

European Parliament: Overwhelming YES vote for Intelligent Cars

On 19 June 2008, the European Parliament voted almost unanimously in favour of MEP Zita Gurmai's report on 'Intelligent Cars'. Out of 428 votes cast, 417 were in favour, 6 against, and 5 abstentions. In practical terms, the European Parliament could not show stronger support for the Commission's Intelligent Car Initiative, which aims at safer, greener and smarter road transport.

The general tenor of the debate was that intelligent safety and eco-protection systems must get down into the cars – into all cars and not just upmarket models - and that these systems therefore and above all must be affordable for the drivers. The Parliament expressed its support for the Intelligent Car Initiative as a whole and for many of the detailed actions, e.g. the Europe-wide introduction of the eCall system.

The Parliament's debate and vote was related to the Commission's 'First Intelligent Car Report'. Adopted in September 2007, it showed the progress achieved in and the tasks ahead for the Intelligent Car Initiative. In its report, the Commission called on the Member States not yet committed to the European in-vehicle emergency call system (eCall) to sign its basic document, the eCall Memorandum of Understanding. It also requested from the eSafety Forum to elaborate on the benefits of ICT systems in the area of cleaner and more efficient mobility. Last but not least, the Commission asked for the better integration into the vehicle of portable devices, e.g. navigation systems. In particular, the Commission called for proposals for the safe use and fixing of such systems.