Basic information

2004/2162(INI) INI - Own-initiative procedure	Procedure completed
Road safety: halving the number of road accident victims by 2010 **Subject** 3.20.06 Transport regulations, road safety, roadworthiness tests, driving licence	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
TRAN Transport and Tourism	VATANEN Ari (PPE-DE)	01/09/2004

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.	

Council of the European Union

Council configuration	Meetings	Date
Transport, Telecommunications and Energy	2629	2004-12-09
Transport, Telecommunications and Energy	2671	2005-06-27

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
02/06/2003	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2003)0311	Summary
28/10/2004	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
09/12/2004	Resolution/conclusions adopted by Council		Summary
15/06/2005	Vote in committee		Summary
27/06/2005	Debate in Council		Summary
04/07/2005	Committee report tabled for plenary	A6-0225/2005	
28/09/2005	Debate in Parliament		

29/09/2005	Decision by Parliament	T6-0366/2005	Summary
29/09/2005	Results of vote in Parliament		
29/09/2005	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2004/2162(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 55
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	TRAN/6/23554

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A6-0225/2005	04/07/2005	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T6-0366/2005 OJ C 227 21.09.2006, p. 0525-0609 E	29/09/2005	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(2003)0311	02/06/2003	Summary

Road safety: halving the number of road accident victims by 2010

2004/2162(INI) - 02/06/2003 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE : to present a European road safety action programme.

CONTENT : the Commission report points out that there are 375 million road users in the European Union, of which 200 million are driving licence holders. The grim reality is that, per annum, there are on average 1 300 000 accidents, causing 40 000 deaths and 1 700 0000 injuries on the roads. The direct and indirect cost of these tragedies has been estimated at EUR 160 billion or 2% of GNP. Although there has been an improvement in overall road safety (for example the number of road deaths has halved in the past thirty years) the situation still suggests far too many accidents are happening unnecessarily - moreover they could be prevented. The Commission Communication proposes that

if the EU acts decisively and tackles this problem in a more uniform manner then many, many accidents could be prevented resulting in lower accident statistics. The objective of this Communication therefore is to suggest ways in which to halve the number of road deaths in the EU by 2010. The Commission acknowledges that, to date, Member States have been reluctant to take on a more communautaire approach to tackling road safety - as seen by the on-going question of harmonisation of blood alcohol limits. This has been under discussion for twelve years now.

One of the major policy initiatives discussed in this Communication includes the standardisation of rules on checks and road traffic offences. These factors alone cause the most road deaths in the EU. Other proposals include closer examination of particularly hazardous places on the roads and a review

of the Directive on driving licences. Similarly, under the research Framework Programmes the Commission proposes developing new safety technologies thereby adding value to the work already being undertaken in the Member States.

The proposed action programme aims to:

- Encourage road users to improve their behaviour;

- Make vehicles safer;

- Improve road infrastructure;

- Draft technical guidelines to improve best practices;

- Collect and analyse data on accidents and physical injuries, and lastly,

- Ensure that everyone in authority, with decision-making powers or acting in an economic, social or representative function will give a solemn undertaking that they will subscribe to a "European Road Safety Charter".The commitment will then be publicised and their compliance monitored.

Road safety: halving the number of road accident victims by 2010

2004/2162(INI) - 29/09/2005 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted the own-initiative report drafted by **VATANEN** (EPP-ED, FR) on the European Road Safety Action Programme. (Please see the summary of 15/06/2005.) Parliament noted that every year, more than 40 000 deaths are caused by road traffic accidents in the EU. In addition to the unacceptable human suffering, there are the related direct and indirect costs, estimated at EUR 180 billion or 2% of EU GNP, concerned by the low levels of road safety especially in many of the 10 new Member States. If all the Member States were to achieve the same results as the United Kingdom and Sweden, the number of fatalities would fall by 17 000 a year in the Union of 25 Member States, representing a reduction of 39% and thus a great step forward, but falling short of the 50% target.

Parliament felt that exchange of best practice and coordination of common policies call for enhanced policy coordination, the dissemination of irrefutable data so as to place poor performers under pressure and a more structured approach than has been the case so far. The vital tasks for which a common approach is needed include, for instance, the following: analysing and publishing data as well as safety-performance indicators, and harmonising accident statistics (and their subsequent inclusion in a EU database).

