tightens the required average CO₂ emissions target for 2030 to 55% (previously 37.5%) for cars and to 50% (previously 31%) for LCVs. The baseline is taken as the year 2021, in which cars have to comply with 95 g CO₂/km and LCVs with 147 g CO₂/km. Under the proposal, in 2035 only those vehicles are permitted to be sold that have a type approval listing zero grams of CO₂. Vehicles with combustion engines can therefore no longer be sold in the EU single market as of this year, since the proposal does not allow for climate neutral fuels (e.g. biofuels or synthetic fuels) to be taken into account when calculating the manufacturer's average CO₂ emissions target.

The proposed CO₂ emissions standards for 2030 and 2035 reflect the targets to which the major car manufacturers voluntarily committed themselves in advance. In AK's view, questions of employment and a just transition should be prioritised in the key sector of the automotive industry. Coordination between the social partners at EU and Member State level is essential for designing a fair process. New regulatory parameters are necessary so that vehicles can be built and run in a more environmentally friendly manner.

However, the proposal needs to be embedded in a larger framework. The automotive sector, which is critical in terms of employment policy and industrial policy, requires such a framework in order to manage the upcoming structural change. This necessitates coordinated measures within and outside the automotive sector, the implementation of which is key to the success of the proposal as a whole.

AK refers to the [joint call of the trade unions and associations of the automotive industry dated 7 July 2021](#) for fair structural change. The key elements are more public funds, greater social dialogue and political support for the measures. AK refers to the following measures:

- Ambitious campaigns and outplacement foundations for the training and retraining of affected workers, enabling new employment opportunities within or outside the automotive sector. It is essential for social partners to be involved in the development and implementation at company and industry level.
- Establishment of R&D programmes for the creation of new value chains for electric and fuel cell drives and new services in the automotive sector with a focus on regions that are particularly affected.
- Expansion of charging infrastructure in multi-storey housing, joint car parks and garages in private and semi-private areas.
- Robust eco-design requirements for (zero-emission) vehicles to ensure a sustainable circular economy.

1.1 Inclusion of synthetic fuels in the CO₂ emissions target calculation

Synthetic fuels are, to put it simply, liquid or gaseous fuels produced using electricity and CO₂. If electricity from renewable energy sources is used, this fuel is close to climate neutral. However, the conversion process from electricity to fuel involves massive energy losses. Propulsion via a combustion engine results in additional energy losses, which means that battery-electric drive is up to six times more energy efficient overall. AK assumes that synthetic fuels are not a reasonable option for new cars and LCVs even in the medium term in economic and environmental policy terms. Synthetic fuels are expected to be used for off-road engines with a long service life (aviation, shipping, construction machinery etc.). Currently nothing can be said with certainty about their use

for the historic passenger car fleet, i.e. for already registered vehicles with combustion engines that are to be run in a climate neutral manner.

AK welcomes the fact that under Article 15(2) of [\(EU\) 2019/631](#), the Commission has not included synthetic fuels in the calculation of the future fleet-wide CO₂ emissions target.

1.2 Inclusion of vehicles' upstream and downstream CO₂ emissions

AK is critical of the fact that, as a parameter for the fleet-wide CO₂ emissions target, the proposal does not include consideration of CO₂ emissions throughout the life-cycle ("from cradle to grave"), even in the medium term.

According to Article 7(10) of the existing Regulation [\(EU\) 2019/631](#), the Commission is required to develop that approach by 2023. Such an instrument could contribute a great deal to more objective discussion about the environmental properties of vehicles with a combustion engine or battery. We wish to note that significant elements (in particular the carbon footprint of batteries in electric cars) have already been developed in the [Regulation on Batteries and Waste Batteries](#) that is currently being drawn up.

1.3 Review of the existing legislative parameters for the fleet-wide CO₂ emissions target

The EU fleet-wide target does not apply uniformly to all manufacturers. It is also distributed among the manufacturers based on the respective average vehicle weight, which means that each manufacturer receives its own fleet-wide target. If the average vehicle mass of a manufacturer is above the EU average, its fleet-based CO₂ emissions target is less demanding.

