

Volkswagen failing on climate; Renault on track to meet EU target

Brussels

25 October 2006

Three-quarters of the 20 major car brands sold in Europe last year have failed to improve fuel efficiency at the rate needed to meet a key EU climate target, new figures show.

Volkswagen, Europe's biggest car brand in terms of sales, has improved fuel efficiency at less than half the rate needed. In contrast, **Renault**, Europe's second biggest brand and a direct competitor of VW, is on track to meet the target for the average new car sold to emit 140 grams of carbon dioxide (CO₂) per kilometre by 2008. Renault reduced its emissions by twice as much as VW.

These findings come from a study by Transport & Environment (T&E), the first to track the progress of individual car brands in reducing carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions under the terms of a commitment made by the car industry to the EU in 1998-9. The deal also included an agreement not to disclose the performance of individual companies in cutting emissions.

Improving fuel efficiency of new cars is a key method of tackling climate change because the more fuel a car uses, the more CO₂ is emitted into the atmosphere.

T&E commissioned the Institute for European Environmental Policy (IEEP), UK to analyse sales data from the period 1997-2005 supplied by R.L. Polk Marketing Systems GmbH, the primary data source used by the car industry.

According to the study, 75% of carmakers are failing to cut emissions fast enough. **Nissan** is the worst performer in Europe followed by **Suzuki, Mazda, Audi, Volvo, BMW** and **Volkswagen**. These seven brands all cut emissions at less than half the rate needed to meet their commitment.

Fiat is the best performer in Europe, followed by **Citroen, Renault, Ford and Peugeot**. All five are on track to meet or exceed the target by 2008.

The study also found that **Toyota**, maker of the low-emission Prius hybrid, is failing to improve efficiency across its range at the rate needed. The study concludes that if climate targets are to be met, companies must improve efficiency across their entire range. One or two very efficient models that sell in limited numbers are not enough.

Aat Peterse of T&E said, "Renault is on track while Volkswagen is way off even though Renault started with higher emissions in 1997. Clearly the target is achievable, but as long as seventy-five percent of carmakers go unpunished for their failure, we will never make the necessary progress. Europe must kiss its voluntary targets goodbye and waste no more time in coming up with legally-binding measures to double fuel-efficiency in the next decade. Individual carmakers must be held responsible and punished if they fail."

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Notes to editors:

Ranking	Brand	2005 sales	CO ₂ emissions in g/km				% of target achieved
			1997 average	2005 average	reduction 1997 - 2005	reduction target	
1	Fiat	681,613	169	139	-30	-21	140%
2	Citroen	875,389	172	144	-28	-24	115%
3	Renault	1,361,607	173	149	-25	-25	100%
4	Ford	1,167,602	180	151	-29	-30	95%
5	Peugeot	1,049,819	177	151	-26	-28	94%
6	Opel/Vauxhall	1,262,798	180	156	-24	-30	81%
7	Toyota	704,723	189	163	-26	-35	76%
8	Kia	231,434	202	170	-32	-44	72%
9	Skoda	265,486	165	152	-13	-19	71%
10	Seat	344,693	158	150	-8	-13	63%
11	Honda	224,258	184	166	-18	-31	60%
12	Mercedes-Benz	626,824	223	185	-38	-64	59%
13	Hyundai	294,468	189	170	-19	-34	57%
14	Volkswagen	1,387,628	170	159	-11	-22	48%
15	BMW	575,087	216	192	-23	-58	40%
16	Volvo	224,415	219	195	-24	-61	39%
17	Audi	582,220	190	177	-13	-38	35%
18	Mazda	214,105	186	177	-9	-32	27%
19	Suzuki	172,941	169	165	-4	-20	22%
20	Nissan	332,742	177	172	-5	-26	20%

Source: R.L. Polk Marketing Systems GmbH

- The report 'How clean is your car brand?' can be downloaded from the T&E website at: www.transportenvironment.org
- In 1998 the European Automobile Manufacturers Association (ACEA) committed to the European Union to reduce the average CO₂ emissions of new cars sold in the (then) 15 EU Member States to 140 g/km by 2008, down from 186 g/km in 1995. Similar agreements were signed by the Japanese and Korean manufacturers' associations the following year (1999). The target year for the JAMA and KAMA associations is 2009.
- 1997 was the first year manufacturers were obliged to provide CO₂ figures based on an official EU test-cycle, following the coming-into-force of EU directive 93/116
- Only major car brands, those with sales of over 150,000 cars in 2005, were included in the T&E study.
- The voluntary commitment only applies to new vehicles sold. Overall CO₂ emissions from all cars and vans on Europe's roads have risen by 1% per year since 1990 and are responsible for 15% of Europe's CO₂ emissions.
- Having signed the voluntary commitment, the EU agreed with the car industry not to publish the performance of individual companies in cutting emissions. An unpublished memo on the monitoring process obtained by T&E contains the wording 'the Commission's official reports on the monitoring results will not refer to the individual company's (*sic*) achievements'

About T&E

T&E is Europe's principal environmental organisation campaigning specifically on transport. Together with our 44 member organisations in 20 European countries, T&E works to promote an environmentally-sound approach to transport and mobility.

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