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## €431 million public support approved for cleaner transport in German cities

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The European Commission has found German plans to support the retrofitting of municipal and commercial diesel vehicles to be in line with EU State aid rules. The measure should contribute to reducing nitrogen oxides emissions by 1,450 tonnes per year, while limiting distortions of competition.

Commissioner Margrethe Vestager, in charge of competition policy, said: “Tackling air pollution is one of Europe’s greatest challenges. So these three schemes provide a good incentive for vehicle operators in Germany to invest in cleaner vehicles in the most polluted German cities. This is a good example of how Member States can work to introduce measures that reduce air pollution, in line with both our rules and our common European objective of cleaner air for all.”

The three support schemes that Germany intends to set up, with an overall budget of around €431 million, will support the retrofitting of municipal and commercial vehicles (such as cleaning vehicles, garbage trucks and delivery vehicles) equipped with diesel engines. The public support will be available in over 60 municipalities (German Kommunen) where national limits for nitrogen oxides (NOx) emissions were exceeded in 2017, and will cover the costs of both **the retrofitting systems and their installation.**

The measures are part of the German Federal Government’s “Immediate Clean Air Programme for 2017-2020” (Sofortprogramm Saubere Luft 2017-2020), which aims to reduce nitrogen oxides emissions as quickly as possible.

The retrofitting will concern a large number of vehicles – in the German municipalities that will benefit from the schemes, there are currently over one million heavy and light municipal and commercial vehicles equipped with diesel engines.

The planned support for the retrofitting is expected to lead to substantial reductions of nitrogen oxides emissions in a very short period of time, improving air quality and public health, in particular in cities.

More specifically, the German authorities estimate that the retrofitting will have the following impact:

<b>Category of Vehicle</b>	<b>Expected Number of Vehicles Retrofitted</b>	<b>Expected Annual NO<sub>x</sub> Reduction</b>
Heavy Municipal (>3.5 tonnes)	8,120	750 tonnes
Heavy Commercial (3.5-7.5 tonnes )	20,000	400 tonnes
Light Municipal and Commercial (2.8-3.5 tonnes)	84,000	300 tonnes

The measures are also in line with the Commission's 2018 Communication on "A Europe that protects: Clean air for all", which states that, under EU State aid rules, Member States may facilitate investments in low and zero emission mobility for the benefit of clean air, while promoting the competitiveness of our industry. Member States can make use of these rules at national, regional or local level to effectively tackle emissions, for example from road transport.

On this basis, the Commission approved the measures under EU State aid rules, because they contribute to EU environmental goals without unduly distorting competition.