



TEXTS ADOPTED

P8_TA(2017)0423

Saving lives: Boosting car safety in the EU

European Parliament resolution of 14 November 2017 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 accompanying 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

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.

road vehicles circulating within the Community the maximum authorised dimensions in national and international traffic and the maximum authorised weights in international traffic¹,

- having regard to Regulation (EU) 2015/758 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2015 concerning type-approval requirements for the deployment of the eCall in-vehicle system based on the 112 service and amending Directive 2007/46/EC²,
- 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’³,
- having regard to its resolution of 18 May 2017 on road transport in the European Union⁴,
- having regard to its resolution of 3 July 2013 on ‘Road safety 2011-2020 – First milestones towards an injury strategy’⁵,
- having regard to its resolution of 27 September 2011 on European road safety 2011-2020⁶,
- 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’⁷,
- 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 26 March 2015,

¹ OJ L 115, 6.5.2015, p. 1.

² OJ L 123, 19.5.2015, p. 77.

³ OJ C 316, 22.9.2017, p. 155.

⁴ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2017)0228.

⁵ OJ C 75, 26.2.2016, p. 49.

⁶ OJ C 56 E, 26.2.2013, p. 54.

⁷ OJ C 168 E, 14.6.2013, p. 72.

- 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 the package ‘Europe on the Move’, released by the Commission on 31 May 2017, which includes a set of eight legislative initiatives with a special focus on road transport,
 - having regard to the 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 (A8-0330/2017),
- A. whereas every year on Europe’s roads around 25 500 people die and some 135 000 are seriously injured, so that more – and more effective – measures need to be taken, in consultation with Member States, if the vision zero goal of ‘no fatalities’ is to be achieved;
 - B. whereas road safety depends on three factors: vehicle, infrastructure and drivers’ behaviour, and, therefore, measures in all three areas are necessary in order to enhance road safety and effective measures should be taken in the area of active and passive vehicle safety;
 - C. whereas the average age of passenger cars, light-duty vehicles and heavy-duty vehicles in the EU is constantly increasing and is now over 10 years; whereas the age of a vehicle has a direct bearing on the consequences of and the injuries sustained in a road accident;
 - D. whereas driver assistance systems make the vehicles safer and also enable the safe and active participation of persons with reduced mobility and the elderly in road traffic;
 - E. whereas intelligent driving systems reduce congestion, warn drivers of hazards on their route, and consequently help to lower the risk of causing an accident;
 - F. whereas the move towards driver-free vehicles is progressing rapidly and road safety generally is an urgent issue, so that a review of the General Safety Regulation must be submitted by the Commission no later than first quarter of 2018; whereas in any event any further delay would be unacceptable;
 - G. whereas since 38 % of all fatalities occur in urban areas, often involving vulnerable road users, Member States should take vulnerable road users into consideration in urban traffic planning, improving their treatment in relation to modes of transport such as cars and buses; whereas the Commission should present its review of the pedestrian protection regulation;
 - H. whereas there is a clear link between road safety and the working conditions of

professional road users;

General requests

1. Stresses that Member States should conduct efficient and regular road checks on drivers, as the main causes of accidents, at present as in the past, are speed levels that are inappropriate and excessive speed for the driving conditions concerned, distraction, driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, and excessive fatigue, and therefore:
 - (a) calls on the Commission to set a percentage for the numbers of vehicles in classes M1 and N1 to be checked;
 - (b) calls on the Commission to introduce stricter controls for the proper enforcement of compulsory working-time limits and rest periods for drivers who are professional road users;
 - (c) calls on the Member States to step up exchanges of best practices, particularly regarding smart enforcement strategies, and to introduce penalties which will act as a deterrent to offenders;
2. Notes that around 25 % of all annual traffic fatalities in the EU are caused by alcohol consumption; invites the Commission, therefore, to assess the possible added value of harmonising the EU blood alcohol concentration limit at 0,0 % for new drivers in their first two years and for professional drivers, and welcomes some Member States' zero tolerance policy for drunk driving;
3. Urges the Commission, bearing in mind the Valletta Declaration on improving road safety issued by the Maltese presidency on 29 March 2017, to include new targets for halving the number of serious injuries on the roads in the EU in its new road safety strategy for the decade 2020-2030;
4. Calls on the Member States to significantly improve the state of their road infrastructure by means of regular and effective maintenance, including of traffic signs and signalling systems, and appropriate upgrades to cope with traffic volumes, and to introduce innovative measures providing full functionality and enhancing the interoperability of driver assistance systems, resulting in so-called intelligent infrastructure; calls on the Commission to set up a mechanism to ensure that the European road infrastructure remains in an adequate condition;
5. Points out that infrastructural alterations (for example certain types of crash barrier or traffic-calming devices) can sometimes cause accidents or make them worse, especially when motorised two-wheelers are involved; calls on the Commission, therefore, to propose any standardisation measure likely to remedy the drawbacks;
6. Observes that many drivers are not aware of the necessity of or how to form a corridor for emergency vehicle access on motorways, and therefore calls on the Commission to set common standards for the creation of such corridors and to launch a European awareness campaign;
7. Observes that for pedestrians and cyclists nearly half of all fatalities resulting from traffic accidents are of persons aged over 65, and that road accidents are the biggest cause of death among young people; calls on the Member States, therefore, to make it

