

Dear Sir/Madam,

The way to reduce fuel consumption, CO2 emissions, danger and noise from cars is to reduce their power and weight.

In 1991 and again in 1993 the ECMT stressed the need for power to be reduced. In 1993 the European Transport Safety Council pointed out the absurdity of building cars capable of speeds far in excess of almost all national speed limits. Neither the ECMT nor the ETSC mentioned weight, but other people have done so, and weight is crucial both to danger and to fuel consumption. But in fact both the average weight and the average speed of new cars sold in western Europe has increased steadily since those days.

This shows that the necessary changes will not come about simply through the market as presently constituted. Governmental intervention is required. For each of (say) five sizes of car, with size defined in terms of carrying capacity, the EU should set an upper limit on weight and CO2 emissions. Taxes should be used to discourage people from buying a car larger than they need, and within any size of car to keep as far below the permitted maxima as their circumstances allow.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen Plowden

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