

**Question for written answer E-007803/2011  
to the Commission**

Rule 117

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Subject: 'Clocked' used vehicles

Every year millions of European consumers buy used vehicles, many of which have had their mileage 'clocked' as a means of fraudulently increasing resale value. A study<sup>1</sup> of more than a thousand vehicles exported from Belgium to France showed that 43% of them had been tampered with so as to reduce their mileage by an average of 91 000 km. The German police authorities estimate that a third of used vehicles have had their odometers tampered with.

This type of fraud has a huge impact on consumers, both financially and in terms of road safety: inflated prices are paid for vehicles which will, in many cases, cost more to maintain and repair than anticipated and which may endanger the driver and/or other road users.

The aforementioned study puts the total cost of odometer fraud at between EUR 1.5 billion and EUR 2.9 billion per year in Germany, the Netherlands, France and Luxembourg alone. For their part, the German police authorities estimate the extra costs incurred by consumers as a result of large-scale odometer fraud at EUR 5.4 billion per year in Germany alone. In 2010 the UK Office of Fair Trading arrived at a figure of GBP 580 million per year.

Some Member States – such as the Netherlands and Belgium, with its Car-Pass system – have taken action to combat odometer fraud, with some success. The level of fraud in Belgium has fallen from 8.6% of vehicles sold in 2006 to 0.2% today. However, there has not yet been any concerted action to curb this inherently cross-border problem at the EU level. At the Cars 2010 international conference<sup>2</sup>, experts from across the EU called on the Commission and Parliament to take immediate action to stop odometer fraud.

Are you aware of the scale of odometer fraud and its impact on European consumers?

What measures do you think should be taken at EU level to boost consumer protection in this area? Are you prepared to draw on the experiences and best practice of certain Member States in order to put a stop to such fraud?

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<sup>1</sup> 'Impact study of mileage fraud with used cars & Adaptability of the Car-Pass model in other EU countries', Car-Pass, October 2010.

<sup>2</sup> [www.cars2010.eu](http://www.cars2010.eu).