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Subject: Council conclusions on road safety - endorsing the Valletta Declaration of March 2017

– Council conclusions (8 June 2017)

Delegations will find in the annex the Council conclusions on "Road safety endorsing the Valletta Declaration (Valletta, 28 – 29 March 2017)", adopted by the Council at its 3545th meeting held on 8 June 2017.

COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS
on road safety
- endorsing the Valletta Declaration of March 2017 -

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

1. TAKING STOCK of the continuous work undertaken through various policies to further improve road safety;
2. TAKING NOTE of the Commission's publication of statistics on road traffic fatalities in the Union for the year 2016;¹
3. WELCOMING the ministerial conference on road safety organised by the Maltese Presidency in Valletta on 29 March 2017;
4. ENDORSES the content of the Valletta declaration on road safety, set out in the annex to these conclusions;
5. INVITES the Member States to continue their efforts and cooperation in implementing the commitments made in that declaration;
6. INVITES the Commission to associate itself to these efforts and to take into account the declaration when preparing the next Union strategy on road safety.

¹ European Commission Press Release IP/17/674 of 28 March 2017.

1. Transport ministers of the Member States of the European Union, meeting in Valletta on 29 March 2017 under the Maltese Presidency of the Council of the European Union, reconfirm their commitment to improving road safety. The persistently high number of traffic fatalities (26 100 deaths in the EU in 2015) and serious road traffic injuries is a major societal problem causing human suffering and unacceptable economic costs, estimated to be in the order of EUR 50 billion per year for fatal accidents alone², and more than EUR 100 billion when serious accidents are included.³
2. There has been a steady and promising trend towards meeting the common target of halving the number of road deaths between 2010 and 2020, endorsed by the Council of the European Union in 2010,⁴ but fatality reduction rates have plateaued in recent years. Of particular concern is the number of fatalities and serious injuries among pedestrians and cyclists. The target has therefore become extremely challenging and, unless further efforts are made, it may not be met.
3. The work on improving road safety should not be measured only by counting road deaths; the number of serious injuries is no less worrying as it is five times higher than the number of road deaths.² An ambitious overall target should be aimed at, in the spirit of the UN General Assembly resolution on improving global road safety⁵, to drive the appropriate reduction measures. Such a target needs monitoring through comparable and reliable data, reported using a common definition. Those data have to be thoroughly analysed in collaborative work between Member States and the European Commission so that, based on their robustness, appropriate additional measures can be taken to reduce the number of such injuries in the next decade.

² European Commission, Road safety study for the interim evaluation of Policy Orientations on Road Safety 2011-2020, 2015, p. 19.

³ European Commission, press release, 31 March 2016, IP/16/863.

⁴ Council conclusions on road safety, 2 December 2010, paragraph 21, ST 16951/10.

⁵ Resolution A/70/260 of April 2016.

4. The situation with regard to road safety varies widely across the Member States. A special effort should be made in those cases where road safety is below the European Union average, supported by close cooperation and knowledge-exchange among Member States.
5. Speeding, driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, and being distracted or tired while driving continue to be among the major causes of road traffic collisions. Failure to use protective equipment aggravates the severity of injuries. Particular attention should thus be paid to improving road users' behaviour.
6. There is already a wide range of instruments relating to, in particular, better enforcement of traffic rules in the Member States and across borders, better education of, and awareness-raising among, road users, as well as improvement of infrastructure and vehicle safety, taking into account age and roadworthiness. These instruments should be readily applied.
7. Building on the principle of subsidiarity, road safety is a shared responsibility, which requires concrete and joint action by the institutions of the European Union, the Member States, regional and local authorities, industry and civil society.
8. Member States will undertake to:
 - a) continue and reinforce measures necessary to halve the number of road deaths in the EU by 2020 from the 2010 baseline;
 - b) enhance cooperation between Member States, including relevant authorities, and with civil society, research institutes and the private sector, in particular with regard to road safety plans and strategies following a risk-based or an integrated approach (such as the 'Safe System' approach);
 - c) take cycling⁶ and walking into account in mobility plans, safety policies and measures and, where feasible, consider the inclusion of dedicated infrastructure;

⁶ The policy on cycling is specifically addressed in the Declaration of Luxembourg on cycling as a climate friendly transport mode, October 2015.

