


Procedure file

Basic information		
INI - Own-initiative procedure	2006/2112(INI)	Procedure completed
European road safety action programme, 2003. Mid-term review		
Subject 3.20.06 Transport regulations, road safety, roadworthiness tests, driving licence		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	TRAN Transport and Tourism		21/03/2006
		PSE HEDKVIST PETERSEN Ewa	
Council of the European Union	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	ENVI Environment, Public Health and Food Safety	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
	ITRE Industry, Research and Energy	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
European Commission	Council configuration	Meeting	Date
	Transport, Telecommunications and Energy	2772	11/12/2006
	Transport, Telecommunications and Energy	2735	08/06/2006
	Commission DG Energy and Transport	Commissioner BARROT Jacques	

Key events			
22/02/2006	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2006)0074	Summary
18/05/2006	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
08/06/2006	Resolution/conclusions adopted by Council		Summary
12/10/2006	Debate in Council		
22/11/2006	Vote in committee		Summary
05/12/2006	Committee report tabled for plenary	A6-0449/2006	
11/12/2006	Debate in Council	2772	
17/01/2007	Debate in Parliament		

18/01/2007	Results of vote in Parliament		
18/01/2007	Decision by Parliament	T6-0009/2007	Summary
18/01/2007	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2006/2112(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 54
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	TRAN/6/36466

Documentation gateway

Non-legislative basic document	COM(2006)0074	22/02/2006	EC	Summary
Committee draft report	PE374.277	21/09/2006	EP	
Amendments tabled in committee	PE378.836	26/10/2006	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading	A6-0449/2006	05/12/2006	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading	T6-0009/2007	18/01/2007	EP	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2007)1016-2	27/02/2007	EC	
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2007)1426	10/04/2007	EC	

European road safety action programme, 2003. Mid-term review

PURPOSE: to present a mid-term review of the European Road Safety Action Programme.

CONTENT: both the 2001 Transport White Paper and the European Road Action programme, adopted in 2003, have set a target of halving the number of road fatalities in the EU by 2010. Key to achieving this target is the concept of 'shared responsibility'. In accordance with this principle, action has been taken at a local level (roads have been made safer); at an individual level (encouraging more responsible behaviour) at an industry level (safer vehicles in response to consumer demand) and at a Community level. This Communication acts as the mid-term review of the European Road Action Programme. In summary, the mid-term review makes the following findings:

Overall figures:

In 2001, 50 000 people were killed on the roads. The joint target proposed in 2001, and updated after enlargement in 2004, states that by 2010 there should be no more than 25 000 fatalities a year. The figures for 2005 show that about 41 600 people were killed on the roads in other words a fall of 17.5% over a four year period. Based on current trends, road deaths in the EU by 2010 are estimated to stand at 32 500. The maximum target of 25 000 will probably not be met. Further statistics, however, are worth examining:

- Between 1994 and 2000 the number of people killed on the roads fell by an average of only 2% per year, while the number of accidents rose very slightly. The technical improvements made to vehicles would seem to be the main reason behind this trend.
- Between 2001 and 2005, the number of people killed on the roads fell by an average of 5% a year and the number of accidents fell by an average of 4% a year and 5% between 2003 and 2004. Interestingly, this parallel trend in the major indicators corresponds to the dates of entry into force of voluntary road safety plans in most of the Member States.

Statistics for motor-cycle accidents look more worrying and in many countries show a sharp increase. In overall terms, the number of motorcyclists killed rose by 5.6% between 2000 and 2003 compared to the total number of people killed on the roads, which fell by 12% over the same period. A further figure highlights the continuing vulnerability of the 18-25 age group as being at high risk from fatal road accidents. Although they represent 10% of society as a whole they nevertheless accounted, in 2003, for 21% of all road fatalities.

The road safety performance of the new Member States following the most recent enlargement is not as good as the average situation in the EU prior to 2004. While some have seen dramatic improvements in the early 1990s, their situation, since 2001, has basically been the same as that of several of the EU-15 Member States.

