

WRITTEN QUESTION P-1107/09
by Bill Newton Dunn (ALDE)
to the Commission

Subject: Dangerous motor car windscreens

The World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Bank jointly issued their 'World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention' in 2004. It underscored the fact that unsafe road traffic systems are seriously harming global public health and development.

One measure highlighted, which offers a high level of protection, was laminated-glass windscreens. The report stated that they should be adopted in all countries.

Laminated windscreens remain in one piece when impacted, preventing penetration of unbelted occupants' heads and maintaining a minimal but adequate transparency for control of the car immediately following a collision.

Many countries in Europe started to forbid toughened-glass windscreens and to require laminated-glass windscreens, together with the implementation of UN/ECE Regulation No 43, on 15 February 1982.

In spite of this, the UK remains one of the few European countries that does not require by law that a vehicle have a laminated windscreen.

Since 1983, all new cars have been manufactured as standard with laminated windscreens. However, there are vehicles produced before this date on the roads which still have toughened-glass windscreens. In the event of a collision, these vehicles pose an inherent danger to the vehicle's driver, other road users and pedestrians.

Are British vehicles with toughened-glass windscreens legal if they choose to travel on roads in another EU Member State which forbids toughened-glass windscreens?

Should the UK be required to make all toughened-glass windscreens illegal?