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DRAFT REPORT

on the EU Road Safety Policy Framework 2021-2030 – Recommendations on next steps towards ‘Vision Zero’
(2021/2014(INI))

Committee on Transport and Tourism

Rapporteur: Elena Kountoura

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MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

on the EU Road Safety Policy Framework 2021-2030 – Recommendations on next steps towards ‘Vision Zero’
(2021/2014(INI))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission staff working document of 19 June 2019 entitled ‘EU Road Safety Policy Framework 2021-2030 – Next steps towards “Vision Zero”’ (SWD(2019)0283),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 9 December 2020 entitled ‘Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy – putting European transport on track for the future’ (COM(2020)0789),
- having regard to Directive (EU) 2015/413 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2015 facilitating cross-border exchange of information on road-safety-related traffic offences (Cross-Border Enforcement Directive)¹,
- having regard to Directive 2006/126/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 December 2006 on driving licences (Driving Licence Directive)²,
- having regard to Regulation (EU) 2019/2144 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 November 2019 on type-approval requirements for motor vehicles and their trailers, and systems, components and separate technical units intended for such vehicles, as regards their general safety and the protection of vehicle occupants and vulnerable road users (General Safety Regulation)³,
- having regard to the Committee on Transport and Tourism’s (TRAN) report of 2 March 2021 on the implementation report on the road safety aspects of the Roadworthiness Package (2019/2205(INI)),
- having regard to the Council conclusions of 8 June 2017 entitled ‘road safety – endorsing the Valletta Declaration of March 2017’,
- having regard to the Stockholm Declaration of 19-20 February 2020 made during the Third Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety,
- having regard to Rule 54 of its Rules of Procedure,
- having regard to the report of the Committee on Transport and Tourism (A9-0000/2021),

A. whereas every year around 22 700 people still lose their lives on EU roads and around

¹ OJ L 68, 13.3.2015, p. 9.

² OJ L 403, 30.12.2006, p. 18.

³ OJ L 325, 16.12.2019, p. 1.

120 000 are seriously injured; whereas progress in reducing EU fatality rates has stagnated in recent years and, as a result, the target to halve the number of road deaths between 2010 and 2020 was missed; whereas the above figures represent an unacceptable human and social price for EU citizens;

- B. whereas the EU is being confronted with new trends and challenges in automation that could have a huge impact on road safety; whereas the growing phenomenon of distraction by mobile devices needs to be addressed; whereas in the near future, the presence of both vehicles with a wide range of automated/connected features and traditional vehicles in mixed traffic will pose a new risk, especially for vulnerable road users such as motorcyclists, cyclists and pedestrians;
- C. whereas the share of road deaths of vulnerable road users is increasing, as car users have been the main beneficiaries of improved vehicle safety and other road safety measures; whereas the safety of cyclists and pedestrians must be urgently addressed;
- D. whereas among pedestrians, road deaths affect almost twice as many women as men; whereas gender and social inequalities also exist in mobility and road safety aspects;
- E. whereas achieving the new EU road safety targets requires increased and targeted enforcement measures at national level and effective cooperation on cross-border enforcement of penalties;
- F. whereas 40 % of all road deaths in the EU are work-related; whereas driver fatigue is common on EU roads;
- G. whereas the implementation of the national road safety plans and the new EU road safety policy framework requires sufficient financial resources both from the Member States and the EU budget;

