

# EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

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*Committee on Industry, Research and Energy*

**2006/0182(COD)**

28.3.2007

## **OPINION**

of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy

for the Committee on Transport and Tourism

on the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council  
on road infrastructure safety management  
(COM(2006)0569 – C6-0331/2006 – 2006/0182(COD))

Draftsman: Ivo Belet

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## SHORT JUSTIFICATION

In 2001 the EU set itself the ambitious objective of halving the number of fatalities on European roads by 2010. While progress is being made, EU road accidents still cause at present around 40.000 victims and 1.7 million injuries per year. This is the equivalent of a jumbo jet crashing every day on our roads. Road accidents are the leading cause of death for people under 45 years.

Road safety requires action on the level of the vehicle, the driver and the infrastructure. Significant progress has been made in the past decades in terms of vehicle safety and traffic rules. However, for road safety infrastructure, no such joint effort has yet been carried out at European level. This Directive aims at filling this gap by ensuring that safety is integrated in all phases of planning, design and operation of road infrastructure in the Trans-European Network. All Member States are required to carry out road safety impact assessments, road safety audits, safety inspections and network safety management. The setting and defining of technical standards or requirements is left to the Member States.

Your draftsman welcomes this proposal, which is estimated to reduce the number of fatalities by more than 600 per year, creating an annual welfare benefit of more than € 2.4 billions. Our economy and society depend heavily on a safe and efficient road transport. The unnecessary loss of life and the huge socio-economic cost of road accidents (estimated at € 200 billion a year) are both unacceptable. Safety is and should be one of the major issues for all stakeholders in the area of road transport. Your draftsman sees this Directive, therefore, as part of a new "safety deal", linking in a realistic way all the actors of the safety chain - the drivers, the vehicles, the roads, the policy makers and the citizens - in their common effort to save thousands of needless casualties and billions of euros every year. Attention to safety during road design, construction and maintenance can make a significant contribution in reducing the frequency and severity of road traffic accidents by influencing driver behaviour and by eliminating defects in road design. The importance and relevance of improved infrastructure (e.g. quality of motorways and road networks, traffic lanes, traffic signs) was also highlighted recently in Parliament's Resolution on the mid-term review of the European Road Safety Action Programme (18th of January 2007).

Your draftsman would like to highlight two points. The first one concerns the scope of the Directive, which is limited to the Trans-European road Network. This network consists of almost 90.000 km of roads, but is almost entirely made up of motorway or similar grade roads. These roads are not where the majority of fatalities occur. Most of the casualties are produced on single carriageway roads outside of urban areas. According to research many of those accidents could be avoided if the existing road infrastructure was managed according to the best available know-how of safety engineering. From a subsidiarity point of view, a limitation of the scope of the Directive to trans-European roads is understandable. However, in order to increase the safety of all other roads in the EU, your draftsman would recommend to improve the use of existing, but fragmented exchanges of best practices. Furthermore, your draftsman would like to introduce a review clause in the proposal, requesting the commission on the basis of the experience gained to, inter alia, reassess the scope of the proposal.

Your draftsperson would like to stress the importance of research, especially in the field of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). Research is a vital instrument in

improving safety on European roads. Developing and demonstrating components, measures and methods (including telematics) can increase the safety of the infrastructure elements of road transport. In particular, research and development of communications technology for infrastructure can enable safe and secure transfer of information between vehicle and infrastructure. This is necessary for new vehicle safety technology to become available and used to its full capacity. Intelligent Transport Systems, that for example detect hazards on the road ahead and inform drivers of them even before they are visible, have the potential to save lives and reduce the congestion caused by accidents. In this respect, your draftsman would like to stress the importance of research projects carried out under the Research Framework Programme and the dissemination of their results. Furthermore, the interesting and important work done by research networks, such as the European Road Assessment Programme (EURORAP), and Technology Platforms, such as the European Road Transport Research Advisory Council (ERTRAC), should be mentioned.

## AMENDMENTS

The Committee on Industry, Research and Energy calls on the Committee on Transport and Tourism, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following amendments in its report:

Text proposed by the Commission<sup>1</sup>

Amendments by Parliament

Amendment 1  
Recital 4 a (new)

***(4a) Research is a vital instrument in improving safety on European roads. Developing and demonstrating components, measures and methods (including telematics) and disseminating research results play an important part in increasing the safety of road infrastructure.***

### *Justification*

*In the 7th Framework Programme for Research and Development, a substantial budget had been agreed upon in order to boost European research, also in the field of road infrastructure safety (e.g. developing advanced engineering systems and risk analysis methodologies for the design of infrastructure). Improving the dissemination of the results of Community research is however vital to achieve those goals. In its Resolution on the Road Safety Action Programme Mid-term Review of 18 January 2007, the European Parliament called for intensive research and cooperation between all stakeholders.*

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<sup>1</sup> Not yet published in OJ.

