

PRACTICAL ACTIONS PACKAGE

Dr. George Yannis

Chairman of the Hellenic Institute of Transportation Engineers

Lecturer at the Dpt of Transportation Planning and Engineering of the Nat.Tech.University of Athens

The aim of this work is to present a practical actions package elaborated at European Union level for inclusion at the 3rd EU action plan (2002-2010) for the improvement of road safety. On this purpose, **accumulated knowledge** in the field of road safety in Europe from the first and second EU road safety programmes, as well as from a series of national programmes implemented the last decade was used. This knowledge is the outcome of the work from experts of various different road safety disciplines at local, national and European level, from scientists and researchers involved in road safety research projects financed by the European Union and/or the Member States (European Road Safety Research Institutes and Universities), from policy and decision makers and experts of NGOs (ETSC, IRF, ERF, ERTICO, etc.) and from the EU High Level Group of Governmental Experts on Road Safety.

In the early nineties, the "Gerondeau" Report proposed a list of 81 concrete actions, opening the way for actions at European Union level. Several of these actions were adopted and implemented in the 1st EU Road Safety Action Programme (1993 - 1997), which set priorities, produced the related legislation, issued research actions but was also limited by the subsidiarity principle. The second EU Road Safety Action Programme (1997 - 2001) contained some 64 actions dealing with information gathering and dissemination (17 actions), accident avoidance (37 actions) and reduction of consequences of accidents (10 actions). The **evaluation of the results** of these actions through multi-criteria analysis (European added value, institutional commitment, social acceptance, political feasibility, ease of institutional implementation, ease of target group implementation, lack of negative external effects on third parties, independence) and cost-effectiveness assessment (Cost-effectiveness = Costs of the measure / Fatality Reduction Potential x Coverage x Compliance) has led to the following ranking of EU level road safety actions:

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. EuroNCAP 2. Seat belts and child restraints 3. Alcohol 4. Speed limiters for light vehicles 5. Black spot management and forgiving roadside design 6. Safer car fronts for pedestrians and cyclists 7. Medical standards for driving licences 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Testing for driving licences 9. Daytime running lights 10. Effect of medicines on driver behaviour 11. Post accident care 12. CARE database 13. Integrated information system 14. Research into vehicle standards and telematics
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Table 1. Ranking of actions of the 2nd EU Road Safety Programme

At the present state of the development of the 3rd EU Road Safety Action Plan (2002-2010) within the Common Transport Policy, a set of about **100 Concrete Practical Actions** is under consideration. These practical actions can be categorised in nine broad groups (Table 2), not necessarily independent one to the other.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investing in safety Better compliance with road safety rules User training and testing standards Use of safety equipment Safer vehicles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safer roads Safer professional goods transport Post-accident care Accident and injury data gathering and analysis
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Table 2. Groups of actions under consideration at the 3rd EU Road Safety Action Plan

Investing in safety comprises the consideration of infrastructure incentives or requirements for whole-area safety, the project impact assessment and safety audit, the exploration of the potential for fiscal incentives to accelerate the introduction of safer cars on EU roads, the inclusion of safety

requirements in all public expenditure transport contracts and the cooperation with the insurance industry for premiums to reduce high accident and injury risk.

The **better compliance with road safety rules** deals mainly with the support of the awareness raising campaigns in connection with nationally organised police activity on alcohol, seat belts, speed and fatigue, the support of compliance surveys with key road safety rules, the establishment of European traffic police networks and training programmes and compilation of information on national highway codes, key traffic offences and penalties, the promotion of best practice guidelines on police enforcement including automatic controls and the harmonisation of standards for enforcement equipment (alcohol screening devices, interlock systems, cameras).

The **user training and testing standards** comprise the improvement of driving theory and practice tests, the harmonisation of standards for driver instructor and examiner testing (use of simulators), the elaboration of a EU graduated licensing system to reduce young novice driver risk, the establishment of information exchange between Member States on driving licensing, the promotion of lifelong road safety education and improvement of standards for medical fitness to drive and the elaboration of effective rehabilitation schemes to reduce recidivism.

The **safer vehicles** concern a set of actions dealing with consumer information, passive safety, research and development towards harmonised specifications, accident avoidance or active safety, intelligent transport applications and road-worthiness testing. Additionally, the **use of safety equipment** focus on the promotion of front and back seat belt use, as well as to the use of crash helmets by two-wheeled motor vehicle users, possibly including pedal cyclists.

The **safer roads** comprise the support of a European programme for safety impact assessment and road safety audits of current and future infrastructure, the assessment of the casualty reduction potential of harmonised limits, road engineering and equipment standards, the promotion of best practice engineering guidelines on low cost measures at high-risk sites, urban safety management, forgiving roadsides and speed reduction and research and demonstration projects on 'smart roads'.

The **safer professional goods transport** deals with the introduction of measures dealing with driving fatigue, the strengthening of the enforcement of EU goods and passenger transport rules, the extension of speed limitation to lighter goods vehicles, the adaptation to technical progress of the legislation relating to the transport of dangerous goods, the harmonisation of HGV frontal energy absorbing underrun protection and the introduction of blind spot mirrors.

The **post accident care** concerns the establishment of a EU system to link hospital data and national road accident data, the elaboration of best practice in post accident care, the development of specifications for satellite positioning accident-warning systems and the establishment of a EU standard for automatic mayday systems.

The **accident and injury data gathering and analysis** comprises the development of the CARE data system as a comprehensive web-based CARE road safety information system, leading progressively to the establishment of an independent European Road Safety Observatory. Additionally, it concerns the encouragement and provision of support for the collection of risk exposure data, the establishment of a framework for independent in-depth data collection on road accident and injury causation and the development of a specification for on-board crash recorders for vehicles.

As a **conclusion** it can be argued that the exploitation and exchange of actual experience can lead to important reduction in the number of road casualties. Programs and actions should be intensified and generalised all over Europe, especially in the Southern countries and special emphasis should be given to their efficient implementation (adequate budget, active participation of road users and authorities, quantitative monitoring). Increase of investment in road safety projects is considered necessary, as these investments are economically highly justified. Finally, it is noted that only a systematic effort at European, national, regional and local level throughout Europe could bring the desired results, given that the improvement of road user behaviour requires time and is the combined result of all measures implemented at all levels.