

(English version)

Question for written answer E-008874/16
to the Commission
David Casa (PPE)
(28 November 2016)

Subject: Safety of driverless cars

Last year, 26 000 people were killed in road accidents in the EU. Transport Commissioner Bulc has recently called for the development of driverless car technology to reduce the number of deaths.

How does the Commission plan to help the development of this technology?

How will the Commission ensure that driverless cars are safe enough for public roads?

What else does the Commission plan to do to reduce the number of road accidents in the EU?

Answer given by Ms Bulc on behalf of the Commission
(15 February 2017)

1. The Commission has recently published a report ⁽¹⁾ on vehicle safety to prepare the review of the safety requirements applying to cars, trucks and buses under the EU type-approval and the European Strategy on Cooperative Intelligent Transport Systems ⁽²⁾. It is an important milestone towards cooperative, connected and automated mobility as communication between vehicles, infrastructure and with other road users is crucial also to increase the safety of automated vehicles and their full integration into the overall transport system ⁽³⁾. Moreover the Commission launched in 2016 the High Level Group for the automotive industry, GEAR 2030. Finally, the Commission provides funding for research on automation technology.
2. The Commission underlines that all vehicles put into the EU market have to comply with the safety requirements defined under the type-approval framework which guarantees they comply with the safety standards. Highly or fully automated vehicles, when they are available, will have to respect the same standards. If necessary, the Commission will not hesitate to propose additional safety standards for driverless cars.
3. The Commission is determined to see improved road safety in the EU. Road safety is however a competence shared between the Union and the Member States, which are responsible, for example, for police enforcement of traffic rules and the education of road users. The Commission proposes legislation where there is a clear added value in European Union action. In this regard the Commission calls the attention of the Honourable Member to the ongoing work for the review of General Safety Regulation for Type-Approval, the directive on professional driver's training and the review of the directive on infrastructure safety.

⁽¹⁾ COM(2016) 787 — 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.

⁽²⁾ COM(2016) 766 — A European strategy on Cooperative Intelligent Transport Systems, a milestone towards cooperative, connected and automated mobility, adopted on 30 November 2016.

⁽³⁾ In addition the second phase of Cooperative Intelligent Transport Systems Platform was launched in 2016.