

PRESS RELEASE

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EMTA and IRU call for workable Buy European rules for electric buses

European Metropolitan Transport Authorities (EMTA) and International Road Transport Union (IRU) are urging the Irish Presidency and Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) to fix key provisions in the Industrial Accelerator Act's proposed "Buy European" rules for electric vehicles, warning that the current approach risks forcing working electric buses off the road and penalising public transport operators and authorities who bought them in good faith.

Proposed by the European Commission in March 2026, the Industrial Accelerator Act aims to strengthen Europe's industrial base by boosting demand for European-made and low-carbon products. Its proposed "Made in EU" and low-carbon requirements for public procurement and public support schemes would directly affect which electric buses public transport authorities and operators can buy and deploy when public funding is involved.

In a joint message, IRU and EMTA bring together the voices of transport operators and metropolitan transport authorities, calling for three practical changes: protecting electric buses already purchased and registered for their full operational lifetime; harmonising derogations across procurement and support schemes and protecting operators and authorities from costs linked to manufacturers' delivery failures outside their control.

IRU EU Advocacy Director Raluca Marian said, "IRU supports efforts to strengthen European manufacturing.

But the rules need to reflect market realities and give operators the confidence to keep investing in the transition."

The letter calls for non-Union-origin vehicles purchased and registered before the Regulation enters into force to remain eligible for public service contracts for their full operational lifetime, including beyond 2035, so that fully functional electric buses are not withdrawn prematurely.

EMTA Secretary General Thomas Geier said, "Europe's transport authorities have invested heavily in decarbonisation of their public transport networks with electric buses.

We need our European bus industry and support efforts to strengthen European manufacturing. At the same time, we cannot afford to let clean, publicly funded and perfectly fine buses go to waste. That is why we need the certainty that existing sustainable fleets can remain in public transport service throughout their full lifespan."



The organisations also call for the derogations for public procurement and public support schemes to be harmonised, since the same vehicle or bid can currently qualify under one instrument but not the other, creating unnecessary administrative burden.

They further ask for stronger protection for operators and authorities against manufacturers' delivery failures, so that penalties and costs arising from delays outside operators' control can be passed on to the responsible manufacturer or supplier.

“A successful Buy European framework must work for the entire value chain,” said Raluca Marian.

“Clear rules, protection for existing investments and a fair sharing of responsibilities will help strengthen European manufacturing while giving operators and authorities the confidence to continue investing in the green transition.”

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