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DRAFT REPORT

On Saving Lives: Boosting Car Safety in the EU
(2017/2085(INI))

Committee on Transport and Tourism

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MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

on Saving Lives: Boosting Car Safety in the EU (2017/2085(INI))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission report entitled ‘Saving Lives: Boosting Car Safety in the EU – Reporting on the monitoring and assessment of advanced vehicle safety features, their cost effectiveness and feasibility for the review of the regulations on general vehicle safety and on the protection of pedestrians and other vulnerable road users’ (COM(2016)0787) and to the Commission staff working document (SWD(2016)0431),
- having regard to Regulation (EC) No 661/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 July 2009 concerning type-approval requirements for the general safety of motor vehicles, their trailers and systems, components and separate technical units intended therefor¹,
- having regard to Regulation (EC) No 78/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 January 2009 on the type-approval of motor vehicles with regard to the protection of pedestrians and other vulnerable road users, amending Directive 2007/46/EC and repealing Directives 2003/102/EC and 2005/66/EC²,
- having regard to Directive 2014/47/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 3 April 2014 on the technical roadside inspection of the roadworthiness of commercial vehicles circulating in the Union and repealing Directive 2000/30/EC³,
- having regard to Directive (EU) 2015/413 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2015 facilitating cross-border exchange of information on road-safety-related traffic offences⁴,
- having regard to Directive (EU) 2015/719 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2015 amending Council Directive 96/53/EC laying down for certain road vehicles circulating within the Community the maximum authorised dimensions in national and international traffic and the maximum authorised weights in international traffic⁵,
- having regard to its resolution of 9 September 2015 on ‘The implementation of the 2011 White Paper on Transport: taking stock and the way forward towards sustainable mobility’⁶,
- having regard to its resolution of 3 July 2013 on ‘Road safety 2011-2020 – First

¹ OJ L 200, 31.7.2009, p. 1.

² OJ L 35, 4.2.2009, p. 1.

³ OJ L 127, 29.4.2014, p. 134.

⁴ OJ L 68, 13.3.2015, p. 9.

⁵ OJ L 115, 6.5.2015, p. 1.

⁶ Text adopted, P8_TA(2015)0310

- milestones towards an injury strategy'¹,
- having regard to its resolution of 27 September 2011 on European road safety 2011-2020²,
 - having regard to its resolution of 15 December 2011 on ‘the Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area – Towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system’³,
 - having regard to the Commission communication entitled ‘A European strategy on Cooperative Intelligent Transport Systems, a milestone towards cooperative, connected and automated mobility’ (COM(2016)0766),
 - having regard to the Commission communication entitled ‘Towards a European road safety area: policy orientations on road safety 2011-2020’ (COM(2010)0389),
 - having regard to the Commission communication entitled ‘CARS 2020: Action Plan for a competitive and sustainable automotive industry in Europe’ (COM(2012)0636),
 - having regard to the Commission White Paper entitled ‘Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area – Towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system’ (COM(2011)0144),
 - having regard to the Commission report entitled ‘Benefit and feasibility of a range of new technologies and unregulated measures in the field of vehicle occupant safety and protection of vulnerable road users’ drawn up by the Transport Research Laboratory and published on 31.3.2015,
 - having regard to the Commission staff working document entitled ‘On the implementation of objective 6 of the European Commission’s policy orientations on road safety 2011-2020 – First milestone towards an injury strategy’ (SWD(2013)0094),
 - having regard to the Council Conclusions of 8 June 2017 on road safety in support of the Valletta Declaration of March 2017,
 - having regard to United Nations General Assembly resolution 70/260 of 15 April 2016 entitled ‘Improving Global Road Safety’,
 - having regard to Rule 52 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Transport and Tourism and the opinion of the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection (A8-0000/2017),
- A. whereas every year around 25 500 people die on Europe’s roads and some 135 000 people are seriously injured, so that more – and more effective – measures are needed if the goal of ‘no fatalities’ is to be achieved;

¹ OJ C 75, 26.2.2016, p. 49.

² OJ C 56E, 26.2.2013, p. 54.

³ OJ C 168E, 14.6.2013, p. 72.

- B. whereas the installation of driver assistance systems in vehicles for persons of restricted mobility and the elderly enables their safe, active participation in road traffic;
- C. whereas the move towards completely driver-free vehicles is progressing rapidly, so that a review of the General Safety Regulation needs to be submitted by the Commission no later than January 2018;