Parliament was convinced that only an integrated approach involving all aspects of road safety, namely all road users and all users and purchasers of transport services and especially the driver , the vehicle and the infrastructure– together with incentives to make greater use of public transport – and effective legislation in the Member States, can lead to significant and lasting results.

High-quality training for drivers, instructors and law enforcement officers is of great importance. Parliament called on the Commission to promote training, as early as in primary schools, as well as life-long driver education with due regard to the needs of specific groups such as the elderly, disabled people or immigrants. It also called for the rapid introduction of the European driving licence not least with a view to enabling the physical and mental faculties of drivers and their driving skills to be checked over time.

Parliament went on to note that 91% of motorists want greater harmonisation of road signs across Europe in order to improve road safety. The Commission is asked to respond by taking effective measures to improve traffic signing systems and driver behaviour. Parliament urged the Commission to investigate identified problems such as the over-abundance of road signs and the deficient understanding of signs. There must be user-friendly and up-to-date information about the traffic signing systems used in the Member States, thus facilitating cross-border traffic.

Finally, Parliament referred to the huge selection of technologies, and specified the solutions that should receive particular attention. These include seat belt reminders and advanced restraint systems and Electronic Stability Control as well as Intelligent Speed Adaptation (ISA), which could reduce crashes by around 35% as a compulsory and intervening system.

Road safety: halving the number of road accident victims by 2010

2004/2162(INI) - 09/12/2004

Following an exchange of views, the Council adopted the following conclusions on road safety in which it agrees on the need to focus road safety policies on the following four important areas of road

safety:

1) Enforcement and best practices : the enforcement of rules and a widespread use of best practices are two basic factors for being successful in road safety policy on European level as well as on national, regional and local level. The following considerations and actions are of importance : Traffic rules have to be effective for road safety, credible for the road users and enforceable; Enforcement of traffic safety is part of an integrated road safety policy. Enforcement therefore should be a common and unrelenting effort, recognising each player's role and responsibility but also the need for cooperation. In this respect, recently started efforts at EU level as part of the work programme of the European Commission are welcomed; Technological means play an increasing role in support of enforcement. In the future, some of these might replace conventional enforcement in specific

cases. It is certainly of interest to follow closely these developments and to exchange experiences with regard to automatic speed control systems, speed warning or speed limiting devices, the alcohol lock and seat belt reminders, to stimulate further developments of such devices and to promote the introduction of such devices; Enforcement directly linked to public information campaigns is a successful combination and should be further promoted. In this respect, European-wide campaigns followed by comparisons of the results in the participating countries should be supported; The improvement of cross-border enforcement enhances the credibility and effectiveness of enforcement in general. An implementation of a European system of cooperation for the settlement of penalties for foreign offenders and for the verification of driver license

validity should be considered at Community level within the suitable framework; With regard to road safety enforcement, priority should be given to roads with high accident risks, and to driver behaviour that causes high accident risks or could have severe consequences, like speeding, driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, non-use of seat belts. This makes data collection and distribution essential for effective enforcement; Incentives and programmes to promote a widespread use of surveillance techniques, traffic management systems, automatic information systems, systems dedicated to automatic maintenance systems, should be further developed; Promote and organise tools for an information exchange between national and regional governments as well as local administrations regarding best practices, including effects of applied penalties and penalty systems for road safety offences.

2) Vehicle safety : in the last decades the automobile industry has made a major effort to increase vehicle safety. But much can be done to further improve the safety of road vehicles. Without this, the ambitious goals for road safety will not be attainable. The following considerations are of importance: Many lives can be saved by new intelligent safety features integrating both active and passive safety systems. The industry is urged to implement them as quickly and widely as economically possible and sustainable for the users; knowledge about the cause of accidents and the possible benefits of new technology is insufficient. Member States and the European Commission (for accidentology) and industry (for the assessment of technology) have a shared responsibility to improve the situation; Exchanging views between industry and governments about the future of vehicle safety is essential to make progress. Specifically, road operators have an important role in the realisation of an intelligent road infrastructure and databases required to optimise the benefits to be derived from intelligent vehicles. Member States, the European Commission and industry should make a joint effort to create opportunities for a more intensified collaboration; Like environmental friendliness, vehicle safety is not always easy to sell to the customer. The mandatory label on fuel economy, test results of Euro-NCAP or demonstrations are examples of ways governments can increase customer awareness and support the sale of well-performing vehicles. An exchange of views and experiences in this field would be welcomed; In the commercial transport sector an improved safety performance will reduce costs. This can be a good incentive for the inclusion of vehicle safety standards in the corporate safety strategy ("safety culture"); Authorities have a role to play in promoting the installation and use of advanced safety features, by including them in their procurement criteria for their vehicles. The Council also urges the Community's continued engagement in the wider international development of vehicle safety standards through UNECE regulations, developed by the World Forum for Harmonisation of Vehicle Regulations (WP.29).