Amendment 2  
Recital 5 a (new)

***(5a) In order to improve the safety performance of existing roads further, the adverse impact of particularly heavy vehicles with a total weight of up to 60 tonnes and a maximum length of 25,25 metres which pose many safety risks should be taken into account.***

*Justification*

*So-called Gigaliners and Megatrucks are endangering safety on Europe's roads. Many motorways have no retention systems capable of withstanding a collision with these vehicles. Road accidents involving such vehicles would have grave consequences and bridge constructions would also be exposed to high stress levels.*

Amendment 3  
Recital 8 a (new)

***(8a) In order to improve the safety of roads within the European Union that are not part of the Trans-European road network, a coherent system for the exchange of best practice between Member States should be established, covering, inter alia, existing road infrastructure safety projects and proven road safety technology such as the embedded road-marking reflectors known as cats' eyes. The Commission should timely evaluate this Directive in order to establish whether its scope should be broadened to include all major roads in the Member States, having particular regard to vulnerable road users.***

Amendment 4  
Recital 8 b (new)

***(8b) Modal shift from road to rail for its***

*part can also be an important tool to promote road safety.*

Amendment 5  
Article 10, paragraph 1

1. Member States shall report to the Commission on the implementation of this Directive **five years** after its entry into force and thereafter every four years.

1. Member States shall report to the Commission on the implementation of this Directive **four years** after its entry into force and thereafter every four years.

*Justification*

*It is important to review this proposal. In order for the review to be in time, the Commission should earlier be aware of the state of implementation.*

Amendment 6  
Article 10, paragraph 4

4. The Commission shall analyse the reports and information obtained and **provide as** appropriate **a** report to the European Parliament and the Council **on the implementation of this Directive**.

4. The Commission shall analyse the reports and information obtained and **shall review this Directive in order to establish whether its scope should be broadened to include all major roads in the Member States, having particular regard to vulnerable road users. It shall forward an** appropriate report **and the results of its review** to the European Parliament and the Council.

Amendment 7  
Article 11 a (new)

**Article 11a**

**Member State obligations**

***In order to improve the safety of roads within the European Union that are not part of the Trans-European road network, the Member States should establish a coherent system for the exchange of best practice, covering, inter alia, existing road infrastructure safety projects and proven road safety technology.***

Amendment 8

Annex I, point 1, point (d)

(d) analysis of impacts of the proposed alternatives;

(d) analysis of impacts of the proposed alternatives, ***taking into account the best available know-how in safety engineering and telematics***;

*Justification*

*Safety engineering and telematics can increase the safety of the infrastructure elements of road transport. The use of ICT (for example Intelligent Transport Systems) has a huge potential to save lives. Best available know-how should therefore be taken into account when analysing alternatives.*

Amendment 9

Annex I, point 2, point (d a)

***(d a) any need for improvement or construction of pedestrians' paths and cycle lanes***;

Amendment 10

Annex III, point 3, point (f), indent 10 a (new)

***– use and testing of intelligent road signs and reception systems for the integrated transmission of speed limits to vehicles.***

*Justification*

*Using intelligent road signs for the automatic transmission of speed limits to passing vehicles is a relatively straightforward technology but it can mean a substantial increase in safety.*

Amendment 11

Annex III, point 3, point (f), indent 10 b (new)

***– installation of telematics services harmonised for operational and signage purposes for Trans-European Transport Network roads and installation of intelligent transport systems.***

*Justification*

*Telematics and the adoption of intelligent transport systems may play a key part in improving the safety of road infrastructure and should therefore be considered as potential corrective measures.*

## PROCEDURE

<b>Title</b>	Road infrastructure safety
<b>References</b>	COM(2006)0569 - C6-0331/2006 - 2006/0182(COD)
<b>Committee responsible</b>	TRAN
<b>Opinion by</b> Date announced in plenary	ITRE 23.10.2006
<b>Drafts(wo)man</b> Date appointed	Ivo Belet 28.11.2006
<b>Discussed in committee</b>	26.2.2007                      27.3.2007
<b>Date adopted</b>	27.3.2007
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+:                      40 -:                      0 0:                      0
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Jerzy Buzek, Jorgo Chatzimarkakis, Giles Chichester, Silvia Ciornei, Pilar del Castillo Vera, Den Dover, Lena Ek, Nicole Fontaine, Adam Gierek, András Gyürk, Fiona Hall, Rebecca Harms, Erna Hennicot-Schoepges, Mary Honeyball, Ján Hudacký, Romana Jordan Cizelj, Anne Laperrouze, Angelika Niebler, Reino Paasilinna, Atanas Paparizov, Francisca Pleguezuelos Aguilar, Miloslav Ransdorf, Vladimír Remek, Herbert Reul, Mechtild Rothe, Paul Rübig, Andres Tarand, Britta Thomsen, Radu Țîrle, Patrizia Toia, Catherine Trautmann, Claude Turmes, Nikolaos Vakalis, Alejo Vidal-Quadras
<b>Substitute(s) present for the final vote</b>	Alexander Alvaro, Ivo Belet, Philip Dimitrov Dimitrov, Matthias Groote, Satu Hassi, Esko Seppänen