

Quality of petrol and diesel fuels: level of sulphur

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The Conciliation Committee formally reached agreement on the joint text of the directive. The main points of the compromise package can be summarised as follows: - as from 1 January 2009, the sulphur level in any petrol or diesel fuel offered for sale in the Community must not exceed 10 mg/kg. In the case of diesel fuel for use in mobile machinery, the quality standards are to be tightened up by means of a review to be completed by 31 December 2005. The aim is to bring the quality requirements which apply to fuel for mobile machinery into line with those which apply to fuel for road vehicles by the above deadline, which the Commission will confirm or amend in the course of the 2005 review; - the Member States will be required to ensure that by the beginning of 2005 low-sulphur petrol is available on a sufficiently balanced geographical basis. The instructions which the Commission draws up for the implementation of this instrument will take account of the special conditions in the most peripheral regions; - as part of the review, account will be taken of the consequences of mixing biofuels and, for example, the impact of this on the volatility of petrol, and if necessary a proposal will be made for amending CEN standard EN 228/1999; - the Member States will be urged to promote and support the use of tax incentives at the appropriate national or Community level.