In AK's view, this legislative approach is clearly incompatible with the "Fit for 55" objective and should be removed. Greater vehicle weight simply means higher energy consumption.

It should also be noted that measures to improve vehicle efficiency in recent decades and the associated positive effects have been more than outweighed by increasing traffic volumes and the growing number of high-powered vehicles with relatively high fuel consumption.

1.4 Deviations of real energy consumption from the standard consumption

Consumer protection organisations have successfully obtained that the real energy consumption of every new car registered from 1 January 2021 is recorded and available for the monitoring of the Commission. AK demands an annual reporting obligation of the Commission from 2025 onwards on deviations and monitoring and legal consequences for manufacturers if the limits are exceeded.

1.5 Information for consumers about the energy efficiency of new cars

Under Regulation (EU) 2019/631, the Commission is required to put forward a new proposal by no later than 2021 on informing consumers about fuel consumption and CO₂ emissions in the marketing of new cars. The European legislature deemed this necessary because the [existing legislation](#) literally dates back to the last century. For example, it is unfamiliar with alternative types of drive, online advertising, information about a vehicle's carbon footprint and approaches to a total-cost-of-ownership calculation. AK calls upon the Commission to finally present a proposal.

1.6 Supply chain issues

Sustainable vehicle manufacturing also means that emissions and environmental pollution are not simply allowed to "disappear" from the environmental balance sheets of the EU Member States because services and upstream products (e.g. manufacturing of electricity-intensive batteries for electric cars) are manufactured in other countries. Core labour standards (e.g. extraction of ores, recycling of waste) must likewise be complied with along the whole supply chain. In its [Proposal on Batteries](#), the Commission has proposed a legally binding due diligence procedure for the extraction of certain ores (in particular a ban on child labour) that is legally binding for companies and allows civil society to bring a legal action in the case of violations. AK calls for a similar legal framework for vehicle manufacturing as a whole.

2. Deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure

With regard to the [deployment of an infrastructure for alternative fuels](#), a new EU framework on publicly accessible charging and fuelling infrastructure will be given to Member States. This concerns cars and vans, lorries, ports for inland waterway and maritime transport, as well as airports. Essentially, Member States must fulfil provisions regarding a minimum supply in the Trans-European Transport Network and throughout their territory. In the case of electric cars, the minimum number of public charging stations is to be based on the number of vehicles registered in the given Member State. In addition, provisions concerning information for users, payment options and the provision of data to the public are planned.

An adequate, user-friendly charging infrastructure for alternative fuels is a key component in the transport sector to ensure the transition to alternative drives in vehicles and cover the energy needs of airports and inland waterway and ocean ports in a more environmentally friendly manner. In view of the above, AK supports the proposed regulation in general and sees positive steps in the area of consumer protection in particular. The key points of our position on the proposal are:

- Price labelling per kWh at electric charging stations and monitoring are good for consumers.
- Rejection of the establishment of hydrogen infrastructure for road transport.
- Charging stations on motorways should be made more worker-friendly. Professional lorry drivers need a power connection for cooling units for lorries during their night-time rest.

2.1 General remarks

This proposal concerns charging and fuelling in public areas. In the case of cars, for example, only ten percent of all charging processes take place in public areas. Most charging processes are performed on the user's own property or in joint garages in residential or non-residential areas. In AK's view, this infrastructure should be retained because it benefits the grid. Relatively long stays in joint car parks enable longer charging times and prevent costly peak loads for the grid. The Commission is expected to revise the rules concerning such charging infrastructure in non-public areas in the Directive on the Energy Performance of Buildings in December 2021. We would like to see, in particular, an easing of conditions for tenants in multi-

storey housing who need or want to establish a new charging infrastructure for electric cars.

Additional space in public areas is a very scarce resource, especially in cities. The establishment of a charging infrastructure needs to take that into account and should not be to the detriment of other road users, especially cyclists and pedestrians. The charging infrastructure should also be built in such a way that it is accessible, i.e. so that people with disabilities (e.g. wheelchair users) can access it safely from their parking space. This aspect should be taken into consideration when reviewing the national strategic framework and progress reports (cf. Article 15).

