

What does the new EU Clean Vehicles Directive mean for GPP?

Road transport is responsible for 73% of transport-related greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the European Union (EU), and around 20% of the EU's total GHG emissions ([source](#)), making it one of the most important areas of action in the transition to a low-carbon society. The recent amendment to the Clean Vehicles Directive, signed in June 2019, has enhanced the public sector's ability to demand clean mobility solutions in public procurement tenders, with the goal of supporting the further deployment of clean vehicles across the EU.

The Clean Vehicles Directive ([Directive 2009/33/EC](#)) was first introduced in 2009 to promote the procurement of clean and energy efficient road transport vehicles, by requiring public procurers to go beyond cost when procuring vehicles and consider fuel consumption, CO₂ emissions, and air pollutants like nitrogen oxide (NO_x), non-methane hydrocarbons (NMHC) and particulate matter (PM).

Despite actions on many fronts, however, transport remains the only sector in the EU with no significant declines in greenhouse gas (GHG) in comparison to 1990 levels. In fact, in 2016, transport GHG emissions were 25% above 1990 levels (including international aviation but excluding maritime shipping). As a result, in November 2017, the Commission presented the [Europe on the Move](#) clean mobility package, consisting of legislative proposals on vehicles and infrastructure, non-legislative measures such as an alternative fuels action plan, and a communication on low-emission mobility. The package also included a legislative proposal for a revised Clean Vehicles Directive.



One of the main developments in this revision process has been the inclusion of a new definition of 'clean vehicle', which brings the Directive into line with Europe's 2030 climate and energy targets. This includes new minimum public procurement targets for each category of vehicle and for each Member State. For light-duty vehicles, Member States must reach a share ranging from 16% to 35%, which is the same for the 2025 and for the 2030 deadlines. For buses, individual Member State targets range from 29% to 50% (2025) and from 43% to 75% (2030). Finally, for trucks, targets range from 6% to 10% (2025) and from 7% to 15% (2030).

The amended Directive ([2019/1161](#)) also includes a broadening of the scope of the Clean Vehicle Directive to include forms of procurement other than vehicle purchase, including vehicle leasing and vehicle service contracts such as transport services, mail and parcel services, and refuse collection.

Finally, the monetisation methodology introduced by the original Clean Vehicles Directive has been abolished. Evaluations by the European Commission (EC) found that the high emphasis on fuel

efficiency within the methodology without adequate consideration of air pollution, meant that a tension arose between energy efficient vehicles, in particular diesel vehicles, and the need for low air pollutant emission alternatives ([source](#)). The approach was also found to be too complex to apply within tendering, and lacked the flexibility to account for local requirements (especially with regards to air pollution).

The amended Clean Vehicle Directive entered into force on 1 August 2019, and must be transposed by Member States into national legislation by 2 August 2021. The EC estimates that it will reduce environmental costs related to CO₂ and air pollution emissions by €2.2 billion over the lifetime of the vehicles procured over the 2020-2035 period. The amendments also introduce new reporting and monitoring obligations for the Member States, requiring intermediate reporting in 2023, full reporting in 2026 on the implementation of the targets for 2025, and further reporting every further three years.

For more information on the amendment of the Clean Vehicles Directive, see [here](#).