

Osservatorio Autopromotec

PRESS RELEASE

Review of competition rules for motor vehicle sector (BER) is warming up the engine

Public consultation on review of BER to last until February 10

The European Commission has published the guidelines and the draft for the revised BER on the competition regime in the automotive sector. The current Regulation (1400/2002) is due to expire in May 2010.

Moreover, the European Commission has launched a public consultation for a revised Block Exemption Regulation. Private citizens, as well as the organizations involved in the revised regulation and public authorities are invited to submit their comments through http://ec.europa.eu/competition/consultations/2010_motor_vehicles/index.html. The submission deadline set by the European Commission is February 10. The revised draft Regulation and Guidelines can also be downloaded from the *Europa* website.

The inspiring principles behind the revised regulation are summed up in Competition Commissioner Neelie Kroes' words: "Our analysis has shown that competition is fierce as regards car sales, so we have no reason to treat this sector differently from any other. In contrast, we found the repair and maintenance market more prone to competition problems. This is why we propose to keep specific rules in this area."

The automotive aftermarket sector plays a leading role in the economy as a whole; as a matter of fact, repair and maintenance services together make up a big chunk of total consumer expenditures for motor vehicles, which in turn make up a big chunk of the average household budget. According to the Osservatorio Autopromotec (issued by the Autopromotec show, taking place in Bologna - Trade Fair Center / May 25 – 29, 2011), in Italy alone, the costs for repair and maintenance services amounted to EUR 27, 225 million in 2008.

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