Implementation report on the road safety aspects of the Roadworthiness Package

2019/2205(INI) - 27/04/2021 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 660 votes to 8, with 25 abstentions, a resolution on the implementation of the road safety aspects of the Roadworthiness Package.

The roadworthiness package includes Directive 2014/45/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on periodic roadworthiness tests for motor vehicles and their trailers, Directive 2014/46/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Council Directive 1999/37/EC on the registration documents for vehicles, and Directive 2014/47/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on the technical roadside inspection of the roadworthiness of commercial vehicles circulating in the Union.

Parliament made the following recommendations:

Transposition and implementation of the Roadworthiness Package - EU safety objectives

Members welcomed the fact that the transposition of the Roadworthiness Package and the implementation of some of its provisions to improve the quality of the periodic technical inspections, the qualification level of inspectors, and Member States' coordination and standards relating to roadside inspection of vehicles, in order to enhance road safety.

On the other hand, Members regretted the fact that, despite the better quality of the periodic technical inspections and the positive implications of this for road safety, the Roadworthiness Package contains some non-mandatory provisions that have not been transposed with sufficient stringency or simply not been transposed at all. The resolution highlighted the need to develop a system of obligatory requirements to increase the harmonisation at EU level of aspects such as cargo securing, information exchange and cooperation between the Member States, and recalled the particular importance of these measures for cross-border regions.

Deploring the inadequate financing for inspection activities, including inspection staff, equipment and training, Members called on Member States to provide sufficient financial and administrative support to their road safety authorities.

Frequency and content of tests

Following the entry into force of the Roadworthiness Package, 90 % of vehicle inspections have occurred according to the same intervals as or at even more stringent intervals than those set by the Package, contributing to a large extent to reducing the number of unsafe vehicles circulating on EU roads. Members regret the fact, however, that some Member States still require longer intervals than those set by the Package.

The Commission is called on to:

- consider tightening the test regime and introducing the obligation of additional checks after reaching a specified mileage for vehicles of category M1 in use as a taxi or ambulance and vehicles of category N1 used by parcel delivery service providers;

- assess, in view of the increasing use of private vehicles and shared mobility for public transport, whether the frequency of inspections of these vehicles should be increased by providing for the possibility of a mandatory annual inspection or by taking into account, for example, the intensity of their use, based on their mileage, the related obsolescence of their components and the number of passengers carried;

- corporate an EU certification for second-hand cars into the next revision of the Roadworthiness Package;

- consider ending exceptions from the obligation for periodical technical inspections for two- and three-wheel vehicles and to assess in its forthcoming evaluation the possibility to include in the obligatory periodical technical inspection regime also categories of two and three-wheel vehicles with an engine displacement of less than 125 cm^3 and light trailers;

- include in the next revision of the Package mandatory provisions enabling the Member States to register mandatory odometer readings from each inspection, service, maintenance operation and major repair carried out, starting with the vehicle's first registration;

- take due account of the new emissions tests in real driving conditions provided for in the Euro 6 regulation and possible future revisions.

Equipment used and training of inspectors

Members welcomed the fact that in all Member States testing equipment has been harmonised and fulfils certain minimum requirements, thus improving the uniformity of roadworthiness checks across the EU. They called on those Member States to align their requirements to those prescribed by Annex IV to Directive 2014/45/EU on periodic roadworthiness tests.

The Commission is called on to promote regular updates and harmonisation of the training content among Member States to adjust inspectors' knowledge and skills to the developing process of automation and digitalisation of the automotive sector.

Steps should be taken to guarantee the independence of inspectors and inspection organisations from the vehicle trade, maintenance and repair industry to avoid any financial conflicts of interest, including for checking emissions, while providing stronger safeguards in terms of civil liability for all parties.

Information records and data exchange between the Member States

The resolution noted that only a few Member States keep a national electronic database of the major and dangerous deficiencies brought to light by roadside inspections and that Member States seldom notify the results of these inspections to the national contact point of the Member State in which the vehicle is registered. Member States should facilitate systematic data exchange on roadworthiness testing and odometer readings between their respective competent authorities for testing, registration and vehicle approval, test equipment manufacturers and vehicle manufacturers.

Members called on the Commission and the Member States to work to ensure that a Vehicle Information Platform is set up as part of the next revision to expedite and facilitate data exchange and ensure more effective coordination between the Member States.

Technical progress

Due account should be taken of the technical progress in vehicle safety features for the next revision. New vehicles should start being equipped with new advanced safety and driver assistance systems from 2022. The Commission should include these systems in the scope of periodic technical inspections.

Members also asked the Commission to assess whether new modes of transport such as e-scooters and onewheels should be taken into account in the next review.