



## 2021 EU ROAD SAFETY RESULTS CONFERENCE

The EU Road Safety Results Conference was an opportunity to engage with EU Member State authorities and all stakeholders on the progress being made with implementing the Safe System approach. In particular, it allowed participants to learn how work towards the Key Performance Indicators set out in the Next Steps Towards Vision Zero policy framework was moving forward. It also offered a forum for analysis and exchange between senior EU policy makers and the wider European road safety community. In this event, representatives from leading institutions participated, among them Adina Vălean, the European Commissioner for Transport, Matthew Baldwin, Deputy Director General, DG MOVE, Elena Kountoura, MEP, Malina Kroumova, State Agency for Road Safety (Bulgaria).

Commenting on the data, Antonio Avenoso, Executive Director of the European Transport Safety Council (ETSC) said:

“The EU has a new target for 2030 to reduce deaths and serious injuries by half. If we are to succeed this time, we need to avoid the mistakes of the past decade. The EU needs to act now, not wait years before taking action. Measures agreed in law should also not be weakened during the implementation phase. That, regrettably, is what we are seeing today with mandatory vehicle safety measures including Intelligent Speed Assistance (ISA), Electronic Data Recorders (EDR) and Direct Vision standards for lorries.

The Covid-19 pandemic has shown how quickly the road safety situation can change. As traffic levels reduced and police time was spent on other things, speeding went up in several countries. On a positive note, as cities put in place new cycling infrastructure, cycling numbers increased. We need to learn the lessons and build a safer and more equal system for all road users – giving back separated space for healthier, sustainable activities like walking and cycling”.

[More information](#)



## PARLIAMENT WANTS ALL MOTORCYCLES TO BE SUBJECT TO REGULAR TECHNICAL CHECKS

The European Parliament is urging the European Commission to consider mandating regular technical inspections for all motorcycles in all EU Member States when vehicle roadworthiness rules are revised in 2023. Only motorcycles above 125cc are required to be checked under rules on regular technical inspections today, though many EU member states require checks on such vehicles anyway.

In a report approved by the Parliament's online plenary session on 3 March, parliamentarians set out a number of changes they would like to see that would make safety checks more wide-ranging and in line with new technology.

MEPs also want technical checks to move with the times, including testing of emergency call systems (eCall) and new safety technologies that will be required from 2022 such as automated emergency braking systems (AEB) and Intelligent Speed Assistance (ISA). Checks could be used to screen for technical failures or tampering.

[More information](#)



## OVERHAUL OF EU RULES ON DRIVER MEDICAL FITNESS NEEDED

The current EU approach to assessing whether drivers are medically fit to hold a licence needs substantial revision, according to a new report by ETSC.

The report examines the current state of play in European countries regarding the assessment of medical fitness to drive, with reference to current EU rules. The EU is currently reviewing the Directive on driver licensing and a revised legal proposal is expected in 2022.

The report shows that the starting point for many EU countries is still age-based assessment despite the fact that studies have concluded that specific medical conditions, substance abuse, mental disorders, epilepsy and diabetes are more important factors than age when it comes to medical fitness to drive. Mandatory age-based screening of older drivers has not been shown to be effective in preventing severe collisions. It may even have a negative safety impact, as older drivers with revoked licences due to poor health become vulnerable road users. ETSC is recommending that national governments should make wider use of conditional licences to allow those who may be at slight risk to continue to drive under certain circumstances.

When it comes to driving under the influence of medication, less is known about the effects than for alcohol. ETSC recommends applying the existing EU 'DRUID' categorisation for labelling relevant medicines and stressing the role doctors can play in advising their patients on the impact of prescription medicines on driving.

[More information](#)



## IS CAR NO LONGER KING IN BERLIN?

A new “pedestrian law” has been passed in Berlin, with the aim of shifting the priority away from cars, and further towards vulnerable road users.

At the end of January, Berlin’s state parliament passed a so-called pedestrian law — an amendment to a 2018 law that focused on improving traffic safety for cyclists. Both were the first of their kind in Germany, according to DW – a German news broadcaster.

The new requirements include: longer green lights for pedestrians, safer routes to school, more pedestrian crossings and more benches for older people and others in need of a rest along their route; curbs are to be lowered to make them more wheelchair accessible; construction sites will need to ensure that pedestrians and cyclists can safely navigate around them; and city authorities are supposed to crack down harder on illegal parking and dangerous driving.

ETSC says the modal priority in urban areas should put pedestrians and cyclists first, followed by public transport and then private motor vehicles.

[More information](#)



## MEMBER STATES WARNED ON NEED FOR ACCESS TO IN-VEHICLE CRASH DATA

ETSC, together with a coalition of organisations, has written to EU Member State representatives to outline concerns over specifications for in-vehicle Electronic Data Recorders which will be mandatory in the EU starting from 2022.

The issue relates to the need to record location, date and time events on the devices. Such information is critical to road safety researchers and in-depth collision investigations, which, as in the aviation sector, can be used to help prevent a similar situation occurring in the future.

While robust data privacy requirements were written into the legislation, ETSC and other expert organisations believe that the European Commission’s interpretation is too strict. While there should

be tight controls on who can access location and time data, the organisations believe it is absolutely essential that it is available to certain authorised parties.

Furthermore, the original purpose of requiring the devices was to provide a data source to improve road safety. Ruling out the recording of location and time information would render the device data virtually useless to road safety researchers.

In recent years, with the rise of automated systems in vehicles, it has become ever more necessary for crash investigators and road safety researchers to understand which systems were active at the time of the crash. Electronic Data Recorders only store data when a collision occurs. There is no question of EDRs being used to continuously track vehicle movements.

