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Mid Term Review

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60. Calls on the Member States to commit themselves once more to the principle that the criteria of the Code of Conduct will not be compromised in the pursuit of broader foreign policy objectives;

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61. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the UN Secretary-General and the President of the UNGA.

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European Road Safety Action Programme — Mid-Term Review

European Parliament resolution on European Road Safety Action Programme — mid-term review (2006/2112(INI))

The European Parliament,

— having regard to the Commission White Paper entitled 'European transport policy for 2010: time to decide' (COM(2001)0370), and its resolution of 12 February 2003 thereon [1],

— having regard to the Communication from the Commission entitled 'Information and Communications Technologies for Safe and Intelligent Vehicles' (COM(2003)0542),

— having regard to the Communication from the Commission entitled 'European Road Safety Action Programme: Halving the number of road accident victims in the European Union by 2010: A shared responsibility' (COM(2003)0311), and its resolution of 29 September 2005 thereon [2], and the Commission publication entitled 'Saving 20 000 lives on our roads' of October 2004,

— having regard to the Commission Recommendation 2004/345/EC of 6 April 2004 on enforcement in the field of road safety [3],

— having regard to the Verona Declaration on Road Safety of 24 October 2003 as well as the conclusions on the Second Verona Conference held on 25 and 26 October 2004 and the subsequent commitment given by EU transport ministers to regard road safety as a priority,

— having regard to the European Road Safety Charter launched on 29 January 2004,

— having regard to the Communication from the Commission entitled 'European Road Safety Action Programme — Mid-Term Review' (COM(2006)0074),

— having regard to the announcement by the US National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) that electronic stability systems (ESP/ESC) will become mandatory standard equipment in the USA for all new cars with effect from September 2011,

— having regard to Rule 45 of its Rules of Procedure,

— having regard to the report of the Committee on Transport and Tourism (A6-0449/2006),

A. whereas more than 40 000 deaths are caused by road traffic accidents each year in the European Union, the direct and indirect costs of which are estimated at EUR 180 000 000 000, or 2 % of EU GDP,

B. whereas the target of halving the number of road fatalities in the European Union by 2010 remains a priority, and failure to make the necessary progress towards reaching that figure is a cause for concern,

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(1) OJ C 43 E, 19.2.2004, p. 250.
(2) OJ C 227 E, 21.9.2006, p. 609.
(3) OJ L 111, 17.4.2004, p. 75.

C. whereas insufficient progress is being made to achieve this target across the European Union,

D. whereas Parliament continues to be of the view that road safety is a shared responsibility of the Member States and the European Union,

E. whereas World Health Organization Europe has highlighted the scale of the health problem that road death and injury present and views as priorities the need to engage the health sector in road safety and reducing speeding, a matter which, however, falls within the Member States' sphere of competence,

F. whereas the disparity between those Member States with a poor road safety record and those with a better record continues to widen,

G. whereas road safety has a horizontal dimension and, in order to meet the target of increasing such safety to the greatest possible extent, it is now necessary to concentrate, as areas of the greatest priority, on a number of policies which aim to achieve more effective implementation of legislation (seat belts, speed limits, observance of the highway code), improved driving standards (driving licences, driver behaviour, respect for pedestrians), improved infrastructure (quality of motorways and road networks, traffic lanes, traffic signs), improved vehicles (periodic checks, models) and sharing of best practice,

H. whereas improving standards of driving across the European Union will be most effectively facilitated in the short term through the enforcement of Member States' traffic laws, particularly as regards speeding and drink-driving offences and the requirement to use seat belts and child-restraint systems,

I. whereas vehicles are now four times safer than they were in 1970,

J. whereas an increasing number of motorcyclists are killed as a proportion of total road deaths,

K. whereas road centre barriers significantly reduce the number of road deaths,

L. whereas in October 2006 the Commission launched the 4-year DRUID research project to investigate the effects of driving under the influence of alcohol, drugs and medicines,

M. whereas, in connection with the introduction of life-saving safety systems, Member States should be no less ambitious than other countries,

1. Calls for a higher level of political commitment to road safety across the European Union by all Member States, by regional and local authorities and EU institutions and by industry, organisations and individuals;

2. Considers that only an integrated systems approach involving all road users and stakeholders, on the basis of efforts to promote public transport and more effective lawmaking in the Member States, combined with adequate monitoring of road users in the Member States (driving licence checks, breathalyser tests, etc.), can lead to significant and sustainable reductions in the number of serious road accidents;

3. Recalls that the ambitious objectives that the European Union has set out cannot be attained without taking into account the essential character of education and enforcement of present legislation in Member States; urges the Member States, therefore, to further emphasise and generalise their information policies and increase public awareness of road safety for all users, of all ages; calls on the Member States also to fully apply, without exception, the legislation in force at present, compliance with which by road users will bring about a significant improvement in road safety;

