

Quality of petrol and diesel fuels

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This report represents a consolidation of the twelfth year of Member States' submissions under Directive 98/70/EC, summarising the quality of petrol and diesel used for road transport in the EU for 2013.

Fuel sales in the Europe: fuel sales in the EU in 2013 continue to be heavily weighted towards diesel with 243,516 million litres of diesel sold compared to 106,082 million litres of petrol sold. There is a continued reduction in consumption with 2013 being the fourth year in a row that saw a fall in sales. For petrol there is also a reduction in consumption in 2013; in fact petrol sales have continued to decline since 2004

Fuel availability 2013: in terms of fuel grades, RON 91 has almost disappeared from the market, and is only now being sold in four countries. Denmark is the only country where this fuel has any significant presence. The sale of E10 continues to be limited to only three Member States: France, Finland and Germany.

Some general points are noted:

diesel dominates the market in all but two of the 28 Member States with petrol fuels representing 57.8% share of Greek fuel sales and 60.5% of Cypriot fuel sales;

Belgium, on the other hand, has the heaviest dependence on diesel fuel with an 82.8% diesel share of the market. Above 80% of diesel share can also be found in Lithuania (82.7%), Luxembourg (82.1%) and France (81.2%).

The greatest volume of fuel sales in 2013 took place in Germany, with 19.1% total EU fuel sales. The next biggest market was France with a 14.3% share of EU petrol and diesel fuel sales. UK fuel sales totalled 12.9% of all fuel sales in the EU.

In most countries the tax rate for diesel is lower than for petrol (sometimes significantly), and this coupled with the higher efficiency of diesel vehicles (vs. petrol equivalents) and improvements to diesel cars has been a key driver in the shift to increasing diesel use in the EU.

RON 95 is by far the most popular type of petrol fuel in most Member States, followed by 95<RON.

Fuel monitoring: the monitoring of fuel quality in 2013 shows that the specifications for petrol and diesel laid down in Directive 98/70/EC are in general met with very few deviations from the relevant provisions being identified.

The report recalls, however, that Member States must establish a Fuel Quality Monitoring Systems (FQMS) in accordance with the requirements of the relevant European standard and if, an alternative fuel quality monitoring system (a national system) is used, it should ensure results of equivalent confidence. As noted in the annual report for 2012 it would appear that **some Member States were not in full compliance with these requirements**. The main issues of divergence regarded the number of samples, location of the sampling and the measurement of all necessary parameters to ensure appropriated fuel quality. The continuing divergence of some of these issues may be seen in this report.

The Commission launched and closed 20 EU Pilots during 2014, the main issues addressed being sampling procedures, the number of samples, the confidence level of national systems and incorrect

parameters being measured. The Commission was satisfied with the replies it received from the Member States. However as this exercise was conducted during 2014, the 2013 report does not reflect the improvement. The Commission expects to see the full result of these improvements in the 2014 report.

Non-compliance: in general, of the 10,095 **samples tested for petrol** in 2013, 248 were found to be out of specification with tolerance limits for one or more parameter, which represents a non-compliance rate of 2.5%. Of the 14,764 **samples tested for the six mandatory parameters for diesel** in 2013, 161 were found to be non-compliant with the specified limits, representing 1.1% of all samples reported. As cases of non-compliance are relatively rare and Member States generally take action to remove non-compliant fuel from sale, the Commission is not aware of any negative repercussions on vehicle emissions or engine functioning due to these exceedances.

The Commission urges Member States to continue to take action to ensure full compliance with the requirements of the Fuel Quality Directive.