EU road safety policy framework 2021-2030 — next steps towards Vision Zero

1. Welcomes the fact that the EU has reaffirmed in the 2021-2030 EU road safety policy framework its long-term vision to get close to zero deaths by 2050, known as Vision Zero, and its medium-term goal to reduce deaths and serious injuries by 50 % by 2030; highlights that these EU goals and targets relating to road safety should be underpinned by a coordinated, well-planned, systematic and well-financed road safety approach at EU, national and local level;
2. Welcomes in this regard the adoption of the safe system approach at EU level, based on a performance framework and timed targets for the reduction of casualties and serious injuries; welcomes the setting up of key performance indicators (KPIs) established in cooperation with Member States to enable a more focused and targeted analysis of the Member States' performances and to identify shortcomings; calls on the Commission to set outcome targets by 2023; underlines the importance of the ongoing cooperation between the EU and the Members States in this regard and urges all Members States to fully commit to this exercise and agree on a harmonised methodology for KPIs that will allow Member States to be compared;
3. Calls on all Member States to earmark an adequate part of their national budget, which,

coupled with EU funds, should make it possible to implement their national road safety programmes and the new 2021-2030 EU Road Safety Policy Framework;

Safe infrastructure

4. Calls on the Member States and the Commission to prioritise investments with the greatest benefit in terms of road safety, including investments in maintaining existing infrastructure and in the construction of new infrastructure; welcomes, in this regard, the launch of the Safer Transport Platform initiative and calls on all interested parties to consider its use;
5. Highlights that a proactive assessment of the EU road network will be a useful tool to assess the in-built safety of roads and to target investment; welcomes, in this regard, the risk mapping and safety rating of motorways and primary roads introduced in the recently revised EU infrastructure safety rules⁴ and calls on the Member States to designate as many primary roads in their territory as possible to increase the road safety potential of the new directive; calls on the Commission and the Member States to agree as soon as possible on a methodology to carry out systematic network-wide road assessments as mandated in the revision of the above-mentioned act; calls on the Commission and the Member States to speed up the work on the specifications at EU level for the performance of road signs and markings in order to prepare the way for a higher level of automation in vehicles;
6. Calls for measures to further strengthen road safety in urban nodes and improve operational safety throughout the life cycle of critical infrastructure in the forthcoming revision of the TEN-T Regulation; calls on the Commission to set out therein the bases for future investment decisions relating to road safety;

Safe vehicles

7. Welcomes the recent revision of the General Safety Regulation, which will make new advanced safety features in vehicles such as intelligent speed assistance and emergency lane keeping systems mandatory in the EU as from 2022, with the potential to save around 7 300 lives and avoid 38 900 serious injuries by 2030; calls on the Commission to adopt ambitious and timely secondary legislation, to evaluate future developments and to review the regulation where appropriate in order to keep pace with technical developments;
8. Urges the Commission, in line with the TRAN implementation report on the road safety aspects of the Roadworthiness Package, to take due account of the technical progress in vehicle safety features provided for in new General Safety Regulation and to include advanced safety systems in the scope of the next revision of the Roadworthiness Package to ensure they are checked during periodical technical inspections;
9. Calls on the Commission to propose a new harmonised regulatory framework for automated cars in order to ensure, by means of comprehensive tests, including real driving conditions, that automated cars will operate in an absolutely safe manner for

⁴ Directive (EU) 2019/1936 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2019 amending Directive 2008/96/EC on road infrastructure safety management, OJ L 305, 26.11.2019, p. 1.

their drivers and other road users, in particular concerning their interaction with conventional vehicles and vulnerable road users;

10. Notes that new personal mobility devices also raise a number of serious concerns related not only to the safety of the devices themselves, but also to their safe use in traffic; regrets that only a few Member States have introduced legislation on this issue and that the lack of harmonisation in the EU can create confusion and make it difficult for visitors to abide by local rules; calls on the Commission to consider a type approval framework for these new mobility devices and to issue guidelines for Member States on traffic rules for the use of such devices;