The letter from ETSC and others also reiterates concerns over the weakening of technical standards for Intelligent Speed Assistance technology, also mandatory starting in 2022. The organisations believe the requirements for the systems will result in vastly inferior safety benefits compared to the system envisaged at the time the legislation was developed.

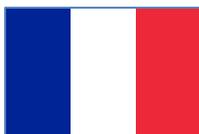
[More information](#)



## REVERSING CAR DEPENDENCY

Managing the growth of urban traffic is vital for improving the liveability of our cities. This report examines how governments can encourage citizens to use alternatives to private cars in order to reduce car dependency, regardless of how they are powered or who drives them. The report analyses fiscal policies and other instruments for managing urban traffic and correcting current policy biases that favour automobile travel over more sustainable and affordable transport options. It also reviews international experience in co-ordinating transport planning with land-use development and in allocating space to walking and cycling in order to make transport more efficient and streets less congested.

[More information](#)



## FRANCE MOVES TO BAN SHORT-HAUL DOMESTIC FLIGHTS

French MPs have voted to suspend domestic airline flights on routes that can be travelled by direct train in less than two and a half hours, as part of a series of climate and environmental measures.

After a heated debate in the Assemblée Nationale at the weekend, the ban, a watered-down version of a key recommendation from President Emmanuel Macron's citizens' climate convention, was adopted. It will mean the end of short internal flights from Orly airport, south of Paris, to Nantes and Bordeaux

among others, though connecting flights through Charles de Gaulle/Roissy airport, north of the French capital, will continue.

The climate commission set up by Macron had originally recommended the scrapping of all flights between French destinations where an alternative direct train journey of less than four hours existed. This was reduced to two and a half hours after strong objections from certain regions and from Air France-KLM, which, like other airlines, has been badly hit by local and international COVID-19 restrictions on travel.

A year ago, the French government agreed a €7bn loan for AF-KLM on the condition that certain internal flights were dropped, but the decree will also stop low-cost airlines from operating the banned domestic routes.

The chief executive of Air France-KLM, Benjamin Smith, has said the airline is committed to reducing the number of its French domestic routes by 40% by the end of this year.

[More information](#)

## ROAD SAFETY IN THE MEDIA

### **Two die in Tesla car crash in Texas with 'no one' in driver's seat**

Car ran off road and hit a tree north of Houston, before bursting into flames, local media says

Two men died after a Tesla vehicle, which was believed to be operating without anyone in the driver's seat, crashed into a tree north of Houston, authorities said.

The 2019 Tesla Model S was traveling at high speed when it failed to negotiate a curve and went off the roadway. After the fire was extinguished, authorities located two passengers, with one in the front passenger seat while the other was in the back seat of the Tesla, the report said.

Tesla and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration did not immediately respond to a request for comment. The accident came amid growing scrutiny over Tesla's semi-automated driving system following recent accidents and as it is preparing to launch its updated "full self-driving" software to more customers. The self-driving technology must overcome safety and regulatory hurdles to achieve commercial success.

[More information](#)

## **Ivory Coast suspends all driving test staff as road deaths rise**

All driving test examiners have been suspended across Ivory Coast while the government "cleans up" the sector.

Fraud, corruption and a rise in road accidents are of concern, it says.

Police officers will take over and officiate driving tests for a period of three months, announced Transport Minister Amadou Koné. He said the country enjoys "better quality roads" after recent investment but said human error was behind many of the latest accidents. "This is not an incrimination of the licence as such but there are a great number of matters on which we have decided to be uncompromising."

Around 1,400 people die each year in road accidents in Ivory Coast. At least 38 people have been killed this month alone, including eight who burned to death after a car and a minibus collided on a main road 149 km (92 miles) from the biggest city Abidjan.

A corrupt examiner has never been convicted in Ivory Coast. Corruption has been around for long that people don't necessarily see it as a bad thing - they think it's normal.

[More information](#)

## **All Renault and Dacia cars will be speed-limited to 180km/h from 2022**

The brand's CEO claims the move will make roads safer.

All Renault cars will be speed-limited to 180km/h from next year, the French manufacturer has confirmed.

The cap will also reportedly apply to cars built by Renault's budget Romanian subsidiary Dacia (although this is unlikely to inconvenience many people as, even in flagship 2.0-litre guise, the top-selling Duster SUV maxes out at just 181km/h).

Caradvice understands the upcoming Mégane eVision SUV (shown in concept form below) will be the first model fitted with the limiter, before a wider roll-out across the range.

[More information](#)

## Driver parks car in truck emergency lane to walk dog, fine \$272

An ignorant driver has been busted for parking their car in the middle of a truck emergency lane – which was used to stop a runaway vehicle just a fortnight ago – so they could take their dog for a walk in nearby bushland.



Truck 'arrestor beds' or 'sand traps' are designed to stop heavy vehicles at the bottom of steep hills if they run out of brakes.

But one owner of a Mitsubishi Mirage thought it would be a good place for a picnic or to walk their dog, and has copped a \$272 fine for their trouble – and, presumably, for not noticing the massive signs.

Highway patrol police near the coastal city of Wollongong, south of Sydney, were notified of the parked vehicle and commenced a search of the nearby area to try to locate the vehicle's owner.

Police said the driver "had deliberately parked their vehicle in the middle of the safety ramp to do so" and "did not see any signs indicating they could not park there".

The driver was directed to move the vehicle and issued a \$272 fine.

The safety ramp in question was used to stop a runaway truck just a fortnight ago (pictured above), demonstrating the importance of keeping sand traps clear.

Commenters on Facebook were furious at the driver's actions, with some suggesting there should be a ticket for a lack of common sense. Others said it was such a faux-pas it should warrant an automatic loss of licence.

[More information](#)