possible for older people and young drivers to use the roads safely by developing well-publicised programmes to avert age-specific accident risks;

8. Observes that in 51 % of cases the victims of fatal road accidents in urban areas are pedestrians and cyclists, and therefore encourages cities to include targets in their mobility plans for reducing the number of road and traffic accidents; also calls on the Member States to take greater account of more vulnerable road users, by addressing critical accident hotspots and by building and maintaining more safe pedestrian and cycling infrastructure or expanding and modernising existing infrastructure while also ensuring better indications; calls on the Commission also to take further action at EU level over and above the availability of existing funding schemes, in order to facilitate widespread improvements to cycling infrastructure and to mandate new active and passive vehicle safety technologies that protect in particular vulnerable road users;
9. Notes that because some cyclists are ignorant of traffic regulations and/or fail to observe them, situations sometimes arise in which their own safety and that of other road users can be endangered; calls on the Commission to consider what kind of proposal it might make to promote safer cycling, thereby enabling bicycles to be dovetailed smoothly with the other modes of urban mobility;
10. Encourages intelligent transport system (ITS) and public transport operators to further develop technologies for vehicles that encourage drivers to switch to safer modes of transport when entering urban areas;
11. Observes that new means of transport, such as e-bikes and other electric mobility devices, are becoming increasingly popular; calls on the Commission, therefore, to examine the safety requirements for such vehicles without delay, and to make proposals for their safe integration into road transport, while taking due account of subsidiarity;
12. Notes that the development and implementation of safety systems ought to make for road safety, and that this process will accordingly require some kind of adaptation period; calls on the Commission, therefore, to allow for the time necessary to develop such systems before specific technical legislation is put into effect;
13. Recalls that odometer fraud remains an untackled problem, especially in the second-hand car market, as noted by the Commission in its study on the functioning of the market for second-hand cars from a consumer perspective; urges the Commission and the Member States to address the issue of manipulation of or tampering with odometers through effective measures and legislation;
14. Notes that the more vehicles there are on the road, the more likely it is accidents might occur; calls, therefore, on the Member States and the Commission to promote collective and shared mobility, especially in urban areas, in order to reduce the circulating fleet, as well as measures to increase the proportion of bicycles and of professionally driven vehicles;
15. Points out that the equipment that must compulsorily be carried in a vehicle differs from one Member State to another, and calls on the Commission, therefore, to draw up an EU-wide binding list of objects that should fall under the carrying requirement;
16. Maintains that the EU and its research centres should play a leading role in the

development of autonomous vehicles, since these will revolutionise the automobile sector, especially in terms of road safety, in which respect they are expected to save thousands of lives every year, as well as contributing to the digitalisation of the internal market;

