European road safety 2011-2020

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PURPOSE: to present a series of policy orientations on road safety 2011-2020.

BACKGROUND: in 2009, more than 35,000 people died on the roads of the European Union, i.e. the equivalent of a medium town, and no fewer than 1,500,000 persons were injured. The cost for society is huge, representing approximately EUR 130 billion in 2009.

In conjunction with the "Europe 2020" strategy, the Commission considers that a coherent holistic and integrated approach is needed, taking into account synergies with other policy goals. Road safety policies at local, national, European or international level should integrate relevant objectives of other public policies and vice versa.

The proposed policy orientations take fully account of the results obtained during the third road safety action programme 2001-2010, showing that, in spite of important progress made on road safety, efforts needed to be continued and further strengthened.

To achieve the objective of creating a common road safety area, the Commission proposes to continue with the target of **halving the overall number of road deaths in the European Union by 2020** starting from 2010.

CONTENT: the European road safety policy orientations up to 2020 aims to provide a general governance framework and challenging objectives which should guide national or local strategies. In line with the principle of subsidiarity, actions described should be implemented at the most appropriate level and through the most appropriate means.

In the framework of these policy orientations, the Commission considers that the **three following actions** should be undertaken as a priority:

- the establishment of a **structured and coherent cooperation framework** which draws on best practices across the Member States
- a **strategy for injuries and first aid** to address the urgent and growing need to reduce the number of road injuries,
- the improvement of the **safety of vulnerable road users**, in particular motorcyclists for whom accidents statistics are particularly worrying.

Seven strategic objectives have been identified:

Objective 1: Improve education and training of road users: the current approach as regards driver training remains indeed too fragmented and specialised. The Commission proposes to promote a wider approach and view education and training as an overall process, a lifelong ‘educational continuum’.

The Commission will work, in cooperation with Member States as appropriate, on the development of a common educational and training road safety strategy including notably the integration of apprenticeship in the ‘pre-licensing’ process as well as common minimum requirements for driving instructors.

Objective 2: Increase enforcement of road rules: the Commission will work together with the European Parliament and the Council on the establishment of a cross-border exchange of information in the field of road safety. It will work towards developing a common road safety enforcement strategy, including: i) the

possibility of introducing speed limiters in light commercial vehicles and of making use of alcohol interlock devices obligatory in certain specific cases and ii) the establishment of national implementation plans.

Objective 3: Safer road infrastructure: the highest number of fatalities occurs on rural and urban roads (56% and 44% respectively in 2008, compared to 6% on motorways). Therefore, ways should be found for gradually extending the relevant principles of safe management of infrastructure to the secondary road network of the Member States, taking into account the principle of subsidiarity. The Commission will ensure that requests for funding from the EU funds related to road infrastructure within Member States incorporate safety requirements.

Objective 4: Safer vehicles: the Commission will make proposals: i) to encourage progress on the active and passive safety of vehicles, such as motorcycles and electric vehicles; ii) to progressively harmonise and strengthen roadworthiness tests and technical roadside inspections.

As regards the vehicles of tomorrow, the development of 'cooperative systems', where vehicles exchange data and interact with the infrastructure and other surrounding vehicles to have drivers optimally informed, is expected to make a significant contribution to road safety. The Commission will further assess the impact and benefits of co-operative systems to identify most beneficial applications and recommend the relevant measures for their synchronised deployment.

Objective 5: Promote the use of modern technology to increase road safety: within the context of the implementation of the ITS Action Plan and of the proposed ITS Directive, the Commission will cooperate with the Member States with a view to: i) evaluate the feasibility of retrofitting commercial vehicles and private cars with Advanced Driver Assistance Systems; ii) accelerate the deployment of e-Call and examine its extension to other vehicles.

Objective 6: Improve emergency and post-injuries services: while the number of fatalities has decreased between 2001 and 2010, the number of injured people is still very high. Reducing the number of injuries should be one of the priority actions within Europe for the next decade. In collaboration with Member States and other actors involved in road safety, the Commission will propose the setting-up of a global strategy of action on road injuries and first aid.

Objective 7: Protect vulnerable road users: the Commission will make appropriate proposals with a view to: i) monitoring and further developing technical standards for the protection of vulnerable road users; ii) including powered-two wheelers in vehicle inspections; iii) increasing the safety of cycling and other vulnerable road users, e.g. by encouraging the establishment of adequate infrastructures.

The proposed policy orientations provides a general framework under which, at various European, national, regional or local levels concerned, concrete initiatives could be taken. Individual measures would be subject to proper impact assessment in line with established EU better regulation principles. The role of the Commission will be to make proposals on matters where the EU is competent and, in all other cases, to support initiatives taken at various levels.