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## WORKING DOCUMENT

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From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Antici Group (Simplification)
Subject:	Omnibus IX (Automotive): discussion note by the Presidency (AGS on 16 February 2026)

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Delegations will find enclosed a discussion note by the Presidency for the Antici Group (Simplification) meeting on 16 February 2026 regarding both proposals for Omnibus IX (Automotive).

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## Omnibus IX (Automotive) – Presidency Steering Note

This Steering Note was prepared by the Presidency in view of the continued discussions in the Antici Group on Simplification (AGS) on the Automotive Omnibus package. It builds on the written comments submitted by Member States. The objective is to take stock of emerging views, identify key policy choices, and seek guidance from delegations to allow the Presidency to move towards the drafting phase.

### State of Play

Member States broadly welcome the overall objective of the Automotive Omnibus to simplify regulatory requirements for the automotive sector and reduce administrative burden. At the same time, many delegations have entered scrutiny reservations and stressed the need to ensure that simplification measures do not lead to legal uncertainty, uneven implementation, or unintended impacts on road safety, environmental protection, or the functioning of the internal market.

### Steering questions

The following questions are intended to steer the discussion and help identify key policy choices with a view to making progress on the file.

#### **A. Technological neutrality / tachograph and speed limiter exemption for electric vans up to 4,25 tonnes (amendment to Art 1 of Directive 92/6/EEC and to Art 13(1) of Regulation 561/2006)**

A number of Member States emphasised that simplification measures should remain technologically neutral and future-proof. Questions were raised as to whether certain provisions may de facto favour specific powertrain technologies. These questions relate to the scope of battery-propelled vehicles within the tachograph and speed limiter exemption, and to alternative zero-emission solutions in the context of the new vehicle category M1E (point D. below).

- 1) Do Member States agree that “propelled by means of electricity” should make clear that plug-in hybrid electric vans (off-vehicle charging hybrid electric vehicles) should be covered by this provision? Would Member States prefer including those vehicles into the exemption or limit the exemption only to fully electric vehicles?

- 2) Which would be the underlying reasons (for instance: aim to compensate for the battery weight; need to limit the exemption to the cases of highest benefit for the zero-emission transition; avoidance of complexity in the interest of simple and enforceable rules).

## **B. Tachograph exemption – national vs. cross-border rules**

Regulation 561/2006 foresees, from 1 July 2026, a tachograph obligation for the carriage of goods by vans between 2,5 tonnes and 3,5 tonnes in cross border transport operations or cabotage operations. Exemptions are generally limited to cases of non-commercial activity or outside of carriage for hire and reward (Article 2 (1) (aa) and Article 3 of Regulation 561/2006). Options for Member States to add national exemptions to rules on breaks and rest times are in general limited to national transport but may be agreed among Member States with cross-border application as well (Article 13). The proposal aims at an equal treatment of electric vans with their combustion engine counterparts, thus allowing extra weight up to 4,25 tonnes to account for the extra weight of batteries. However, the proposal does not intend to change tachograph obligations for carriage of goods by road in international transport operations or cabotage. It is therefore limited to “national transport” for which Member States can regulate exemptions. The impact description of the Commission expects meaningful cost savings for SMEs and microenterprises in the domestic commercial transport sector (document 17050/25 page 9).

- 1) Do Member States agree it is consistent to have stricter tachograph rules for cross-border operations, while allowing more exemptions for heavier electric vans (3,5 tonnes) used only nationally, unless otherwise agreed with other Member States?

## **C. Motorhome exemptions – individual or generalised measure**

The exemption from the tachograph obligation for large motorhomes (amendment to Article 13 of Regulation 561/2006) is a reaction to a Court case, according to which tachograph rules apply to the non-commercial carriage with motorhomes above 7,5 tonnes, where the vehicle may carry goods. The proposal would allow for national exemptions. Very large caravans were placed under the general exemptions (Article 3 of Regulation 561/2006) as because Member States had different views about the scope of the tachograph obligation and have, after the Court ruling, different views about road safety implications.

- 1) Do Member States agree with this flexible approach or do Member States consider that a fragmentation of the tachograph obligation and confusion of vehicle owners could be the consequence, even though the vehicles concerned are mainly used for tourism in Member States other than the Member State of registration?

#### **D. New M1E vehicle category**

Member States raised questions regarding the proposed M1E vehicle category, in particular the ten-year freeze of technical requirements mentioned in the explanatory memorandum. Against the background that with the Omnibus proposal, all requirements for M1 vehicles will also apply to M1E, Member States seek confirmation on whether essential obligations, such as the recording of energy consumption data and CO<sub>2</sub> labelling, would apply to vehicles in the M1E category.

Member States have shown different views concerning the definition of M1E vehicle subcategory, especially with regard to the maximum length and the powertrain.

Against the backdrop that type approval definitions are based on objective and measurable criteria, COM is invited to elaborate about possible measures to prevent manufacturer-driven classification, where vehicles could be designed primarily to benefit from flexibilities associated with the M1E category rather than reflecting genuine functional differences.

- 1) Do Member States consider it appropriate to have the definition exclusively based on maximum length or should the definition be extended to other parameters?
- 2) Do Member States consider it appropriate to extend the new vehicle subcategory from “electric” to “zero emissions” running exclusively on CO<sub>2</sub> neutral fuels?

#### **E. Euro 7 emissions testing**

Some Member States have raised concerns regarding the Euro 7 simplifications, particularly with regard to the equivalence of real-driving emissions (RDE) tests with the low-temperature laboratory test. The Commission is invited to clarify if RDE can ensure the same level of control over all relevant pollutants as the current laboratory-based tests, and how pollutants such as carbon monoxide and total hydrocarbons would be adequately addressed under the proposed framework. In this context, Member States seek guidance on how the proposed simplifications will avoid compromising

environmental protection or lead to increased emissions. Regarding heavy-duty vehicles, some Member States request a postponement of certain Euro 7 requirements, the introduction of time-limited “stop-the-clock” mechanisms. Do Member States consider that the proposed testing simplifications preserve an equivalent level of environmental protection? Would alternative approaches merit further consideration?

- 1) Do Member States consider that the proposed testing simplifications preserve a sufficient or equivalent level of environmental protection? Would alternative approaches merit further consideration?
- 2) MSs are invited to elaborate on the possible postponement of Euro 7 emissions standards for heavy duty vehicles.