Driver assistance systems to increase road safety

17. Stresses that approximately 92 % of all accidents are due to human error or interaction of human error with vehicles and/or infrastructure, and that it should therefore be compulsory to incorporate only those driver assistance systems which improve road safety significantly as demonstrated by scientific evidence, have a favourable cost-benefit ratio, and have attained market maturity; considers that additionally, the resulting purchase price increases should not be so inordinate that the intended customers for such vehicles cannot afford to buy them, and that driver assistance systems, which are of relevance for road safety, should be checked regularly;
18. Calls on the Commission to test the above-mentioned safety devices when performing vehicle market surveillance;
19. Considers that the benefits of improved safety standards and equipment can be realised only if existing and future provisions are implemented and enforced effectively; calls, in this regard, for increased European-level oversight of type-approval authorities and technical services in the Union; calls, in addition, for greater and more independent post-market surveillance of vehicles on roads across the Union to ensure that they continue to conform to safety criteria;
20. Stresses that, when non-conformities are identified, European consumers should be able to count on rapid, appropriate and coordinated corrective measures, including Union-wide vehicle recall where necessary; considers that economic operators should be liable for any damage caused to owners of affected vehicles as a result of non-compliance or following a recall;
21. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to improve the safety level of existing vehicles in use and to support developments and innovations which will increase the safety of cars already in use by incentivising and promoting the retrofitting of vehicles with cost-effective road safety systems that help drivers react better in a dangerous situation;
22. Calls on manufacturers and operators:
 - (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;
 - (c) to ensure that each time a vehicle is started afresh the driver assistance system is restored to active status; and
 - (d) to introduce a pricing policy which will encourage consumers to choose vehicles equipped with safety and driver assistance systems;

23. Stresses that evident warnings should be sufficiently differentiated to ensure that it is intuitively clear to which system the assistance pertains, and that warnings should also be easy to perceive for elderly persons, persons with a disability, such as hearing and/or sight impairment, and persons with reduced mobility; calls, therefore, on the parties concerned to adopt appropriate uniform standards allowing the possibility of operator-specific solutions;
24. Welcomes the fact that almost all cars tested under the European New Car Assessment Programme for consumers (Euro NCAP) are awarded five stars and that the majority of car manufacturers have successfully responded to the challenge of meeting the new Euro NCAP requirements; notes, however, that not all car models sold in Europe are tested by Euro NCAP, and not all of the same type are sold with the same specification, which may create lack of clarity for consumers and thus offer a false level of confidence in the vehicle in relation to the actual performance of the model purchased; recalls the importance, therefore, of a strong underlying standard of mandatory safety requirements which ensure that all necessary safety equipment is present across the fleet used and sold in the EU;
25. Is of the opinion that the Euro NCAP should always reflect the actual car safety of a specific model, and encourages it to be more ambitious in assessing the safety of new vehicles than the statutory minimum requirements compel it to, and to take into consideration the updated statutory minimum requirements, in order to further promote the development of vehicles that ensure high road safety standards and so that Europe remains ambitious and acts as a global leader in car safety;
26. Calls on the Commission to coordinate the adoption of standards with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (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; stresses, in addition, that manufacturers should create clear information materials to help drivers better understand the various driver assistance systems and their functionalities;
27. Calls for a harmonised European approach which takes into account all existing international and national legislation and ensures its complementarity;
28. 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;
29. Stresses that drivers' instruction should include periodical and additional training in using obligatory driver assistance mechanisms, paying special attention to the elderly and persons with reduced mobility; urges driving schools, on the one hand, to incorporate issues relating to the operation of these systems into their learner training, and, on the other hand, to couple acquiring a driving licence with having received professional, on-road practical training;
30. Notes that financial incentives, for example tax-based or insurance-based, for measures such as the installation of additional safety-relevant driver assistance systems in new and used cars or their inclusion in driver training, can facilitate the market uptake of vehicles with advanced safety features; invites Member States to consider introducing

such mechanisms;

31. Calls on the Commission to require market operators to arrange for the use of open standards and interfaces which will further improve interoperability, so that independent tests can be carried out by accessing the relevant vehicle and system data, including their updates, and can be performed by any qualified professional, while respecting proprietary data and intellectual property;
32. Stresses that a high level of data protection and retention as required by Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (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; recommends that the principle of ownership of data be explored;
33. Stresses the importance of making use of reliable position and time information from satellite-based positioning systems and of applying the EGNOS/GNSS system to road-active safety; calls for more efforts to be made in order to achieve an EGNOS/GNSS road-active safety accuracy of less than one metre, with a view to a shift from the system's ability to reduce vehicle speed to its ability to automatically intervene and deviate the vehicle trajectory; calls for the promotion of enhanced road safety by integrating EGNOS/GNSS data with on-board control systems;

