

**Question for oral answer O-000112/2015
to the Commission**

Rule 128

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on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group

Subject: Volkswagen's emissions fraud and the protection of EU citizens

Automobile manufacturer Volkswagen is under scrutiny for fraud on a massive scale involving the falsification of emissions test results for its cars. Volkswagen has admitted that as many as 11 million cars – and 11 million car-owners – are affected by the fraud.

This act by Volkswagen is totally shameful and unacceptable, and is a serious breach vis-à-vis both consumers and European environmental legislation. Europeans will be significantly affected as citizens, on account of the very harmful health effects of the excess air pollution, and also as consumers. As regards the falsified emissions test results in the US market, the true figures are reported to be up to 40 times the legal maximum. Volkswagen is by far the largest car manufacturer in the EU market, with a market share of around 25 %. Early analysis shows that nearly 1 million tonnes of additional annual pollution may have been caused by the falsified test results. These emissions may have a far greater impact in Europe, where almost half of passenger cars run on diesel, than in the USA. In the USA, Volkswagen will now face a series of probes and even criminal lawsuits.

The European Union stands for the protection of European citizens and consumers. However, it is in the US market that this massive fraud was revealed, which demonstrates the weak and permeable nature of the EU monitoring system. This will hamper the EU's credibility on the eve of COP 21. An immediate response and thorough investigation are now needed, encompassing all phases of car manufacturing, type-approval, retail and market surveillance processes, and all branches. The investigation should result in adequate compensation for the people and actors concerned, but also – even more importantly – in improved processes which can restore public confidence in environmental test results.

The Commission is asked to answer the following:

1. How will it proceed in order to investigate the Volkswagen affair as a matter of urgency, and the compliance of the whole European car manufacturing industry?
2. How will it tighten emissions test requirements and improve market surveillance in Europe in order to ensure that the rights and public confidence of European consumers and citizens are better safeguarded?

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