

German court opens way for diesel case against Daimler

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Mercedes-Benz C-Class cars are among those targeted by a possible collective legal action in Germany related to disputed diesel emission data

A German court said Friday it had opened the way for shareholders to join a collective legal action against Mercedes-Benz parent Daimler for diesel cheating that mirrors one already brought against VW.

Multiple shareholders in the luxury carmaker argue that their investment was harmed by the "dieselgate" scandal and that they deserve compensation as a result.

Now a Stuttgart tribunal has called for a so-called "model case" that would test questions common to the claims, in the German legal system's closest analogue to a class-action lawsuit.

In a statement, plaintiffs' lawyer Andreas Tilp said that Daimler should have "informed [financial markets](#) about the risks arising from the use of illegal software in its diesel cars" as early as 2012.

A Daimler spokesman told AFP: "We believe this case is baseless and we will contest it with all the legal means at our disposal".

The Stuttgart-based manufacturer has consistently disputed claims that it manipulated its motors to appear less polluting in the lab than in real driving conditions.

Volkswagen admitted in 2015 to such practices affecting 11 million cars worldwide, with the subsequent "dieselgate" scandal costing it tens of billions in fines, compensation and buybacks.

The German transport ministry in June ordered Daimler to recall 774,000 Mercedes vehicles found to contain software capable of deceiving [emissions tests](#).

Most were Vito vans, GLC-class SUVs and C-class sedans.

Since 2015, several German prosecutors' offices have opened cases against VW and its subsidiaries Audi and Porsche, along with Daimler, Opel and parts maker Bosch on suspicion of fraud, stock market manipulation or false advertising.

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