

## Press Release

DEKRA presents Road Safety Report 2019

### **Greater Road Safety for Children**

- EU: Children under 15 most likely to die as passengers in a vehicle
- "Parent taxi service" often counterproductive
- Retroreflective elements can save lives

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**“Boy run over by car” / “Girl hit by bus while crossing road” / “Man runs child over while maneuvering out of parking space”.** Hardly a day goes by when we aren’t shaken by headlines like these that remind us of the dangers that we – and especially children under 15 – are exposed to on the roads. That said, the past few years have seen many positive developments. In 2005, for example, 1,325 children in this age group died on EU roads; by 2017, however, this figure had fallen to “just” 593. “Huge progress has already been made here especially in Germany and the rest of Europe, and other regions of the world can learn much from our experiences. But even in Europe, there is still potential for making our roads even safer for children,” said Clemens Klinke, member of the DEKRA SE Management Board, about the DEKRA Road Safety Report 2019, which has been presented in its English version at the International Transport Forum’s (ITF) Summit in Leipzig. This year’s report focuses on children under 15, and a special supplement especially for children underscores just how seriously DEKRA takes the safety of our youngest road users.

Traffic accidents in which children are killed or seriously injured are always deeply shocking and cause as much suffering to the other people involved in the accident as they do to the relatives. According to the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) at the University of Washington, 300 children under 15 die every single day on our roads worldwide. The reasons for this are many and varied: A lack of experience, poor judgment of risks and inattention on the part of children play just as significant a role as a lack of consideration, excessive speed or distraction on the part of other road users. “There is certainly no shortage of ways to bring about long-term improvements,” said Clemens Klinke on the findings of the report.

The publication looks at the areas – people, vehicle technology and infrastructure – where action needs to be taken to efficiently leverage all potential for enhancing road safety for children.

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Among the most important tasks is road safety education, which should ideally begin at pre-school age. After all, children are developmentally often not in a position to make the right decision in hazardous situations. On top of this, however, other road users need to be sensitized to the ways in which children's behaviors in road traffic differ from those of adults. "Adult road users – and parents, above all – should also strive to lead by example and be conscious of their status as role models, for example when crossing a road or by always wearing a helmet when riding a bicycle," said Klinke.

Apart from road safety education, it is important – especially near kindergartens and schools – to ensure a safe traffic infrastructure, for example by implementing traffic-calming measures. After all, the collision speed in an accident can have a huge impact on the severity of injuries. Another important issue is the "parent taxi service." While parents undoubtedly mean well by transporting their children practically door-to-door with their own car, this "taxi service" does not help children to become independent and safety-conscious road users and in fact often increases the hazard potential near kindergartens and schools.

In addition to a good infrastructure with fully functioning and adequately lit streets, speed monitoring measures in hazardous areas, proper signage near kindergartens and schools, and a host of other measures, children themselves can do various things to make them safer on the roads such as wearing high-contrast clothing with retroreflective elements and making sure that their bicycles are fitted with fully functioning brakes and lights.

A common cause of road accidents is human error, for example when drivers are distracted. Tests conducted recently by DEKRA for the Road Safety Report demonstrate the enormous potential of automatic emergency braking systems with pedestrian detection.

The latest DEKRA Road Safety Report is available online at [www.dekra.de/verkehrssicherheitsreport](http://www.dekra.de/verkehrssicherheitsreport). More detailed information on the contents of the printed report, including videos and interactive graphics, is available online at [www.dekra-roadsafety.com](http://www.dekra-roadsafety.com).

In a side event at the ITF Summit in Leipzig, Volker Noeske, Head of DEKRA Technology Center presented the DEKRA Road Safety Report 2019. The following discussion featured, among others, Saul Billingsley, Executive Director of the FIA Foundation, and Guido Ensemeler, Department Manager for traffic and urban development in the city of Kerpen (Germany).

Both men, like many other experts from 13 countries, have provided statements for the report. The city of Kerpen was the first recipient of the DEKRA Vision Zero Award in 2016 for achieving the goal of zero road fatalities in urban traffic for six years in a row.

### **DEKRA's demands for greater road safety**

- Children traveling in cars must use age- and/or size-appropriate restraint systems.
- Children riding on bicycles should always wear a helmet.
- Bicycles – including children's bicycles – must be fitted with fully functioning active and passive lights so that children riding on bicycles can be clearly seen at any time of the day or night.
- Parents must give their children the opportunity to gather their own road safety skills and experience in a manner appropriate to their age and developmental stage.
- If parents really cannot avoid driving their children to school, they should plan their route so that nobody in the vicinity of the school is endangered.
- Crossings, intersections and sections of road leading up to intersections must be free of anything that could potentially obstruct visibility.
- Traffic-calming measures where a top speed of 30 km/h is enforced should always be implemented on roads within school grounds as well as on roads in the immediate vicinity of schools, kindergartens and playgrounds.
- Road safety education for teenagers right down to kindergarten-age children is absolutely essential for training children to become safe road users. In particular, children have to learn the rules that apply to pedestrians and cyclists.
- Adults must be ever conscious of their status as role models for children. So when out and about on the roads, adults should always behave in manner that children can emulate so that they do not find themselves in dangerous situations.

### **About DEKRA**

*DEKRA has been active in the field of safety for more than 90 years. Founded in 1925 in Berlin as Deutscher Kraftfahrzeug-Überwachungs-Verein e.V., it is today one of the world's leading expert organizations. DEKRA SE is a subsidiary of DEKRA e.V. and manages the Group's operating business. In 2018, DEKRA generated estimated sales totaling more than 3.3 billion euros. The company currently employs more than 45,000 people in approximately 60 countries on all six continents. With qualified and independent expert services, they work for safety on the road, at work and at home. These services range from vehicle inspection and expert appraisals to claims services, industrial and building inspections, safety consultancy, testing and certification of products and systems, as well as training courses and temporary work. The vision for the company's 100th birthday in 2025 is that DEKRA will be the global partner for a safe world.*