Safety measures for accident prevention

34. Welcomes the fact that emergency braking is already mandatory, since November 2015, for all new trucks and buses in the EU, but calls on the Commission to make it compulsory to install automatic emergency braking assistants with detection of pedestrians, cyclists, light powered two-wheelers and motorcyclists in cars, light commercial vehicles, buses, coaches and, especially, heavy goods vehicles, as these have a strong potential to prevent road accidents by means of autonomous powerful braking and a resulting shorter stopping distance;
35. Calls for safer front-end design of heavy goods vehicles related to better vision of pedestrians and cyclists, as well as for barriers to avoid collisions and mitigate consequences of collisions;
36. Calls for the compulsory installation of overridable intelligent speed assistant systems that indicate speed limits, stop signs and traffic lights and intervene to assist drivers to remain within speed limits; calls on Member States to ensure that road signs are kept in excellent condition and that road markings are clearly legible; emphasises that for the proper working of intelligent assistant systems it is necessary to have updated online road maps with current speed limit indications;
37. 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 flashing brake light or flashing hazard lights;
38. Stresses that in view of its relevance to road safety, an overridable lane-keeping assistance that not only warns but also appropriately intervenes, albeit without

preventing drivers from acting directly, should be made compulsory; notes that for using this warning system it is necessary that road markings are kept in a condition ensuring that they are clearly recognisable;

39. Emphasises that increasing the direct vision of the driver in heavy goods vehicles, buses and coaches and reducing or eliminating blind spots are vital for improving the road safety of such vehicles; calls on the Commission, therefore, to mandate ambitious differentiated direct vision standards and to make it compulsory to install front, side and rear cameras, sensors 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 therein;
40. Stresses the need to provide preconditions for installing alcohol interlock devices and systems to detect driver distraction and drowsiness, and urges the use of alcohol interlocks for professional drivers and for drivers who have caused a traffic accident under the influence of alcohol and have therefore been convicted of a drunk driving offence, as a rehabilitation measure;
41. Observes that trucks are involved in 15 % of road fatalities, and that vulnerable road users account for approximately 1 000 truck-related fatalities every year; calls on the Commission, therefore, to accelerate the mandatory introduction for trucks of ambitious differentiated direct vision standards, intelligent speed assistance, and automatic emergency braking systems with cyclist and pedestrian detection;

Safety measures to mitigate the effects of accidents

42. Observes that tyre pressure has significant implications for road safety and fuel consumption as well as for emissions; calls on the Commission, therefore, to make it compulsory to install direct tyre pressure monitoring systems; also calls on the Commission to transpose into EU law the tyre pressure measurement systems amendments aimed at delivering in real world conditions agreed at UNECE;
43. Considers it necessary to make it compulsory to install intelligent seatbelt reminder systems for all front seats for all vehicles and for rear seats for M1 and N1 vehicles;
44. Considers it important to make it compulsory to install automated seatbelt adjustment systems in order to avoid neck damage;
45. Calls on the Commission, from 2019, to extend the eCall installation requirement to motorcycles, heavy goods vehicles and buses and coaches, and also to make the system available for retrofitting so as to ensure that it can cover the highest possible numbers of vehicles on the road;
46. Calls for accurate and reliable EU-wide accident statistics, including statistics on the causes of accidents, exposure data and listing of injuries and accident victims, and observes that an event data recorder could be very helpful in this connection, in which context the data must be kept anonymous and used only for purposes of accident research;
47. Calls for data to be collected throughout the EU on vehicle occupants killed or injured due to causes other than collisions; notes that there are no data available on vehicle heat-stroke casualties;

48. Calls for better fire safety rules for buses and coaches with different types of power, including CNG-powered buses, to maximise the protection of passenger safety;
49. Observes that redesigned front underrun protection of trucks could reduce fatalities in head-on collisions between cars and trucks by 20 %; calls on the Commission to mandate improved energy-absorbing front underrun protection for all new trucks;
50. 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; and
 - (b) electrically propelled vehicles and vehicles with other new propulsion technologies;
51. Calls on the Commission to also update the testing requirements for motor vehicle passive safety systems so as to include protection of all vulnerable road users in front and rear impacts, including not only pedestrians but also cyclists;
52. Calls on the Commission to ensure that the market will have sufficient and realistic time to adapt to these measures;
53. Stresses that Directive (EU) 2015/719 on weights and dimensions of heavy goods vehicles has great potential to improve truck safety; calls on the Commission to accelerate work on this directive and come forward with its assessment without delay;

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