Safe road use

11. Notes that according to a Commission study, alcohol is estimated to be involved in around 25 % of all road fatalities, while drugs are involved in 15 % of road fatalities⁵; notes that the EU recommendation on permitted blood alcohol content dates from 2001; calls the Commission to include a zero-tolerance drink-driving limit in its recommendations, and to introduce an EU recommendation for zero tolerance regarding illicit psychoactive drugs and standards on roadside drug-driving enforcement; calls on the Commission to also include in the revised recommendations guidance on the fitting of alcohol interlock devices, with a special focus on repeat offenders, high-level first-time offenders and all professional drivers;
12. Notes that speeding is a key factor in around 30 % of fatal road crashes and an aggravating factor in most crashes; calls on the Commission to come up with a recommendation to apply safe speed limits in line with the safe system approach for all road types, such as maximum speeds of 30km/h in residential areas and areas where there are high numbers of cyclists and pedestrians, or where there could be potential to increase cycling and walking levels, and to assess the feasibility of limiting the maximum top speed of all new vehicles as an effective way of reducing road casualties, as well as air pollution and carbon dioxide emissions;
13. Notes that according to Commission estimates⁶, 10 million major road traffic offences in the EU related to speeding, driving through red lights and drink-driving committed by non-residents are detected each year; acknowledges the progress made in setting up a framework for the cross-border enforcement of traffic offences since 2015, yet regrets that the existing framework on cross-border enforcement of traffic offences laid down in the Cross-Border Enforcement Directive does not adequately ensure investigation in order to enforce penalties or recognition of decisions on penalties; believes that better cross-border enforcement of road traffic rules would increase compliance with such rules and act as a deterrent, thereby reducing dangerous behaviour and improving road safety; calls on the Commission, in this regard, to address the above-mentioned issues in the next review of the directive and to assess the issue of mutual recognition of driving disqualifications and penalty points;

⁵ Commission study of 18 February 2014 on the prevention of drink-driving by the use of alcohol interlock devices.

⁶ Commission Inception Impact Assessment of 15 March 2019 on the revision of the Cross-Border Enforcement Directive.

14. Recalls that the Driving Licence Directive established a harmonised EU licence model and introduced minimum requirements for obtaining licences; notes that the directive will need to be kept up-to-date regarding new technological developments in vehicle and infrastructure technology and vehicle automation; calls on the Commission to consider introducing a graduated licencing system that encourages novice drivers to gain more experience while limiting certain high-risk activities such as driving at night and with passengers; notes with concern that cases of irregular issuing of driving licences have been reported in several Member States and calls on the Commission to monitor this issue;
15. Notes that the COVID-19 pandemic has led to the expansion of the home delivery sector and specifically the use of vans, powered two-wheelers and bicycles; calls on the Commission to consider introducing a requirement for van drivers to undergo professional driver training and proposing a regulation on working hours and rest periods for van drivers; calls on the Commission to assess the introduction of a recommendation on the safety of delivery personnel, including requirements for employers and companies to ensure the provision and use of safety equipment and safe vehicles;
16. Highlights the importance of fast and effective post-crash care in significantly reducing the consequences of injury; calls on the Member States, in this context, to establish closer collaboration between their road safety authorities and the health sector, to make it mandatory to build emergency lanes and to enforce their correct use to speed up rescue operations; calls on the Commission to consider making first aid training compulsory in the future revision of the Driving Licence Directive;
17. Stresses that poor enforcement of road traffic rules undermines efforts to achieve Vision Zero; encourages the Member States to set annual targets for enforcement and compliance in their road safety plans and to ensure their adequate funding; underlines that only well-explained and well-publicised consistent enforcement activities can have a long-lasting effect on driving behaviour;

Framework fit for the future

18. Highlights that external factors and emerging societal trends present unprecedented challenges to road safety under the EU strategy to 2030 and beyond; notes that the EU should pave the way for connected and automated vehicles to be rolled out in due time and should assess the possible risks of combining such vehicles with traditional vehicles in mixed traffic and vulnerable road users;
19. Points out that data will play a key role in improving road safety; recalls that in-vehicle data are extremely valuable for traffic management, roadworthiness tests and the investigation of crashes; calls on the Commission to set up a framework to access in-vehicle data beyond the repair market in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation, solely for the purpose of accident research and roadworthiness tests;
20. Calls on the Commission, in view of the upcoming revision of the Urban Mobility Package, to promote synergies between safety and sustainability measures in urban areas; calls, in this regard, for the reprioritisation of transport infrastructure in dense urban areas away from individual motorised transport towards public transport and

sustainable, safer and healthier transport modes such as walking and cycling;