2.2 Targets for electric recharging infrastructure for light-duty vehicles (Article 3)

AK welcomes the establishment of the required minimum number of publicly accessible charging stations in a given EU Member State based on the number of registered cars. That criterion is in line with the subsidiary responsibility of the Member States and enables maximum flexibility with respect to the location of charging stations.

The proposed minimum coverage on motorways in the entire network and core network of the Trans-European Network (every 60 kilometres, a charging location with charging capacity of at least 300 kW and a charging station with individual charging capacity of 150 kW from 2026) is not particularly ambitious and could be extended. It does not serve to encourage cross-border journeys using electric vehicles. AK suggests that, in addition to kilometres, the traffic density or traffic volume is used as parameters.

2.3 Targets for electric recharging infrastructure for heavy-duty vehicles (Article 4)

AK calls for the establishment of charging stations for electric lorries on motorways not to be mandatory if major investments are made to develop environmentally friendly rail lines in the TEN core network (e.g. Munich-Verona with the Brenner Base Tunnel) in the same corridor.

Lorries with temperature-controlled loads must be taken into consideration with respect to the design and operation of "safe and secure parking" (Article 2(56) and Article 4c). Power connections should enable the electric operation of cooling units in rest areas and car parks by motorways, so that professional lorry drivers are not detrimentally affected by noise and diesel fumes during their night-time rest. AK refers

here to the [relevant pilot project](#) supported by the Commission.

2.4 User-friendliness and tariff transparency (Article 5 and Article 18)

Simple and transparent comparability of prices through uniform quantity-based price labelling (kWh) is currently not a matter in Austria or elsewhere in Europe. This means charging is unpredictable for consumers, which unnecessarily hinders the shift to electric mobility. AK therefore welcomes mandatory price labelling for ad-hoc charging. Accordingly, in future the operator will be required to indicate the price per charging process, price per minute and price per kWh. The prescribed monitoring, especially the requirement for operators to report to a national reporting office in the case of ad-hoc prices (Article 18) will contribute effectively to tariff transparency.

To minimise barriers to electric mobility and charging, AK also calls for cash-free payment options using standard payment cards at charging stations below 50 kW, as well as price labelling by kW for contract-based charging.

2.5 Hydrogen refuelling infrastructure for road transport vehicles (Articles 6 and 7)

It can be assumed that "green" hydrogen from renewable energy sources cannot be produced in sufficient quantities and that industry (in particular steel, iron, the chemical industry), aviation and maritime transport will be the preferred recipients of this fuel. Furthermore, AK advocates a shift from road freight transport to rail infrastructure, which is significantly more energy efficient. AK calls for those infrastructure requirements to be removed without replacement.

2.6 Shore-side electricity supply in inland waterway ports (Article 10)

The low level of investment in shore-side electricity supply in inland waterway ports justifies not only an installation (cf. Article 10), but also charging infrastructure enabling electricity supply for all ships in inland ports and landing places by 2025. A requirement to use electricity, as proposed by the Commission for seaports, should be stipulated as soon as possible.

2.7 Targets for supply of electricity to stationary aircraft (Article 12)

AK not only calls for electricity supply to be provided for stationary aircraft at gates and parking locations, but also for the use of electricity to be required. This infrastructure should also be provided and required to be used by all off-road engines deployed (buses, tank trucks, aircraft tugs etc.). Workers on the apron must no longer be exposed to carcinogenic emissions.

3. Ensuring a level playing field for sustainable air transport

The proposal to ensure a level playing field for sustainable aviation sets a mandatory blending of advanced biogenic and synthetic aviation fuels from 2025 onwards. The level is to be increased in five-year steps, until it reaches 63% in 2050. This concerns commercial airlines performing flights for passenger or freight transport within the EU or with their starting or end point at an airport in the EU. Such a blending mandate is only intended to apply at EU airports with a passenger volume exceeding one million passengers or freight volume exceeding 100,000 tonnes. An exemption is in place for airports in the outermost regions of the EU and flights for non-commercial purposes (military, police, rescue operations, fire department etc.) In addition, an EU agency is intended to be created to monitor compliance with the blending mandates and to establish a nexus for the inclusion of aviation in the Emissions Trading System.

