

Press Release

DEKRA presents 2022 Road Safety Report in Brussels

Commissioner Valean: “Use all measures in the road safety toolbox”

- For young drivers: education, enforcement, technological progress
- Young people have significantly higher accident risk
- Technical condition of vehicles remains important issue

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EU Transport Commissioner Adina Valean advocates a multifaceted approach in the effort to improve road safety, especially that of young people. “To halve fatalities and serious injuries by 2030, we need to use all measures in the road safety toolbox – training and education, enforcement of existing rules, and, increasingly, technological advances”, the Commissioner said at the presentation of the DEKRA Road Safety Report 2022 “Mobility of Young People” in Brussels. “Doing so can save lives, including those of young people, whose fatality rate for road deaths is disproportionately high.”

For years, more young people between the ages of 15 and 29 have died in road accidents worldwide each year than from HIV/AIDS, malaria or tuberculosis, according to the World Health Organization (WHO). “In order to counteract this efficiently and sustainably in the long term, great efforts are needed by all those involved,” emphasized Jann Fehlauer, Managing Director of DEKRA Automobil GmbH, at the presentation of the report.

Four factors dominate road traffic accidents involving young people in many countries around the world: the majority of them are male, they are on the road in cars or on motorcycles, they are speeding and possibly intoxicated. Even though the number of road users between the ages of 15 and 24 who are killed or seriously injured in accidents has fallen significantly in some cases over the last ten years: in relation to one million inhabitants in this age group, the figures are still mostly well above the average of other age groups.

Various statistics from all parts of the world show: young people are at great risk on the roads - especially as novice drivers. “For all those involved, this should be an unmistakable mandate to counteract with all possible measures”, said Jann Fehlauer. The DEKRA Road Safety Report 2022 shows where to start making efficient use of all the optimization potential that presents itself.

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There are plenty of areas for action – above all in the areas of people and technology. For example, the major risk factors for novice drivers include a lack of driving experience, overestimating one's own capabilities, inadequate vehicle control, limited perception of danger, distraction from traffic events using digital media, for example, and driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

“All of these are problem areas that should be focused on in the context of driver training even more than they already are” said Fehlaue. In addition to vehicle handling and rules, higher-level skills such as safety-relevant attitudes, self-control, self-observation, and the acceptance of traffic rules should also be taught. The DEKRA managing director also sees a problem in the fact that some new drivers interpret passing the driving test as meaning that they are already good drivers and do not need to learn anything more. However, he said the opposite is usually the case. “Just like learning a new sport, knowledge of the rules, training practice and situational observation and movement must come together – through continuous practice in real road traffic, even after the driving test”, Fehlaue explained.

Many defects in older vehicles frequently used by young people

To demonstrate how important it is for vehicles to also be in good technical condition, DEKRA conducted several driving tests at its Technology Center at the DEKRA Lausitzring. These again showed that stable contact between tires and road surface in particular – regardless of weather and road surface condition – is essential. Because only then is it guaranteed that assistance systems such as ABS or ESP can also work effectively. Since many young drivers very often drive older vehicles, primarily for financial reasons, periodic vehicle inspection thus remains a very central element for road safety. “The consequence of aging, wear and tear, often a lack of awareness of technical defects, and saving money on repairs and maintenance is: older passenger cars tend to have significant defects much more frequently and thus pose a greater risk of accidents than younger vehicles”, Fehlaue indicated presenting the report.

“I am grateful to DEKRA for making young people the focus of this year's road safety report, and for their work to protect younger road users”, said the EU Transport Commissioner. “We need to enforce safe driving. But we also need a safe system approach, ensuring that our young people have access to safe vehicles and safe infrastructure. We will continue to work with DEKRA to put this approach in place.”

The DEKRA Road Safety Report 2022 “Mobility of Young People” is available for download online at www.dekra-roadsafety.com. All previous reports can also be found there, including more in-depth content, for example in the form of moving images or interactive graphics.

The DEKRA demands for more road safety with a view to young people:

- Particularly dangerous behaviors such as alcohol and drugs at the wheel, distraction by smartphones, for example, or excessive speeding must be consistently monitored and penalized.
- An absolute ban on drinking and driving should apply everywhere for novice drivers. Experience in various countries, including Germany, proves its effectiveness.
- The spread and use of feedback systems, telematics-based for example, should be increased.
- Young male novice drivers pose a far above-average risk to themselves and others. This group must be given special attention in road safety work – even before the start of driver training.
- The multi-stage acquisition of the driving license has proven itself in many places and should therefore be introduced in more countries.
- Only a transparent, standardized, and high-quality theoretical and practical test for obtaining a driver's license that is independent of driving schools can ensure the necessary quality standard in driver training.
- The use of driver assistance systems and automated driving functions should already be taught during driver training, but the limits of these systems should also be made clear. Ideally, the safe use of these systems should also become part of the driving test.
- Practical driving training should be designed as comprehensively as possible regarding road characteristics (inner-city, narrow rural roads, highway) and lighting conditions (night driving) in all countries.
- Since many young people have fatal accidents on rural roads, the primary goal in new construction or road design changes must be self-explanatory roads with forgiving side space design.
- The functionality of mechanical and electronic components of vehicle safety systems must be guaranteed over the entire life of the vehicle. The content of periodical vehicle inspection must be adjusted accordingly on a regular basis.

Captions

1. Presentation of the DEKRA Road Safety Report 2022, „Mobility of Young People“, in Brussels. EU Transport Commissioner Adina Valean (middle) with DEKRA CEO Stan Zurkiewicz (left) and Jann Fehlauer, Managing Director of DEKRA Automobil GmbH.
2. The presentation of the DEKRA Road Safety Report 2022 in Brussels met with a great response.
3. Jann Fehlauer, Managing Director of DEKRA Automobil GmbH, presented the DEKRA Road Safety Report 2022.

Photos: Alexander Louvet / DEKRA

About DEKRA

DEKRA has been active in the field of safety for almost 100 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 2021, DEKRA generated sales totaling more than EUR 3.5 billion. The company currently employs almost 48,000 people in approximately 60 countries on all 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, secure and sustainable world. With a platinum rating from EcoVadis, DEKRA is now in the top one percent of sustainable businesses ranked.