4. Welcomes the Commission's proposal for a directive on road infrastructure safety management (COM(2006)0569), which could reduce fatalities by between 12 and 16 %, and its proposal for a directive on the retrofitting of mirrors to heavy goods vehicles registered in the Community (COM(2006)0570) concerning the use of blind-spot mirrors;

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5. Calls on the Commission to present as soon as possible its promised proposals on issues such as cross-border enforcement, daytime-running lights, application of the existing measures and regulations in the field of road safety, the use of rear reflector strips to indicate the outlines of lorries and the use of installed and retrofitted blind-spot mirrors and/or new systems to monitor the blind spot;

6. Considers it particularly important, with a view to combating cross-border driving offences, that it be possible to enforce the law on speeding, failure to wear a seat belt and drink-driving in an effective manner so that significant penalties are imposed irrespective of whether the offence is committed in the offender's own country or in another Member State;

7. Reminds the Commission of its intention to consider the provision of user-friendly and up-to-date information about the traffic sign systems used in the Member States via an internet website available in all official EU languages;

8. Emphasises the need to harmonise road traffic rules and signs since, for example, differing priority rules at roundabouts can cause accidents;

9. Calls on the Commission, since unclear or inconsistent road signs cause unnecessary risks for road safety, and considering the provisions of the Vienna Convention on Road Signs, to put forward a study on harmonisation of road signs in Europe as a means to improve road safety;

10. Calls on the Commission, considering the high number of accidents and deaths at roadwork zones, to develop common guidelines on the requirements for safe roadwork zones based on identification and exchange of best practices;

11. Considers that the Commission should promote EU-funded twinning projects between new and old Member States with a view to speeding up positive developments in road safety;

12. Considers that the Commission should encourage the presence of participants from both new and old Member States in its working parties;

13. Calls on the Commission to evaluate the European Road Safety Charter;

14. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to actively compare and coordinate the results achieved by the Member States in the field of road safety so that, by following best practice, all Member States can benefit from their positive experiences and thus hasten positive developments in this area;

15. Calls on the Commission to recognise the importance of independent pan-European benchmarking assessment programmes in supporting a more uniform application of EU legislation affecting road safety, which stimulate competition among stakeholders responsible for ensuring a safe road environment (e.g. EuroTAP, EuroNCAP);

16. Calls on the Member States to consider introducing a zero alcohol limit for new drivers and professional commercial vehicle and bus drivers involved in passenger transport and, for example, in the transport of hazardous goods;

17. Draws attention to the possibility of laying down minimum active and passive security requirements for all vehicles and harmonising the technical rules on road signs throughout the European Union;

18. Considers that driving under the influence of drugs is a serious problem which needs to be combated and that the Member States and the Commission should invest more resources in researching and combating such offences;

19. Considers that rules on health and safety at work should apply in cases where the vehicle is a mobile place of work;

20. Calls on the Commission to investigate the influence of the use of communication devices in vehicles on driver behaviour and road safety;

21. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to step up their efforts to ensure that the use of seat belts is increased in all vehicles, especially buses;

22. Calls on the Member States to extend — as far as possible — the ban on overtaking for vehicles weighing in excess of 12 tonnes to all one- and two-lane roads;

23. Invites the Commission to recommend that Member States establish and maintain adequate rest facilities which meet the criteria of the European social partners in order to ensure safer infrastructure facilities for breaks while driving;

24. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to create incentives for purchasers or leasers of fleets of vehicles to buy or lease the best vehicles the market has to offer in terms of safety and environmental impact and for car producers to develop vehicles that are safer and environmentally more efficient;

25. Is convinced that insurance companies can play a crucial role in the observance of road safety legislation and labour legislation in the road transport sector, e.g. by setting differential premiums;

26. Calls on the Member States to ensure that incentives are not confined to the latest technologies for reducing emissions, but also cover significant safety features (emergency brake assistants, lane departure warning systems, adaptive cruise control systems, shock absorber control systems, etc.);

27. Calls on the Commission to investigate the effects of tiredness and exhaustion on drivers in order to reduce the frequency of accidents which they cause, both among private motorists and, from a health and safety at work perspective, for those who use vehicles in their work;

28. Calls on the Commission to start an information campaign at European level against tiredness while driving in order to promote the need for drivers to stop driving every two hours in any journey, as has already been done in several Member States;

29. Is of the view that, out of the vast selection of technologies available, the following solutions should receive particular attention: seat belt reminders and advanced restraint systems, Electronic Stability Control (ESC), speed limiters, alcohol interlocks, predictive safety systems (emergency brake assistant, adaptive cruise control, lane departure warning system, ultrasound blind-spot monitor, shock absorber control system) and eCall;

30. Calls on the Member States to sign the joint statement of intent concerning the eCall system by June 2007;

31. Considers that Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) should be adapted for older drivers;

32. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to encourage EuroNCAP to introduce tests for whiplash protection and for active technical systems such as ESP/ESC emergency braking, driver support (e.g. alcohol interlocks), adaptive cruise control and lane departure warning;

