

The Consumer Voice in Europe

# Member States' dirty Dieselgate secrets



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## Summary

Several Member States are failing to address the deep rooted problems associated with the Dieseldgate scandal and are risking derailing current efforts to reform the system of approving and checking cars in Europe.

This is the finding of a BEUC assessment into the unpublished findings of a survey of Member States' positions, by the EU Council, on type approval and market surveillance of motor vehicles:

- **Member States in slow lane:** Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Portugal, Romania, Sweden.
- **Member States in middle lane:** Belgium, Croatia, Estonia, Greece, Poland, United Kingdom.
- **Member States in fast lane:** Austria, Denmark, France, Malta, Netherlands, Spain.

### MEMBER STATES ON DIESELGATE REFORMS

Who's stepping on the gas and who's stuck in the slow lane?



## Reviewing Member State positions

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BEUC reviewed the responses given by Member States to a questionnaire conducted by the EU Council secretariat near the end of 2016. The questionnaire specifically concerned the Commission's proposal on type approval and market surveillance of motor vehicles. The results have never been published but BEUC recently managed to obtain a copy of the survey results.

The Dieselgate scandal has revealed several failures with regard to vehicle testing in the EU. In particular it has shown: a lack of EU oversight; little to no market surveillance; a lack of auditing at the national level on the implementation of EU legislation; and conflict of interests between Member States, car makers and technical services. BEUC ranked the Member States according to the way they supported or rejected four key measures to tackle these problems:

- **Strengthening EU oversight:** ensuring the European Commission has a strong role in overseeing vehicle testing and can independently test cars;
- **More market surveillance:** ensuring that there are minimum quantifiable market surveillance targets shared across Europe;
- **Auditing Member States:** ensuring that regular and robust checks are conducted on Member State authorities and technical services;
- **Avoiding conflicts of interest:** ensuring there are no conflicts with regard the financial relationships between car makers, technical services and national authorities.

Depending on the score of the Member State according to their support for the above criteria, BEUC ranked the Member States in the following way:

- **Fast lane** = Member State position is positive, meaning it would help prevent a future Dieselgate (at least 2 ticks)
- **Middle lane** = Member State position has positive and negative opinions meaning it is questionable whether it would help prevent a future Dieselgate (1 tick)
- **Slow lane** = Member State position is negative, meaning it would not help prevent a future Dieselgate (0 ticks)

## Attitudes of Member States

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	<b>Strong EU oversight</b>	<b>More market surveillance – shared across EU</b>	<b>Breaking the financial link</b>	<b>More checks on Member States</b>	<b>Ranking</b>
<b>Austria</b>	✓	?	X	✓	<b>Fast lane</b>
<b>Belgium</b>	✓	?	X	X	<b>Middle lane</b>
<b>Bulgaria</b>	X	X	X	X	<b>Slow lane</b>
<b>Croatia</b>	✓	?	X	?	<b>Middle lane</b>
<b>Cyprus</b>	X	?	X	X	<b>Slow lane</b>
<b>Czech Republic</b>	X	?	X	X	<b>Slow lane</b>
<b>Denmark</b>	✓	?	✓	✓	<b>Fast lane</b>
<b>Estonia</b>	✓	?	X	X	<b>Middle lane</b>
<b>France</b>	✓	?	X	✓	<b>Fast lane</b>
<b>Germany</b>	X	?	?	X	<b>Slow lane</b>
<b>Greece</b>	✓	?	?	X	<b>Middle lane</b>
<b>Hungary</b>	X	?	X	X	<b>Slow lane</b>
<b>Italy</b>	X	X	?	X	<b>Slow lane</b>
<b>Latvia</b>	X	X	X	X	<b>Slow lane</b>
<b>Lithuania</b>	X	X	X	X	<b>Slow lane</b>
<b>Malta</b>	✓	?	✓	✓	<b>Fast lane</b>
<b>Netherlands</b>	✓	?	X	✓	<b>Fast lane</b>
<b>Poland</b>	✓	?	X	X	<b>Middle lane</b>
<b>Portugal</b>	X	?	X	X	<b>Slow lane</b>
<b>Romania</b>	X	X	?	X	<b>Slow lane</b>
<b>Spain</b>	✓	?	X	✓	<b>Fast lane</b>
<b>Sweden</b>	X	?	X	X	<b>Slow lane</b>
<b>UK</b>	X	?	?	✓	<b>Middle lane</b>

\*No reliable information available for Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland, Ireland and Luxembourg

## Background

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In January 2016 the European Commission proposed to fundamentally reform existing EU rules surrounding type approval and market surveillance of passenger cars. BEUC conducted its own analysis of the proposal and produced a dedicated [position paper](#), backing a range of essential measures including those used as the criteria for the assessment above. If applied, such rules would go a long way to preventing a future Dieselgate scandal from happening again.

Despite the European Parliament having made great strides to develop its position (On 9<sup>th</sup> February MEPs adopted a [positive draft report](#) on the matter), European Member States have however stalled in their progress over recent months. In draft working documents published by the EU Council in 2016, it was indicated that there was [little appetite to fundamentally change the existing rules](#)

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