- d) improve the safety of road users by developing safer road infrastructure, bearing in mind the possibility of extending the application of infrastructure safety management principles beyond the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) roads;
- e) engage with relevant stakeholders, as part of urban mobility planning, on the possibility of expanding and integrating reduced speed limits, such as 30 km/h, into high-risk areas, in particular areas where people work, cycle and play;
- f) ensure the effective deployment of the e-Call system and reduce rescue times;
- g) promote the undertaking of in-depth investigations using relevant samples of severe traffic collisions/accidents and analysing the data to identify priority areas for intervention;
- h) continue, in parallel with their efforts towards reaching the 2020 fatality reduction target, with the work towards: (i) reducing the number of serious injuries in road traffic collisions, and (ii) reporting reliable and comparable data using a common definition based on the MAIS⁷3+ trauma scale by 2018;
- i) set a target of halving the number of serious injuries in the EU by 2030 from the 2020 baseline using this common definition and in the framework of an overall road safety strategy for this period;
- j) continue developing measures to ensure post-collision care, early rehabilitation and social reintegration of road traffic accident victims, in cooperation with the relevant public policy stakeholders, in particular with those representing road traffic victims;

⁷ *Maximum Abbreviated Injury Scale*, an index ranging from 1 to 6.

- k) effectively enforce road safety rules and provide support to road enforcement bodies, including through cooperation and exchange of best practices, in particular with regard to speeding, driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, failing to comply with traffic light and traffic sign rules, being distracted while driving, e.g. by using mobile devices, and failing to use protective equipment. Particular attention should be given to preventive tools such as alcohol interlocks, and to other technical support systems;
- l) continue to work in international road safety bodies⁸ to help accelerate improvements in road safety through technical and non-technical means in Europe and further afield;
- m) ensure adequate levels of funding for future road safety policies, programmes and research in accordance with (i) the objectives set out in national strategies and (ii) the available financial resources of the Member States;
- n) promote, together with the European Commission, a Europe-wide road safety culture based on shared values and improve road users' behaviour through continued and effective education and training targeting different groups, taking into account the specific needs of vulnerable road users⁹ as well as professional drivers;
- o) support the deployment of compatible and interoperable connected and automated vehicles with proven safety benefits, as mentioned in the Declaration of Amsterdam¹⁰ and the Commission's strategy on Cooperative Intelligent Transport Systems.¹¹

⁸ Such as working groups of the UN Economic Commission for Europe (Working Party on Road Traffic Safety (WP.1), World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations (WP.29), Working Party on the Transport of Dangerous Goods (WP.15)).

⁹ 'Vulnerable road users' includes non-motorised road users, such as pedestrians and cyclists, as well as motor-cyclists and persons with disabilities or reduced mobility and orientation.

¹⁰ Declaration of Amsterdam on cooperation in the field of connected and automated driving, April 2016.

¹¹ Document ST 15203/16 (COM (2016) 766 final of November 2016).

9. Member States call upon the Commission to:
- a) enhance the protection of road users, and in particular vulnerable road users, by ensuring the deployment of new safety features for vehicles, for instance through accelerating the review of type-approval rules in the General Safety Regulation as outlined in the Commission's report to the European Parliament and the Council entitled 'Saving Lives: Boosting Car Safety in the EU';¹²
 - b) prepare a new road safety policy framework for the decade after 2020, including an assessment of road safety performance taking into account the targets and objectives set out in this declaration;
 - c) explore the strengthening of the Union's road safety legal framework with a particular focus on Member States' cooperation on the mutual recognition of the driving disqualifications of non-resident drivers, without prejudice to the appropriate legal base(s) for such proposals;
 - d) work with all stakeholders to establish projects and initiatives to protect vulnerable road users and facilitate the exchange of knowledge and best practices among Member States concerning road accident investigation, as well as road safety strategies and campaigns;
 - e) explore the potential of connected and automated driving technologies, and of the use of the data that is already available in vehicles and infrastructure, to enhance road safety while ensuring data security;
 - f) ensure that necessary resources are allocated to research, programmes and projects promoting road safety in Europe;
 - g) cooperate with Member States and other key stakeholders on developing a Europe-wide road safety culture.

¹² Document ST 15705/16 (COM (2016) 787 final of December 2016).

10. Member States invite industry, in cooperation with civil society in the sector, to:
- a) develop cooperative intelligent transport systems, ensuring that new services and systems are compatible, secure and interoperable at European level;
 - b) develop and promote new technologies, especially those automated driving functions and driver assistance systems that reduce the effects of human error and distraction, such as advanced Intelligent Speed Assistance or Autonomous Emergency Braking, protecting in particular vulnerable road users;
 - c) promote the road safety potential of cooperative, connected and automated vehicles.
11. The transport ministers highlight the importance of continuous work and cooperation on road safety, and take note of the contributions and commitments made by stakeholders prior to and during the Valletta conference.
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