The mid-term review also assesses recent trends in road safety measures. In 2001, the White Paper on Transport and the 2003 action plan encouraged several Member States to adopt national road safety plans, which many (who had not already done so) enacted. Other Member

State initiatives include strengthening controls and penalties; information schemes to help create a road safety culture and the adoption of initiatives to combat driving while under the influence of alcohol, drugs or medicines.

Community Action since 2001:

Under this heading the Commission sets out what action has been taken since 2001, presents a list of all legislation adopted since 2001 concerning road safety, presents a list of proposals being negotiated and sets out a selection of European projects and studies currently under way in the field of road safety. The kind of actions under taken refer to the promotion of passive safety (making it compulsory to wear a seat belt); eSafety (such as implementation of the eCall initiative); CARS-21 (the compulsory use of onboard systems in vehicles) and the development of safe infrastructure (European road assessment programme and the European tunnels assessment programme.) In other initiatives proposals are afoot to recast and extend existing legislation on driving licenses by toughening up the rules on gradual access to motorcycles and very heavy goods vehicles as well as introducing a driving licence for mopeds.

The Commission is also considering an amendment to Annex III of the driving licences Directive so that it meets modern standards for vision, epilepsy and diabetes and the physical fitness of professional drivers. Further, the action programme seeks to protect, as well as to educate, users at risk and vulnerable users such as children and adolescents, young adults, senior citizens, pedestrians and cyclists, moped and motorcycle drivers and disabled users.

To conclude, in overall terms, road safety is improving in the European Union. Faster progress is being made than in the past ? but this is patchy and a lot remains to be done if the EU is to meet its stated target of reducing all road deaths by 2010. The Commission, therefore, calls on the Member States and all other interested parties to do more and do it better in order to achieve the ambitious common objective. In light of this, the Commission will give consideration to additional measures within the framework of the mid-term review of the Transport White Paper.

European road safety action programme, 2003. Mid-term review

In the light of the mid-term review of the Commission's road safety action programme, the results of an informal meeting of Ministers of Transport on "Crossing Borders in Road Safety", which took place in Bregenz on 2 and 3 March, 2006 as well as the debate held at the TTE Council of 27 March, 2006 the Council adopted the following conclusions:

The Council noted that the number of fatalities on European roads has fallen by 17.5 % between 2001 and 2005. The number of accidents which had been on the rise until 2000 fell by an average of 4% a year between 2001 and 2005 and 5% between 2003 and 2004, which shows that additional measures are already beginning to bear fruit. This decrease, while significant, is not yet satisfactory as it will not allow the Community to reach its goal of reducing road accident victims by 50 % until 2010. These results confirm that Member States are on the right track, but are still moving too slowly.

In this context, the Council agrees on the need to strengthen road safety measures and initiatives on Community or Member States' level in particular in the following areas:

- devising practical and concrete measures addressing the accident situation, especially prevalent where the age and experience of drivers are an issue;
- additional attention and protective measures should be directed towards motorcyclists and extremely vulnerable road users, especially pedestrians and cyclists;
- measures concerning road infrastructure safety should be further improved taking into account the best practices and the need to meet the specificities of each situation. Intelligent infrastructure features, such as variable speed signing linked to active traffic monitoring systems, should be used when appropriate;
- measures concerning cross-border enforcement of offences committed by non-resident drivers should be pursued in the appropriate fora with a view to providing improvement of road safety in an increasingly integrated and enlarged European Union. Measures to combat drink/drug driving, excessive speeding and the promotion of the use of seat belts are particularly relevant.
- new initiatives on vehicle safety, as set out in the Report "CARS 21", such as Electronic Stability Control, Seatbelt Reminders, Brake Assistant Systems, Heavy Duty Vehicles, rear view vision and conspicuity and Daytime Running Lights should be subject to special attention. In addition, advanced technologies such as collision avoidance systems, the introduction of speed limiters and speed management systems together with alcolocks to combat drink driving may warrant further political and scientific evaluation;
- a joint European awareness-raising campaign fighting accident risks, such as drivers' fatigue or drink driving, could acquire synergetic effects and show higher efficiency;
- the positive effect of committing non-governmental stakeholders to additional road safety measures in the sense of a shared responsibility for fighting the suffering on European roads should be further supported, especially via the European Road Safety Charter;
- finally, raising road users' awareness towards possible risks, through the European Commission's initiative for a road safety day, preferably in cooperation with other such initiatives of the United Nations.

