



European
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Council



F.E.V.R.



MEPS' DECISION ON PEDESTRIAN PROTECTION: 2000 LIVES ANNUALLY AT STAKE

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On 18 April the European Parliament's Regional Policy, Transport and Tourism Committee will vote on the voluntary agreement on pedestrian protection in car crashes. This vote may be decisive for the vote in plenary. European NGOs¹ representing safety, accident victims, consumers, disability, health and transport concerns warn that thousands of lives are at stake.

Jeanne Breen, ETSC Executive Director, said: "We are urging MEPs to reject the voluntary agreement since it fails to implement state of the art EEVC² crash tests which could save up to 2000 lives and prevent 17000 serious injuries. We want a directive implementing these life-saving tests. We fear MEPs could agree to a weak directive leaving the door open for take up in legislation of other 'equivalent' test methods (which do not yet exist), this would mean further research, further delay and sets in stone the worst elements of the voluntary agreement. "

According to **EPHA**: "Overall, the voluntary agreement tests would provide 75% less protection against fatal injury than the EEVC tests. Only two tests (lower leg, one head test) as opposed to four tests proposed by EEVC (lower leg, upper leg, adult head, child head) would be required by the voluntary agreement. The removal of the upper leg tests will not protect against fatal injuries to small children nor protect against adult hip and leg injuries. Combining the child and adult head tests into one "average" mass head test underestimates the risks posed to both child and adult heads and fails to protect adequately against skull fracture and brain injury ".

Francis Herbert of FEVR said, "Since legislation was first promised ten years ago, we have missed the opportunity to save 20,000 lives – most of these would have been either children or the elderly. Road accident victims demand that MEPs put public safety above industrial convenience and insist on the implementation by Directive of the well-researched and well-established EEVC tests".

Yannis Vardakastanis, President of EDF, said "EDF calls on MEPs to ensure vehicles comply with the requirements of the EEVC tests to improve the safety of disabled pedestrians who are particularly vulnerable to hazards on the road."

According to **Beatrice Schell, Director of T&E** "Similar voluntary agreements with carmakers on CO2 emissions have not brought about improvements quicker or greater than legislation would have achieved".

Gottlobe Fabisch, Secretary General of ANEC, said, "As Parliament's Industry Committee acknowledged recently, this agreement fails to deliver the high level of protection required by the Treaty . How could MEPS possibly agree to proceed with it?"

Finally, **Willemien Bax, BEUC's Deputy Director** said: "The fact that the Commission even proposed this voluntary agreement causes us to deeply mistrust the new approach towards legislation as suggested in the white paper on governance. We find pedestrian safety too important an area to experiment with new types of co-regulation, all the more so as the European Parliament will only be consulted, and will be deprived of its hard won powers of co-decision in this area".

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¹ Organisations participating are: ETSC, the European Transport Safety Council; EPHA, the European Public Health Alliance; FEVR, the Federation of European Road Traffic Victims; EDF, the European Disability Forum; T&E, the European Federation for Transport and Environment; ANEC, the European Association for the Coordination of Consumer Representation in Standardisation; BEUC, the European Consumers' Organisation.

² European Enhanced Vehicle Safety Committee - a research programme involving national laboratories, government departments, and industry that has been running for more than 20 years