

Future of Transport

Recommendations of the German Society for Traffic Psychology

As is pointed out in the paper, sustainability of transport also depends on sound planning and on a change in transport habits. Whether there are measures that can be taken at EU level to improve accessibility and modify transport needs and behaviour may be an important question; the crucial question, however, is to what extent road users will be capable to change their habits in an increasingly complex and cross-border traffic. Therefore the subsequent recommendations have been developed within the past four years:

- (1) The European Commission is recommended to implement an expert working group on behavioural problems of road users, thus focussing on the most important causes of fatalities and serious injuries, namely human behaviour. (This recommendation would certainly have to be accepted by the member states as they are responsible for the national traffic safety. A European expert working group can only be effective if their work is accepted by the member states).
- (2) The European Commission is recommended to facilitate the implementation of a central register for criminal and serious traffic offenders that should cover all member states of the Union (e.g. - as a first step - by supporting a critical overview of existing demerit/penalty point systems and developing criteria for the implementation of effective systems). Individuals cross borders. Thus, there must be a common initiative to protect European citizens from harm by serious traffic offenders. A central register could deliver information about deviant traffic behaviour to the different national authorities who would then be able to take measures. Only if individual behaviour is controlled it will be possible to achieve both safety and sustainability.
- (3) As more than 90% of traffic accidents are caused by human error, the European Commission, the national governments, research institutes and funding bodies are recommended to implement existing knowledge and to enhance the proportion of research projects in the area of traffic behaviour, in order to provide more, and more detailed, knowledge and know-how concerning human errors in the transport area. Such projects should be co-ordinated by behavioural experts and conducted in an interdisciplinary design.

The above given recommendations have been presented on various occasions, first of all during the Fit to Drive conferences in Berlin (2006), Vienna (2007), Prague (2008) and Tallinn (2009). Numerous experts from many member states of the EU have supported the recommendations.

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