21. Stresses the importance of engaging civil society in achieving Vision Zero; welcomes the launch of the EU Urban Road Safety award, as part of European Mobility Week and the revamping of the European Road Safety Charter, the largest civil society platform on road safety; calls on the Commission to organise a ‘European Year of Road Safety’ initiative in the coming years, as part of the 2021-2030 EU Road Safety Policy Framework;
22. Is of the view that in order to properly implement the next steps in the EU road safety policy under the overarching Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy, some new capacities are needed in the field of road safety, in particular with respect to the coordination, monitoring and evaluation functions and technical support for the overall strategy; calls on the Commission in this regard to explore options to further support safe road transport under an existing agency or another body;
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23. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, and the governments and parliaments of the Member States.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

1. Background and general considerations

Every year nearly 1 million crashes occur in the EU. In 2019 only, there were 23,000 deaths and 12,000 serious injuries. The weekly number of road deaths in the EU is equivalent to a jumbo jet crashing and killing everyone -around 500 people- on board. Although the EU and its Member States have achieved a substantial progress in road safety during the last decades, the Rapporteur acknowledges that these numbers are shocking and highlight, in the most dramatic way, that road safety must be a priority at political, social and personal level. Besides, these figures represent next-door tragedies and carry a huge cost to society. This is why the EU's long-term vision is to move as close as possible to zero fatalities in road transport by 2050 (*Vision Zero*).

The rapporteur firmly believes that our society should no longer accept deaths and serious injuries on the road. Our fundamental right to mobility should not be accompanied by a road death toll and this principle needs to streamline all decision making on road safety. In this regard, the Rapporteur deeply regrets the significant stagnation in numbers concerning deaths and serious injuries on EU roads and since 2013 and that the strategic target of the "Policy Orientations on Road Safety 2011-2020" to reduce road fatalities by 50% between 2010 and 2020 was not met. What is more, disparities in the road safety performance between Member States remain noteworthy and new trends and challenges in our way of living and moving, geared also by technological progress, need to be urgently addressed.

All the above have made prominent that we have a long way to go and great effort is still required before we have moved closer to *Vision Zero*. In parallel, they have also stressed that a paradigm shift in the way we approach road safety is necessary.

The European Council has already made a step forward towards this direction by endorsing the Valetta declaration in March 2017, reasserting commitments and targets in the area of road safety. Following the Council conclusions, the European Commission adopted a new approach to EU road safety for the years 2021-2030, reaffirming its ambitious long-term vision and setting the targets of reducing by 50% deaths and - for the first time - serious injuries by 2030. This policy was initially introduced by the Commission in the "Europe on the Move" package and the accompanying Strategic Action Plan on Road Safety, in May 2018. Almost a year after, with the adoption of the EU Road Safety Policy Framework 2021-2030- Next steps towards "Vision Zero" the Commission set out how this policy could be translated into action.

The novelty of the new policy framework is the adoption of the so-called "Safe System" approach, which aims at reframing road safety policy by focussing on the prevention of deaths and serious injuries in four core elements: safe vehicles, safe infrastructure, safe road use and better post-crash care, and requires enhanced governance at EU level. According to the "Safe System" approach, deaths and serious injuries are largely preventable even though collisions will continue to occur.

It is therefore due time for the European Parliament to deliver a political resolution on road safety. This report serves as Parliament's formal response to the above-mentioned Commission's new approach and its EU Road Safety Policy Framework 2021-2030.