General desiderata

1. Stresses that Member States should conduct efficient checks on road traffic, as the main causes of accidents, at present as in the past, are inappropriate and excessive speed, distraction and driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, and therefore calls on:
 - (a) the Commission to set a percentage for the numbers of vehicles of classes M1 and N1 to be checked, and
 - (b) the Member States to step up exchanges of tried and tested procedures, particularly regarding smart enforcement strategies, and to introduce penalties which will act as a deterrent;
2. Calls for a harmonised EU blood alcohol concentration limit of 0.0% for new drivers in the first two years and for professional drivers;
3. Calls on Member States to improve their road infrastructure significantly by means of regular maintenance and innovative measures;
4. Observes that nearly half of all pedestrians and cyclists killed on the roads are aged over 65, and calls on Member States to make it possible for older people to use the roads safely by developing programmes to avert age-specific risks of accidents;
5. Observes that, in 43% of cases, fatal road accidents in urban areas occur to pedestrians and cyclists, and calls on Member States to take greater account of the more vulnerable road users in building and maintaining roads, for example by building more cycle paths, or expanding them;
6. Observes that relatively fast e-bikes and also electric unicycles are becoming increasingly popular, and calls on the Commission therefore to examine the safety requirements for them without delay and to make proposals relating to safety, taking due account of subsidiarity;

Driver assistance systems to increase road safety

7. Stresses that some 95% of all accidents are due to human error and that therefore it should be compulsory to incorporate driver assistance systems which promote safety, a requirement that should apply only to those driver assistance systems which improve road safety significantly, as demonstrated by scientific evidence, which have a favourable cost-benefit ratio and which have attained market maturity.
8. Calls on manufacturers:

- (a) to make it clear to drivers what the activation status of each driver assistance system is,
 - (b) where systems can be switched off, to introduce two-stage deactivation systems, such that the driver can initially merely switch off the warning signal and can only deactivate the system itself by means of a second procedure, and
 - (c) to ensure that, each time a vehicle is started afresh, the driver assistance system is restored to active status;
9. Stresses that warnings should be sufficiently distinct from one another to make it intuitively clear to which system the assistance pertains, and that warnings should moreover also be easy to perceive for older persons and persons with limited mobility; calls therefore on the parties concerned to adopt appropriate uniform standards;
10. Encourages the European New Car Assessment Programme to be more ambitious in assessing the safety of new vehicles than the statutory minimum requirements compel it to, in order to promote yet further the development of vehicles with high road safety standards;
11. Calls on the Commission to coordinate the adoption of standards with the UNECE so as to achieve international consistency and at the same time limit to a minimum exemptions from the requirement to install driver assistance systems, in order to improve road safety across the board;
12. Calls on the Commission to investigate the involvement of special-purpose vehicles in urban accidents and, if necessary, to abolish the existing exemptions from the requirement to install driver assistance systems;
13. Calls for incentives for measures to promote road safety based on insurance or taxation aspects, such as the installation of additional safety-relevant driver assistance systems or driver training;
14. Calls on the Commission and market operators to arrange for open standards and interfaces so that no systems peculiar to a single manufacturer limit interoperability and so that independent tests are possible thanks to access to the relevant vehicle and system data, including updates to them;
15. Stresses that a high level of data protection as required by the General Data Protection Regulation and by the right to protection of privacy and personal data should be ensured, as should high IT security, so that the possibility of new accident risks due to remote manipulation of on-board systems or conflicts of compatibility is excluded;

Safety measures for accident prevention

16. Calls on the Commission to make it compulsory to install automatic emergency braking assistants with cyclist and pedestrian recognition in cars, light commercial vehicles, buses, coaches and heavy goods vehicles, as they have strong potential to prevent accidents due to autonomous powerful braking and the resultant shorter stopping distance;

17. Stresses that, in order to improve road safety, the deceleration of vehicles should be rendered easier for other road users to perceive by means of clear signal lights on vehicles, and expects the compulsory use of an emergency braking indicator in the form of a winking brake light;
18. Calls for the compulsory installation of overridable intelligent assistants to indicate speed limits, and calls on Member States to ensure that road signs are kept in excellent condition, and that road markings are clearly legible;
19. Stresses that, due to its relevance to road safety, a lane departure warning system that not only warns but also actively intervenes, albeit without preventing drivers from acting directly, should be made compulsory;
20. Emphasises that increasing the immediate field of vision in heavy goods vehicles, buses and coaches, and reducing the blind spot can help significantly to improve the road safety of such vehicles, and calls on the Commission to make it compulsory to install cameras and turning assistant systems, while observing that such measures should accord with Directive (EU) 2015/719 and should not result in any extension of the time limits for implementation laid down there;
21. Stresses that devices to operate alcohol-sensitive immobilisers and systems to recognise the state of the driver should be provided, and recommends the use of alcohol interlocks for drivers who have been convicted of drunk driving, as a rehabilitation measure;