The CO₂ emissions of the aviation sector account for 13% of the emissions of the transport sector and three percent of total emissions in the EU. According to the documents concerning this proposal, aviation activities are expected to rise by almost 80% by 2050 and employment is expected to rise slightly. For this reason, AK has been calling for an end to privileges for aviation. At national level, it advocates an increase in the flight ticket duty and, at the EU level, an end to the VAT exemption for tickets for internal European flights, and taxation of kerosene. AK's basic principle concerning more environmentally friendly aviation is that there should be a shift from short-haul flights to rail transport.

The mandate to blend biogenic and synthetic fuels with conventional jet fuel may contribute to a reduction in emissions, since no other feasible alternatives are available in the aviation sector (such as new propulsion systems) in the medium term. It must, however, be ensured that the advanced fuels used are not in competition with the cultivation of foodstuffs or animal feed, do not threaten biodiversity,

and actually result in zero or close to zero greenhouse gas emissions throughout their life-cycle. However, AK notes that neither this proposal, nor the extensive "Fit for 55" package explicitly points the way towards climate-neutral aviation in 2050. The provision of raw materials for advanced biofuels is unclear and possible problems with third countries must be addressed promptly.

AK considers it regrettable that private aircraft and sports aircraft are not subject to a blending mandate. The exemptions should include not only aircraft with public authority tasks, but also flights for the performance of services in the public interest.

3.1 Definitions of airports (Article 3)

The threshold for an airport (over 1 million passengers) where the blending mandate is to be applied is set too high and should apply at most on an interim basis. By 2030 at the latest, all airports used by airlines recorded in the EU Emissions Trading System should be subject to the blending mandate.

3.2 Proportion of sustainable fuels available at airports in the Union (Article 4)

AK welcomes the fact that biofuels that are directly or indirectly in competition with the cultivation of foodstuffs or animal feed are categorically excluded. According to the proposal, sustainable aviation fuels are either biofuels or synthetic fuels that meet the sustainability criteria under Directive (EU) 2018/2001. Due to the raw material base, biofuels can essentially only be produced using the biomass share from waste from forestry, municipal waste and industry, as well as from manure, slurry, used food oil and certain animal fats. In the extensive annex to this document, it is not credibly demonstrated how the required quantity of biofuels is to be produced for blending in the aviation industry. Synthetic aviation fuels are electricity-based fuels of non-biological origin from renewable energy sources. Here too, the provision of the necessary renewable energy for the generation of e-kerosene is not plausibly described.

3.3 Fuel Tankering (Articles 5 and 7)

Fuel tankering refers to the practice of an aircraft carrying more fuel than needed for a particular flight. Instead of carrying only the necessary fuel amount, plus the prescribed reserves, for a given flight from A to B, in the case of fuel tankering sufficient excess fuel is carried so that it is not necessary to refuel again at

the destination for the return flight or onward flight. Fuel tankering enables money to be saved if the fuel costs are higher at the destination. The advantage of cost saving for the return flight, however, is set against greater fuel consumption and CO₂ emissions during the flight because the extra fuel carried results in a higher mass of the aircraft.

A blending mandate of only 90% for all flights that have an EU-airport as their starting point can be seen as a feasible step for the prevention of fuel tankering. Clarification must be provided (Articles 3, 5 and 7) as to how specifically these provisions can be tracked for each flight.

3.4 Third countries

In AK's view, it should be prevented that airlines avoid blending mandates for intercontinental or long-haul flights by making a stop-over at airports in neighbouring third countries. To avoid this and in order to not weaken the competitiveness of European airlines, relevant agreements or rules with third countries, especially Switzerland, Turkey and the United Kingdom, should be promptly tackled. With regard to the provisions on compliance and penalties (Article 11), there is no indication of how such matters are to be handled in the case of third countries.

3.5 Reduction in CO₂ emissions at airports

The proposal refers only to flights themselves. Sources of CO₂ emissions in the airport area, especially aircraft handling, use of off-road engines on the apron, stationary and infrastructure-related sources and induced landside traffic are not taken into consideration at all. The Proposal on the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure (COM (2021) 559) only provides for the provision of alternative fuels for stationary vehicles at airports.

