Wheeled agricultural or forestry tractors: maximum design speed

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The committee adopted the report by Mrs Heidi HAUTALA (V, FIN) on the proposal for a directive on the maximum design speed of tractors (modification of a series of existing directives) (codecision first reading). The aim of the Commission proposal is to align national legislation and European directives and improve road safety. Current European legislation applies to tractors with a maximum design speed of between 6 and 30 km/h. However, an increasing number of tractors can travel at speeds in excess of 30 km /h. As a result, manufacturers are taking recourse more and more frequently to national rather than Community type-approval procedures. In order to keep pace with the market and extend the scope of the directive, the Commission proposes to extend the scope of the directive to tractors with a design speed of 40 km/h. The committee approves of this approach but highlights the need (in three new recitals) to address the following problems: the obligation to hold a driving licence, the use of seat belts, driving while under the influence of alcohol, technical controls and pollution.