3) Improving safety on European roads : in order to develop a widespread improvement of the safety of the European road network, the following measures appear to be promising : Identify roads with the highest number of victims of road accidents and analyse the relevant conditions and risk factors on the basis of common and shared principles, so as to guarantee risk assessment criteria shared throughout the European Union; Define medium and long-term plans at the appropriate level aimed at gradually increasing safety levels on roads by analysing the causes of accidents and by giving top priority to the

roads where the highest number of accident victims or the highest intensity of collisions relative to traffic intensity occurs; Foster road network maintenance programmes using GIS and other innovative techniques for monitoring road conditions, traffic flows and road accidents' victims, with the aim of

increasing the road safety level; Develop programmes for improving the protection of vulnerable users, especially by reserving lanes of the existing road surface for pedestrians and cyclists only. Speed management is also an essential tool in the protection of vulnerable road users; Include road safety audit and impact assessment as well as road safety criteria in investment or incentive programmes concerning the construction or maintenance of infrastructure; Develop national and regional training programmes for public and private technicians to promote a broader training in all road safety relevant skills and to improve the identification of risk factors and establish the most effective measures and actions to remove or limit them; Set up structures and tools to promote and organise an appropriate information exchange between public administrations in charge of road safety, information on the best ways to identify major risk factors, on the most effective measures to remove them, on the results of such actions and on the ways to evaluate the effectiveness of the actions carried out; Set up information campaigns aimed at giving citizens adequate, understandable and accurate information on the situations with highest risks and raise the awareness of the various risk factors; Encourage industry, operators, organisations and local and regional authorities to commit themselves to concrete road safety actions by signing the European Road Safety Charter.

4) Funding road safety : Defining a process to access financial resources for road safety investment and to use existing resources in the most efficient way is extremely important for the achievement of the objective of halving the number of road accident victims by 2010. The following measures appear to be

promising : Affirm the importance that road safety is an integral component of the design, construction, improvement, maintenance and upkeep of all roads, and is fully provided for in road funding regimes; Develop programmes and measures at the appropriate level, aimed at fostering an increase in investments in road safety, as well as more efficient use of existing resources, keeping as top priority the most dangerous roads, and strengthening the technical structures for checking road safety; Promote extended cooperation projects between cities and regions to demonstrate, validate and disseminate innovative and cost effective road safety solutions; Encourage collaboration with private companies, evaluating also the possibility of promoting public-private cooperation and the investment of private financial resources for road safety; Consider the possibility of allocating a percentage of vehicle taxes, motorway fees, insurance premiums, et cetera, to road safety improvements and for example, in keeping with the principle of subsidiarity, to a road safety fund; Encourage insurance companies to find ways to reward safe driving and stimulate the use of safe vehicles; Consider the possibility of allocating a part of fines for traffic offences to road safety improvements.

Road safety: halving the number of road accident victims by 2010

2004/2162(INI) - 27/06/2005

At the Presidency's initiative, the Council held a detailed discussion, structured by a questionnaire, on the European road safety action programme in the presence of Mr Jacques BARROT, VicePresident of the Commission with responsibility for transport.

In June 2003 the European Commission submitted its European road safety action programme. The programme involves targeted measures to be implemented by 2010 in order to halve the number of road accident victims in the European Union by 2010. In June 2003 the Council adopted conclusions as a political response to the action programme.

In the action programme, the European Commission announces that it will carry out a midterm review in 2005. This will enable it in particular it to assess the road safety implications of European Union enlargement. The Commission leaves open the option of proposing regulatory measures.