Similar legislation should apply to airports as in the proposal on the use of renewable and low-carbon fuels, which prescribes the mandatory use of electricity at berths in seaports from 2030 onwards. AK points out that even today many activities (such as those involving buses and aircraft tugs) could be performed in a climate neutral manner but are not. The climate neutral operation of airports should therefore be laid down as a legally binding target in the "Fit for 55" package.

4. Use of renewable and low-carbon fuels in maritime transport and amending Directive 2009/16/EC

With the [use of renewable and low-carbon fuels in maritime transport](#), the proportion of renewable and low-carbon fuels in this industry is to be boosted. As of 2025, there is a requirement ("blending mandate") for renewable and low-carbon fuels to be blended with conventional fuel, which will increase every five years from two to 75% in 2050. These are advanced biofuels that do not come from foodstuffs or animal feed, biogas, renewable fuels of non-biological origin or recycled CO₂ fuel. This blending mandate applies to all the fuel required on journeys between two ports in the EU. In the case of ship journeys in or from third countries with an EU-port as the starting or end point, such a blending mandate only needs to be fulfilled for half the required fuel. The second pillar of more environmentally friendly maritime transport addresses stays in ports. As of 2030, ships are only to be allowed to use electricity at their berth in the port to cover their energy needs.

AK supports the Commission's objective. However, the proposal does not convincingly describe a path for the climate neutrality of maritime transport by 2050. The key criticism is that the raw material base for advanced biofuels is too small for the blending requirements in maritime transport.

Maritime transport accounts for 11% of all transport emissions and 4% of total CO₂ emissions in the EU. According to the Commission's documents concerning this proposal, CO₂ emissions are expected to increase by another 30% between 2015 and 2030, although currently fossil fuels are used almost exclusively.

Given the above, the efforts in this proposal and in the rest of the "Fit for 55" package are to be welcomed. Since large ships have a long service life and their drive systems cannot be changed in the short term, the production of renewable and low-carbon fuels and blending with conventional fuel must be promoted. AK has doubts, however, about the feasibility of the initiative.

In purely nominal terms, a blending proportion of 75% cannot achieve the intended climate neutrality. However, the role of renewable and low-carbon fuels on that path should also be questioned. According to the Commission's working document, in 2050 advanced biogenic fuels, which must meet the sustainability criteria under Directive [\(EU\) 2018/2001](#), are intended to account for over half of that blending. However, it can by no means be demonstrated how

the raw material base, which is essentially the biomass share from waste from forestry, municipal waste and industry, as well as manure, slurry, used food oil and certain animal fats, can be increased for the purpose of the intended blending.

AK rejects the production of biogenic fuels as a matter of principle since, owing to the limited land available, they are in competition with foodstuff and animal feed crops and threaten biodiversity. Reference is made here to the [AK study](#) that demonstrates this issue by taking biomethane as an example.

However, the potential for the production of green hydrogen is also restricted by the limited potential for renewable electricity.

AK welcomes the fact that the proposal takes the total carbon footprint for the assessment of renewable and low-carbon fuels ("well-to-wake principle") into account and includes the mandatory use of onshore electricity supply at berths in ports.

However, the exemption of large fish processing vessels from the blending mandate should be questioned.



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About us

The Austrian Federal Chamber of Labour (AK) is by law representing the interests of about 3.8 million employees and consumers in Austria. It acts for the interests of its members in fields of social-, educational-, economical-, and consumer issues both on the national and on the EU-level in Brussels. Furthermore, the Austrian Federal Chamber of Labour is a part of the Austrian social partnership. The Austrian Federal Chamber of Labour is registered at the EU Transparency Register under the number 23869471911-54.

The main objectives of the 1991 established AK EUROPA Office in Brussels are the representation of AK vis-à-vis the European Institutions and interest groups, the monitoring of EU policies and to transfer relevant information from Brussels to Austria, as well as to lobby the in Austria developed expertise and positions of the Austrian Federal Chamber of Labour in Brussels.