33. Calls on the Commission to expressly include the safety of motorcyclists in infrastructure guidelines, especially regarding motorcycle-friendly crash barriers on European roads;

34. Considers that one important measure the Commission should examine is the creation of a common minimum standard for driving instructors, to include testing and certification;

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35. Calls on the Member States to draw up an action plan for training and education in road safety to be applied throughout the school curriculum (from age 3 to 18) and in all schools in the Union; advocates also the drawing up of standards for the training and security measures that are needed if there are to be supervised practice sessions for learner drivers from the age of 16;

36. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to introduce uniform rules throughout the European Union governing compulsory regular technical safety checks of all motor vehicles;

37. Invites the Commission and the Member States to propose measures based on an evaluation of the awareness of the single European emergency call number 112 and implementation of E112 by all Member States in order to improve the situation in the European Union;

38. Stresses that the eCall system has the potential to reduce accident response times by about 40 % in urban areas and about 50 % in rural areas, and calls on all the Member States to promote its implementation as soon as possible;

39. Calls on the Commission to work towards a European system for the investigation of road accidents, in order to facilitate comparisons and make it possible to work more effectively to prevent them;

40. Calls on the Commission, the Member States and their regional authorities to pay particular attention to the protection and safety of vulnerable road users such as pedestrians, cyclists and motor-cyclists;

41. Stresses that the Member States should systematically take into account the safety of all road users and accident prevention when designing, building and maintaining roads and other infrastructure measures;

42. Calls on the Commission to encourage the use of rear-facing child seats for children up to the ages of 3-4, in accordance with a study on child safety in cars (rapport 489A) conducted by the Swedish National Road and Transport Research Institute (VTI);

43. Calls on the Commission and, in particular, the Member States to investigate the road safety situation for people with disabilities; considers it important for professional passenger drivers, taxi drivers for example, to be properly trained in securing wheelchairs, etc.;

44. Calls on the Commission to analyse the needs of people with disabilities in terms of their active, independent participation in road transport and to lay down rules which ensure that people with disabilities do not suffer discrimination when applying for a driving licence;

45. Considers that technologies such as telematics offer, in the long term, the possibility of significantly reducing the number of fatal accidents; calls, therefore, for intensive research and cooperation between all stakeholders in order to promote the speedy introduction of the most promising technologies without, however, neglecting road safety education;

46. Considers that the use of information and communication technologies in connection with road infrastructure is bringing about considerable improvements in the management of the trans-European transport networks (TEN-T) and road safety; calls on the Commission and the Member States to continue their action in this area by setting up a European programme for the deployment of intelligent road traffic management systems;

47. Calls on the Commission to pay particular attention to the technical safety of vehicles; emphasises that, before 2010, consideration must be given to further developing the relevant legislation and, in that connection, the testing of electronic vehicle safety systems (e-safety systems), a uniform system of annual checks on vehicles over eight years old and special checks on vehicles which have been involved in serious accidents have a particularly important role to play in further improving safety on Europe's roads;

48. Invites the Commission and Eurostat to improve statistics on road accidents e.g. by

— basing them, in addition, on age and gender,

— better inclusion of actual numbers of vulnerable road accident victims, such as pedestrians and cyclists,

— harmonising criteria for by road accident fatalities, based on periods of survival after the accident;

49. Calls on the Commission to develop a long-term road safety strategy beyond 2010 and setting out the steps required for the avoidance of all fatalities and serious injuries caused by road accidents ('Vision Zero');

50. Calls on the Member States to acknowledge the dangers inherent in driving vehicles, in particular commercial vehicles, with snow and ice on their roofs and, on that basis, to draw up recommendations for the establishment of a comprehensive network of 'snow removal areas' and to consider and/or support technical alternatives;

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

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Equality between men and women in the committees' work

European Parliament resolution on gender mainstreaming in the work of the committees (2005/2149(INI))

The European Parliament,

— having regard to Article 2, Article 3(2), Article 13 and Article 141(4) of the EC Treaty,

— having regard to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the revised European Social Charter and the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights,

— having regard to the work of the Council of Europe's Directorate for Human Rights, and in particular of the Council of Europe's Steering Committee for Equality between Women and Men,

— having regard to the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in September 1995, the Declaration and the Platform for Action adopted in Beijing and the documents adopted at the subsequent United Nations Beijing +5 and Beijing +10 special sessions on further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action, adopted respectively on 9 June 2000 and 11 March 2005,

— having regard to Directive 2002/73/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2002 amending Council Directive 76/207/EEC on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women as regards access to employment, vocational training and promotion, and working conditions [1],

— having regard to its resolution of 13 March 2003 on gender mainstreaming in the European Parliament [2],

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[1] OJ L 269, 5.10.2002, p. 15.
[2] OJ C 61 E, 10.3.2004, p. 384.