

## Press Release

DEKRA presents its Road Safety Report 2020

# High Crash Risk for Users of Two-Wheelers Must Be Brought Down Effectively

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- Crash statistics from Europe and the world reveal significant need for action
- DEKRA gives specific recommendations for greater safety
- European Commissioner: “Human errors should not lead to death”

[www.dekra.com/en/press](http://www.dekra.com/en/press)

**Whether motorized or not – riding a two-wheeled vehicle has been the “in” thing since long before the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic. It has to be said that, compared with cars, vans and trucks, two-wheeled modes of transportation carry a significantly higher risk of being involved in a serious crash. Cyclists are highly vulnerable road users and are likely to come off worst in the event of a collision. “There is a whole host of things we can do to counter this trend with a lasting effect,” said Clemens Klinke, member of the DEKRA SE Management Board, at the presentation of DEKRA’s Road Safety Report 2020. He said that in addition to measures in areas such as improvements to technology and infrastructure, road users themselves had a role to play. “We all have a duty, by conducting ourselves in a risk-aware manner and abiding by the rules and safety standards in place, to make our own contribution to bringing down the number of crashes involving motorcyclists, moped riders, cyclists, pedelec riders and e-scooter riders in the long term,” said Klinke.**

“Road safety is one of my key priorities,” said European Commissioner for Transport, Adina Vălean, in a video message. “We must not relax until we achieve our goal: zero fatalities and zero serious injuries on European roads by 2050.” The DEKRA Road Safety Report 2020 rightly pointed to the role of human error in crashes involving two-wheelers, said the Commissioner. “Indeed, errors play a major and often tragic role. But we must remember that it is human to make mistakes, and mistakes should not lead to death and serious injury,” she said, stressing the importance of safe infrastructure and vehicle technology.

For years, motorcyclists and cyclists have made up around 25 percent of fatalities worldwide. The situation is similar in the EU, for example in Germany – where around a third of accident-related fatalities in 2019 involved bicycles or powered two-wheelers. These few figures alone show that there is still a significant need for action when it comes to road safety for two-wheeled vehicles, especially as the

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use of two-wheeled modes of transportation is set to rise even further over the next few years.

This need for action applies to powered two-wheelers – whether they are used for recreation or for commuting – and, particularly, to bicycles with and without electric assist features. “Without the protective shell of a vehicle around them, cyclists, as road users, always run the risk of receiving serious and even fatal injuries in single-vehicle accidents and particularly in collisions involving other vehicles,” Klinke pointed out at a digital event held at DEKRA’s group headquarters in Stuttgart, Germany. The DEKRA Road Safety Report 2020 highlights where action needs to be taken.

Insufficient risk awareness, flouting the rules of the road, excessive speed, driving under the influence of alcohol, distraction and insufficient consideration for other road users are the main factors responsible for accidents involving riders of two-wheeled vehicles. “This doesn’t have to be the case,” suggested the DEKRA Management Board member, “because these tendencies can be efficiently counteracted by responsible behavior, interaction and communication between road users, and the proper assessment of one’s own capabilities.”

The wearing of a suitable helmet is also a crucial safety factor. This is particularly important for cyclists, where there is the potential to dramatically reduce the risk of serious head injuries in the event of an accident – as impact tests carried out by DEKRA have clearly proven.

### **Greater safety through assistance systems and good infrastructure**

Active safety systems are also increasingly coming under the spotlight, particularly for motorized two-wheeled vehicles. Across the whole of the EU, since 2017 no new motorcycles have been approved without antilock brake systems (ABS). The ABS prevents the wheels from locking, which means that a motorcycle will come to a stop much more safely – particularly when the full brakes are applied or the vehicle decelerates suddenly on a slippery surface – and riders can maintain better control up to the threshold of riding physics. It prevents the front wheel from locking, which usually causes the rider to fall off. The ABS allows motorcyclists to apply the brakes with maximum force. In the meantime, ABS technology has also seen technical advances toward the development of an electronic stability control system for motorcycles.

If – despite all these passive and active safety systems being in place – a crash involving injury should occur, in some cases placing an immediate call to the emergency services can be the difference between life and death. Therefore, since March 31, 2018, eCall has been a mandatory feature for new motorcycle models with EU type approval – along with a range of other vehicle categories. In much the same way as for cars, an eCall system on the motorcycle can activate the emergency response system more quickly and allow emergency services to pinpoint the scene of a crash if the rider cannot call for help themselves.

Alongside vehicle technology and the human factor, infrastructure is also a big contributing factor to road safety. A whole range of measures – making hazardous areas safer, maintaining road infrastructure and ensuring that road surfacing is safer for traffic, targeted speed monitoring at accident hot spots, installing adequate crash barriers, expanding cycle paths, and lots more – offer considerable optimization potential. “But sustainable infrastructure and traffic route planning is only possible if we adopt a long-term approach,” emphasized Clemens Klinke in Stuttgart.

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

### **Ten selected DEKRA demands for greater road safety**

- Users of motorized and non-motorized two-wheeled vehicles should always wear a suitable helmet.
- All riders of two-wheeled vehicles should be aware of just how important active and passive lighting equipment is for their safety.
- For better coexistence on the road, all road users should be taught the applicable rules of the road concerning cyclists.
- Children of primary school age should be given cycling proficiency lessons to learn the basic rules of the road as early as possible.
- Periodic vehicle inspections should also become standard for motorcycles – not just in Europe, but everywhere.
- Motorcycle ABS should be rolled out more widely – perhaps also through a new requirement regarding the equipment of smaller powered two-wheelers.
- Software manipulation on pedelecs should be made more difficult and be systematically punished.
- Rental bicycles and e-scooters should be subjected to regular and independent technical safety inspections.
- Strict alcohol limits should apply to driving e-scooters as well, and compliance should be monitored.
- Infrastructure should be expanded and maintained for all road users. The maintenance of cycle paths in particular is imperative to ensuring cyclists’ safety.

#### ***Caption:***

Presented the DEKRA Road Safety Report 2020: DEKRA CEO Stefan Kölbl (right) and Board Member Clemens Klinke (left).

**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 2019, DEKRA generated sales totaling 3.4 billion euros. The company currently employs almost 44,000 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 temp work. The vision for the company's 100th birthday in 2025 is that DEKRA will be the global partner for a safe world.*