In this respect, the Rapporteur welcomes the new Policy Framework, the new targets set and

the adoption of the “Safe System” approach. According to the Rapporteur, this Policy Framework accompanied with political will and with coordinated measures at EU, national regional and local level, has the potential to act as a valuable tool in reversing indexes’ stagnation and in delivering safer roads for all, thus improving social welfare.

The report makes an analysis of all aspects of the new policy and provides an assessment on how EU intends to implement the proposed actions, while setting political priorities and suggesting further initiatives at EU and national levels.

In the light of certain upcoming Commission’s legislative initiatives, the Rapporteur calls for the adoption of specific proposals to reinforce road safety on the TEN-T Regulation, the Urban Mobility review, the Driving Licence Directive, the Cross Border enforcement Directive on road safety-related offences and the Roadworthiness Package.

Furthermore, since road safety is a shared competence, further proposals come as an urge to the Commission to adopt recommendations towards the Member States. It is worthy underlining that the Commission recommendations on road safety have proven to be a very valuable tool to drive policy change in Member States.

2. Main issues and the Rapporteur’s position

2.1. EU road safety policy framework 2021-2030 - Next steps towards “Vision Zero”

As stated above, the Report embraces the EU Road Safety Policy Framework 2021-2030, the new targets set and the adoption of the “Safe System” approach.

The introduction of a first set of eight key performance indicators (KPIs) will enable a more targeted analysis of Member States’ performances and identify deficiencies. The Rapporteur calls for outcome KPI targets by 2023 and urges Member States and their national competent authorities to fully engage in the collection of these data.

The implementation of the EU road safety policy can only be achieved through the appropriate political commitment and the allocation of adequate financial resources. On this basis, the Rapporteur asks the Member States to designate part of their national budget for road safety and to combine it with EU funds, in order to achieve better results.

2.2 Safe infrastructure

The quality of all road related infrastructures and their in-built safety level is a key factor for road users’ protection. The rapporteur is of the belief that Member States and the European Commission have to prioritise those investments that generate the highest benefit in terms of road safety when they built or when they construct new infrastructures.

What is more, the user of the road has to be aware of the quality and its safety level. An important first step was taken with the risk mapping and safety rating for motorways and primary roads introduced in the recent revision of the EU infrastructure safety rules. However, the Rapporteur stresses that, based on commonly agreed criteria, all European roads must be systematically assessed and rated.

Further, the forthcoming revision of the TEN-T Regulation, shall include measures to further

strengthen road safety in urban nodes and improve operational safety throughout the life cycle of critical infrastructure.

2.3 Safe vehicles

Having safer vehicles on the roads is another core element of the “Safe System” approach. Advanced technical features in vehicles, automation and micro-mobility are among the challenges that the EU Road Safety policy is called to address.

With the recent revision of the General Safety Regulation, advanced safety features in vehicles, such as Intelligent Speed Assistance and Emergency Lane Keeping System, will very soon be mandatory. The Rapporteur welcomes this revision, calls for ambitious secondary legislation in order to keep pace with technical developments and supports the inclusion of these advanced safety features in the scope of the next revision of the Roadworthiness package. Besides, the Rapporteur stresses the need for a new harmonised regulatory framework for automated cars in order to safeguard that they will operate in a safe manner.

Regarding personal mobility devices, the Commission is asked to deliver a type approval framework for the new mobility devices and to issue guidelines on traffic rules and on their use for Members States.

2.4 Safe road use and enhanced post-crash care

Alcohol is involved in around 25% of all road fatalities and together with speeding is one of the two main killers on the road. Therefore, the Rapporteur takes a clear stance in favour of zero-tolerance drink driving for all drivers. The same principle shall also apply for illicit psychoactive drugs. Accordingly, the report calls for standards on roadside drug driving enforcement.