Safety measures to mitigate the effects of accidents

22. Observes that tyre pressure has significant implications for road safety and fuel consumption, and calls therefore on the Commission to make it compulsory to install tyre pressure monitoring systems, which should come with a safety net that should be able to recognise and alert drivers at least to a critical air pressure of less than 1.5 bar;
23. Considers it necessary to make it compulsory to install seatbelt reminder systems for back seats too;
24. Calls on the Commission, from 2019, to extend the eCall installation requirement to motorcycles, heavy goods vehicles and buses and coaches;
25. Calls for accurate, reliable EU-wide accident statistics, including statistics on the causes of accidents and listing of injuries and accident victims, and observes that an accident database could be very helpful in this connection, in which context the data must be kept anonymous and used only for purposes of accident research;
26. Calls for compulsory frontal, side and rear-end crash tests for
 - (a) all-terrain vehicles (SUVs) with raised seats and a maximum weight of more than 2 500 kg,
 - (b) electrically propelled vehicles and vehicles with other new propulsion technologies;

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27. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments and parliaments of the Member States.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

We are still far from meeting the target of halving the number of road accident victims by 2020 and achieving the Vision Zero goal of no road fatalities in Europe by 2050. It is true that we are on the right track. Europe's roads have not only become safer, they have long been the safest in the world! Nevertheless, around 25 500 people die on Europe's roads every year and some 135 000 people are seriously injured.

Given that road safety depends on the vehicle, the infrastructure and the driver, efficient active and passive safety measures are needed at all three levels.

Measures to increase road safety

The **infrastructure factor** is crucial. In particular, more account should be taken of vulnerable road users in the construction and maintenance of roads. A staggering 43 % of fatal road accident victims in urban areas are pedestrians and cyclists. **The separation of transport modes and the construction and development of cycle paths** are solutions on which the Member States should focus more. Moreover, **driver assistance systems function only in conjunction with a well-developed and maintained infrastructure**. This means, inter alia, that **road signs must be clearly legible and road markings must be easy to identify**.

However, the human factor is also highly significant, and the rapporteur therefore considers it important to oblige Member States to conduct **more checks on road traffic** to improve road safety. Percentages of vehicles to be checked have already been set for certain vehicle categories (e.g. M2, M3, N2, N3), and the Commission should also consider similar action for M1 and N2 vehicles.

It is also essential to ensure improved availability of accident statistics and databases. Existing statistics and databases are very patchy. It would be useful to list the causes of accidents, injuries and accident victims, as they are an important source of information for research and development of safety measures.

Mandatory installation of safety-related driver assistance systems

The vehicle factor is fundamental for road safety. The fact that car occupants account for 45 % of fatalities, while **around 95 % of all accidents are caused by human error such as the driver not being fit to drive, overload, miscalculation and distraction**, leads to the conclusion that a legislative obligation to install safety-related driver assistance systems is urgently needed.

Driver safety systems make a key contribution to improving and correcting behaviour conducive to human error and thereby play an essential role in improving road safety. As well as avoiding human error and traffic accidents, driver assistance systems can reduce fuel/energy consumption and optimise traffic flows.

The emphasis on vehicle safety also has an influence on research, development and innovation in Europe and helps create jobs. Moreover, the mandatory installation of driver assistance systems will pave the way for automated and ultimately autonomous driving, since this has long since ceased to be a vision for the distant future. This is a win-win situation which we need to shape wisely.

We can shape the legislation wisely **only if the revision of Regulation 661/2009 is not further delayed and the Commission submits a corresponding proposal by the beginning of 2018**. This will make it possible to take a further significant step towards improving road safety.

We can also shape the legislation wisely only if we do not see it as a general wish list for the installation of driver assistance systems. The rapporteur takes the view that it should be compulsory to install only those driver assistance systems which make a genuine contribution to road safety, which have a favourable cost-benefit ratio and which have attained market maturity, and which therefore rarely give false alarms. In the rapporteur's view, this applies to the following driver assistance systems as active and passive safety measures:

- automatic emergency braking systems with pedestrian and cyclist detection
- emergency braking display
- smart assistance linked to the speed-limit display
- lane-keeping assistance
- turning assistance and cameras for heavy goods vehicles to reduce blind spots
- tyre pressure monitoring systems
- seatbelt reminders for rear seats
- eCall for motorcycles.

Virtually all manufacturers now offer driver assistance packages and around a quarter of all new cars are equipped with one or more driver assistance systems, but conversely this means that three quarters of vehicles do not have any driver assistance systems apart from those prescribed by law. The reason is no doubt the extra cost of driver assistance systems. The rapporteur is of the opinion that road safety should not be a question of money and therefore all drivers should benefit from safety-related driver assistance systems. As a matter of principle, road safety should not depend on EU citizens' wallets.

Arguments to the effect that the price of new vehicles will shoot up as a result of the mandatory installation of driver assistance systems can be countered by the fact that the bundling of technologies, such as the simultaneous use of cameras for intelligent assistance to indicate speed limits and for lane keeping assistance, combined with the high volume of components produced, means that prices will not increase significantly.

In addition, we can shape legislation wisely by ensuring that it lays down specific rules and timeframes that will make realistic implementation possible and thus provide planning certainty for the industry. This, however, is a task that should be carried out as part of the revision of the legislation itself, and these specific rules therefore fall outside the scope of this own-initiative report.