

RECOMMENDATIONS ON SOCIAL LEASING OF ELECTRIC VEHICLES

INTRODUCTION

Social leasing of electric vehicles presents a significant opportunity to enhance affordability and accessibility to sustainable transport, particularly for vulnerable populations facing financial challenges. By enabling a wider segment of society to adopt EVs, these schemes can make a substantial environmental impact by reducing carbon emissions. Social leasing programmes can effectively break down barriers such as high upfront vehicle costs, offering an alternative pathway to cleaner mobility for those who might otherwise be excluded. Social leasing should be viewed as a valuable and positive component of a broader range of demand support measures to accelerate the transition to zero-emission vehicles.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Targeting the vulnerable: social leasing schemes should first and foremost aim to address the needs of vulnerable segments of the population, as well as households, businesses, and microenterprises in need of transitioning to EVs. The specific eligibility criteria should be determined by individual Member States to best reflect their local social and economic circumstances.

Second hand market: Member States could positively consider including well-defined mechanisms for second-hand EVs within social leasing schemes, offering a potentially more affordable option for the most vulnerable.

Making leasing affordable: rather than general price caps, focusing on supporting a significant percentage of the monthly leasing rate can make participation more accessible to a larger number of drivers from vulnerable backgrounds over a longer period.

Empowering vulnerable businesses: social leasing schemes should be extended to small and medium-sized businesses, including microenterprises, to support their transition to zero-emission vehicles, encompassing both light and heavy-duty vehicles where appropriate.

Sustainable and socially responsible schemes: sustainable funding mechanisms are crucial for the long-term viability of social leasing schemes, ensuring they can continue to benefit vulnerable groups without creating excessive public budget burdens.

A key part of a wider strategy: national authorities are encouraged to include social leasing schemes for vulnerable road transport users and microenterprises within their national social climate plans in the implementation of the Social Climate Fund. However, while the Social Climate Fund is an important source of funding, it is essential to explore additional financial instruments. Social leasing should be seen as a vital part of a broader EV deployment strategy

that includes a range of incentives to support all segments of society.

Easy access for all: the design of social leasing programmes must ensure easy accessibility and minimise bureaucratic hurdles to encourage broad participation from vulnerable individuals and businesses.

CONCLUSIONS

Social leasing schemes offer a valuable and positive pathway to significantly increase the adoption of EVs among households, businesses, and microenterprises, especially those in vulnerable situations, thereby strongly contributing to the EU's climate goals.

By implementing these recommendations, policymakers can develop effective and sustainable social leasing programmes that actively promote social equity and stimulate the EV market.

It is important to reiterate that social leasing is a positive tool to address transport poverty and should be a pillar of a broader strategy aimed at creating a robust market for zero-emission vehicles, ensuring that the benefits of clean mobility reach all members of society, particularly the most vulnerable.