Regarding speeding, the Rapporteur is of the view that safe speed limits, in line with the Safe System approach, must apply for all different road types. A very good example is the maximum speeds of 30km/h in residential areas and areas where there are high levels of cyclists and pedestrians. Many European cities have adopted this good practice, with considerable results in terms of road safety and quality of life improvement.

The Rapporteur underlines the worryingly high amount of road traffic offenses committed by non-residents and points out the need of further strengthening the efficiency of the existing framework for cross-border enforcement of road traffic offenses, in the upcoming revision of the Directive.

The Rapporteur also reckons that introducing measures to encourage novice drivers to gain more experience, as part of the Driving Licence Directive, and its continuous update with technological developments in vehicles and infrastructure will result in a safer road use.

Delivery vans, powered two-wheelers, and bicycles are all around urban roads, as home delivery sector has increased substantially, also due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A big percentage of road crashes is directly linked to the quality of professional drivers' working conditions. Hence, the Rapporteur suggests measures to tackle drivers' fatigue and improve the safety of delivery personnel.

Fast and effective post-crash care has proven to be a key factor in reducing the severity of injuries, in many cases. In this regard, the Rapporteur calls for closer collaboration between road safety authorities and the health sector and for compulsory first-aid training for all drivers as part of the Driving Licence Directive.

Enforcement of road traffic rules is an essential element for safer road use. According to the Rapporteur, a long-lasting change in driving behaviour can only be achieved through adequate funding, annual targets and well explained and publicised enforcement measures.

2.5 Framework fit for the future

The ability to closely follow and adopt to new societal changes and continuous technology advances has to be an in-built feature of the EU road safety policy. For instance, over the coming few years, automated cars will be operating in roads together with conventional vehicles and vulnerable road users. The rapporteur fully acknowledges the risks that may arise from the various challenges to come for road safety and asks the EU to prepare the ground in addressing them.

In the light of future evolutions, the Rapporteur, aiming to further enhancing road safety, is also asking for a framework to access in-vehicle data beyond the repair market in full compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation. She considers that access to in-vehicle data should be only for accident research and roadworthiness purposes.

Moreover, the report gives special consideration to vulnerable road users. So far, improved vehicle safety and other road safety measures have mainly benefited car users. The Rapporteur stresses that the safety of pedestrians and cyclists and of certain other demographic groups (e.g. elderly road users, reduced mobility users) is not to be compromised. Additionally, having more people walking, cycling and using public transportation will not only increase our road safety levels but will also help in achieving our climate targets. This is why the Rapporteur favours synergies between safety and sustainability measures and calls for the reprioritisation of transport infrastructure in dense urban areas.

The Rapporteur emphasizes the active engagement of civil society and social partners as a prerequisite in achieving “Vision Zero”. The EU road safety policy must include a comprehensive outreach scheme and incentives to all stakeholders to improve safety on the road. The Rapporteur recognises the importance in this context of the EU Urban Road Safety award as well as Commission’s intention to revitalise the European Road Safety Charter and goes a step further by asking for a “European Year of Road Safety” in due time.

Finally, the Rapporteur is of the opinion that an enhanced governance structure is of paramount importance for the proper implementation of the EU road safety policy, under the overarching Sustainable and Smart Mobility strategy. Drawing inspiration from the contribution to advances in safety that European agencies in other modes of transport have delivered, the Report calls the Commission to further support safe road transport by exploring the feasibility of creating a new agency.

**ANNEX: LIST OF ENTITIES OR PERSONS
FROM WHOM THE RAPPORTEUR HAS RECEIVED INPUT**

The following list is drawn up on a purely voluntary basis under the exclusive responsibility of the rapporteur. The rapporteur has received input from the following entities or persons in the preparation of the draft report on EU Road Safety Policy Framework 2021-2030 – Recommendations on next steps towards “Vision Zero” (2017/2067(INI));

Entity and/or person
European Commission - DG MOVE
European Transport Safety Council (ETSC)
European Transport Workers’ Federation (ETF)