The Council invited the European Commission to take the necessary actions, including, where appropriate, legislative proposals, as intensive work on road safety needs to be continued.

European road safety action programme, 2003. Mid-term review

The committee adopted the own-initiative report drawn up by Ewa HEDKVIST PETERSEN (PES, SE) in response to the Commission's mid-term review of the EU Road Safety Action Programme. The report expressed disappointment at the lack of progress in reaching the target

of halving the number of road fatalities in the EU by 2010, and called for "a higher level of political commitment" to road safety in all Member States and EU institutions. Member States were urged to enforce the present legislation, which MEPs said would ensure a great improvement in road safety if it were fully observed by road users.

The committee made a number of other recommendations:

- an EU-wide zero alcohol limit should be introduced for new drivers as well as for bus drivers and professional commercial drivers involved in the transport of hazardous goods;
- as unclear or inconsistent road signs cause unnecessary risks, the Commission should come up with a study on harmonising road signs in Europe;
- the Commission should consider the creation of a common minimum standard for driving instructors with test and certification;
- given the large number of accidents and deaths at road work zones, the Commission should develop common guidelines for such zones;
- Member States should make the use of hands-free mobile telephone systems compulsory for car, bus and commercial drivers;
- Member States should step up their efforts to ensure that the use of seat belts is increased in all vehicles, especially buses;
- the Commission should launch a European-wide information campaign advocating breaks in driving every two hours to combat tiredness in drivers;
- the Commission should impose a general ban on overtaking for vehicles weighing more than 12 tonnes on one- and two-lane roads;
- out of the "huge selection" of technologies, particular attention should be given to the following: seat belt reminders and advanced restraint systems; Electronic Stability Control (ESC); speed limitation systems; alcohol interlocks; predictive safety systems (such as emergency brake assistant, adaptive cruise control, lane departure warning system, etc.); and eCall;
- the Commission and the Member States should propose measures "based on an evaluation of the awareness of the single European emergency call number 112" in order to improve the situation in the EU.

European road safety action programme, 2003. Mid-term review

The European Parliament adopted a resolution based on the own-initiative report drafted by Ewa HEDKVIST PETERSEN (PES, SE) in response to the Commission's mid-term review of the EU Road Safety Action Programme. It called for a higher level of political commitment to road safety across the EU by all Member States, by regional and local authorities and EU institutions and by industry, organisations and individuals. 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.), could lead to significant and sustainable reductions in the number of serious road accidents.

With a view to combating cross-border driving offences, it should 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 were imposed irrespective of whether the offence is committed in the offender's own country or in another Member State .

Parliament made a number of recommendations:

- since unclear or inconsistent road signs cause unnecessary risks for road safety, the Commission should put forward a study on harmonisation of road signs in Europe as a means to improve road safety;
- considering the high number of accidents and deaths at roadwork zones, common guidelines should be developed on the requirements for safe roadwork zones based on identification and exchange of best practices;
- the Commission should evaluate the European Road Safety Charter;
- Member States should 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;
- driving under the influence of drugs is a serious problem which needs to be combated and Member States and the Commission should invest more resources in researching and combating such offences;
- the Commission should investigate the influence of the use of communication devices in vehicles on driver behaviour and road safety;
- efforts to ensure that the use of seat belts is increased in all vehicles, especially buses must be increased;
- Member States should extend ? as far as possible ? the ban on overtaking for vehicles weighing in excess of 12 tonnes to all one- and two-lane roads;
- insurance companies could 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;
- incentives must not be 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.);
- 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;
- the Commission and the Member States must 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;

- measures might be proposed 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;
- the Commission and, in particular, the Member States should investigate the road safety situation for people with disabilities; it was important for professional passenger drivers, taxi drivers for example, to be properly trained in securing wheelchairs, etc.