# Road transport: alternative fuels and promotion of biofuels

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The European Parliament adopted the resolution drafted by Francesco FIORI (EPP-ED, It) on the Commission communication on biofuels. Parliament pointed out that EU overall import dependency for energy is 50% and projected to rise upto 71% by 2030 if no action is taken. It welcomed the Commission's communication but stated that the objective from the outset should be the achievement of a low to zero emission transport sector. Parliament supports an EU strategy aiming at increasing the market share of alternative fuels. Biofuels represent an indigenous, CO2-neutral fuel, the promotion of which will have a positive impact on job-creation and the agricultural sector, all the more considering that rape and wheat used for the production of biofuels deliver protein-rich feedstuff as by-product. Increased use of alternative fuels must be accompanied by a careful analysis of the environmental effects of the cultivation, processing and use of raw materials. There must be clear benefits compared with the use of conventional fuels. At present, not all biofuels available on the market meet strict environmental efficiency criteria. In some cases their production is linked to high energy input and greenhouse gas emissions. Parliament went on to state that developing the use of natural gas and LPG contributes to the diversification of energy supply, as gas is distributed more evenly around the world and comes from countries whose geopolitical situation is more stable. The Commission and Member States should encourage research on both natural gas and LPG through the sixth Framework Programme. The commission needs also to develop a long-term fiscal strategy for biofuels and alternative fuels that takes into account a life-cycle approach. The basis for fiscal policy should be related to the level of emissions and the energy content, thus avoiding problems with widely differing energy content per litre or cubic metre among traditional and new fuels. Parliament disagreed with the Commission that hydrogen is only a medium to long-term option, as most of the technology is in the final stages of development. It is important to encourage, in the short and medium-term, the use of hydrogen as a motor fuel, particularly for public tnrasport until fuel cell cars come onto the market.