



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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Dear Speaker,

The Commission would like to thank the Riksdag for its Reasoned Opinion on the proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 2008/96/EC on road infrastructure safety management {COM(2018) 274 final}.

As noted by the Riksdag, the aim of this proposal is to reduce the high number of fatalities and serious injuries on the roads of the European Union and to move in the direction of the long-term objective of Vision Zero. The Commission's Third Mobility Package adopted on 17 May 2018, presents a mix of tools that aim to achieve this effect. The negative externalities are not constrained to national borders, and reaching a European solution would considerably help reducing these negative effects for all citizens of the European Union.

In proposing the amendments to the road infrastructure safety management Directive, in addition to the general objective of reducing the number of fatalities and serious injuries on the European Union's road networks, the Commission also wishes to achieve several specific objectives, namely to protect vulnerable road users, to improve the conditions for the deployment of new technologies, to foster harmonisation and knowledge sharing between Member States and to improve follow-up on the findings of road infrastructure safety management procedures without imposing excessive costs on Member States.

As noted by the Riksdag, the issue of subsidiarity is particularly important when considering the possible extension of the scope of the legislation to other roads beyond the trans-European transport networks, which is the scope of the current Directive. Trans-European transport networks' roads represent only about 4% of the inter-urban road network of the European Union in terms of length and account for about 8% of fatalities. At the same time, many roads that are not part of a trans-European transport network are important for the overall functioning of road transport within the European

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Union and carry significant volumes of national and international traffic. For example, many national roads connect urban and industrial centres to the trans-European transport networks. The safety performance on these roads (which also include roads which are of European interest due to cross-border traffic flows) can be considerably lower than on roads belonging to a trans-European transport network. According to the findings of the impact assessment accompanying the proposal, it is estimated that due to the high traffic volumes, the primary road network of the European Union represents a much higher percentage of fatalities compared to the share of these roads in the total road network. The Commission proposal for extension is proportionate to the objectives as it covers only an additional 15% of the road network that accounts for about 40% of fatalities. Therefore co-ordinated action at the level of the European Union on the primary road network (including the non- trans-European transport networks part) will help to achieve both the medium-term European Union's target of halving fatalities by 2020 and the long-term target of moving towards zero fatalities in road transport by 2050.

The main benefits of action at the level of the European Union lie in the convergence towards higher standards of infrastructure safety across the European Union which the initiative aims to achieve. Travel throughout the European Union should become safer, whereby less well performing countries will be able to benefit from the experience of more advanced countries. The gap between the best performing and the least well performing Member States should gradually be reduced. This should in turn improve the functioning of the internal market through a smoother and more coherent travel experience for passenger and freight transport, and support the European Union's objective of economic, social and territorial cohesion.

The Riksdag also notes that the proposal also aims to establish rules for the use and maintenance of road markings and road signs so that they can be read reliably by vehicles, notably automated vehicles, but considers that such rules, if they are to be introduced, do not need to apply on roads outside the trans-European transport networks to meet their objective.

The Commission considers that the deployment of some new safety technologies and the safe roll-out of connected and automated mobility across the European Union is likely to require a more harmonised approach at European Union level, as some new in-vehicle safety solutions will rely on the deployment or upgrade of adequate infrastructure. The considerations that are valid for trans-European transport networks' roads should also be relevant for the other busy roads of Member States' primary road networks. In the opinion of the Commission, the application of the same Road Infrastructure Safety Management procedures and general performance requirements on the trans-European transport networks and on the primary road networks of Member States that carry the biggest traffic flows across the European Union would represent a consistent approach to road infrastructure safety management and would improve the coherence of European Union legislation in this field.

Taking into consideration these elements, the Commission therefore considers that the proposal does not conflict with the principle of subsidiarity.

The Commission hopes that the clarifications provided in this reply address the issues raised by the Riksdag and looks forward to continuing the political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Frans Timmermans
First Vice-President*

*Violeta Bulc
Member of the Commission*