

Car ads must back choices in France

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Car advertisements in France must include messages motivating people to think about less-polluting travel alternatives from 2022 as part of the government's drive to rein in carbon emissions.

Carmakers will have three choices: "Consider carpooling," "For day-to-day use, take public transportation," or "For short trips, opt for walking or cycling."

The ads will also have to include a vehicle's CO2 emission class, a new ranking system to inform consumers about the environmental impact that is part of a widespread climate action law approved by lawmakers in July.

So far automakers appear ready to comply, if not enthusiastically.

"It means that overall, we have to find alternatives to the automobile. It's the first time we've had such a direct message from the government," Lionel French Keogh, the head of Hyundai France, told AFP.

"We are going to adapt -- moving toward zero-emission vehicles is the course of history," he added.

"But there is an irony: they make no distinction between the type of motorisation. It's a bit counterproductive to the government's aim of promoting electric vehicles," he said.

Volkswagen, the third-biggest car seller in France, after Stellantis and Renault, said "We will comply with the legislation and analyse how best to comply with our advertising agency."

As part of the new French law, advertising for the most polluting vehicles -- those that emit more than 123 grammes of carbon dioxide per kilometre, including many

popular SUVs -- will be completely outlawed from 2028.