

## Press Release

DEKRA presents Road Safety Report 2019 in Brussels

### **Baldwin: “25,000 Avoidable Deaths a Year Is Not Something We Should Accept”**

- 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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**The European Coordinator for Road Safety, Matthew Baldwin, has called on the EU and its member states not to let up in their efforts to improve road safety. “All of us need to continue to challenge the notion that 25,000 avoidable deaths a year is something we should accept, something we should live with,” said Baldwin at DEKRA’s annual event in Brussels. The leading international expert organization presented its Road Safety Report 2019 on the topic of children on the roads. “Huge progress has already been made in this regard especially in Germany and the rest of Europe, and other regions of the world can learn much from our experiences. But even here, there is still potential for making our roads even safer for children,” said Clemens Klinke, member of the DEKRA SE Management Board.**

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 Klinke. The report 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.

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

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as role models, for example when crossing a road or by always wearing a helmet when riding a bicycle,” said Klinke, giving everyone pause for thought.

In addition to 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 cars, 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.

Like the preceding reports since 2008, the latest DEKRA Road Safety Report, too, is much more than a collection of facts about the current state of affairs. It provides food for thought and specific recommendations for action for politicians, traffic experts, manufacturers, scientific institutions and associations. It is also meant to act as an essential companion for all road users.

DEKRA has been committed to improving road safety for over 90 years. The expert organization was one of the first signatories of the European Road Safety Charter. In national and international bodies, DEKRA’s experts are highly valued as partners in dialog.

The latest DEKRA Road Safety Report, as well as more detailed information on the content of the printed report, including in the form of videos and interactive graphics, is available online at [www.dekra-roadsafety.com](http://www.dekra-roadsafety.com).

### **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 kept 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 a manner that children can emulate so that they do not find themselves in dangerous situations.

### ***Bildunterschriften***

Brussels 1: DEKRA annual reception in Brussels. From left: Oliver Deiters, Head of DEKRA's Brussels Bureau; DEKRA Board Member Clemens Klinke; EU Road Safety Coordinator Matthew Baldwin; DEKRA CEO Stefan Kölbl and Thomas Pleines, President of the DEKRA Presidential Council. The so-called "Gulliver Car" helps adults to understand how children feel next to a car. DEKRA's 2019 Road Safety Report is titled "Children on the Road".

Brussels 2: DEKRA's 2019 Road Safety Report was met in Brussels with great interest.

Brussels 3: At DEKRA's annual reception in Brussels, the European Coordinator for Road Safety, Matthew Baldwin, has called on the EU and its member states not to let up in their efforts to improve road safety.

### ***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.*