



THE NETHERLANDS IS FIRST EU MEMBER STATE TO ISSUE AUTOMATED FINES FOR MOBILE PHONE USE AT THE WHEEL

The Netherlands has begun issuing fines following detection of mobile phone use by a new generation of cameras, the first EU Member State to do so.

Since last month drivers holding a phone behind the wheel can be photographed by smart cameras. If the system determines that the driver is holding a phone, the photo is automatically forwarded to the relevant agency where an investigating officer will determine whether there is indeed a violation. Fines can then be sent out automatically.

The cameras take pictures of every passer-by. But the head of the driver is not in the picture because the pictures are taken diagonally downwards. The driver's hands and license plate are captured by the system, and the cameras are said to work day and night and in all weather conditions.

During a test phase, many violations were recorded, with two cameras on a national road and a motorway recording 400 drivers holding a phone in their hand during a single six hour period.

The Dutch road safety research organisation SWOV has recently published new recommendations on enforcement of mobile device use and warns of drivers circumventing detection by putting their phone on their lap or being distracted by devices in other ways.

[More information](#)



ALWAYS A GREEN LIGHT FOR AMBULANCES THANKS TO SMART TRAFFIC LIGHT SYSTEM

With Be-Mobile's C-ITS platform, smart traffic lights in the Netherlands are turning green for ambulances. The platform is part of the Talking Traffic partnership.

The C-ITS platform is one of the latest developments from the Talking Traffic partnership. This partnership of the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and Public Works looks at innovative traffic applications with the aim of making Dutch roads as safe as possible.

In October 2020, the AZN association connected all regional ambulance services to this partnership. Be-Mobile, one of the partners of Talking Traffic, is an international provider of smart mobility services and is developing the platform.

Recent figures show that there is an accident at least once a week with an emergency vehicle that speeds through a red light. Consultations have been taking place with the Dutch Institute for Safety (IFV) on this issue. In addition to ambulances, this institute also encompasses the fire department, police and defence. According to the IFV, fire departments, police and the defence will also be joining Talking Traffic in the near future.

[More information](#)



BELGIAN-UK STUDY: POSITIVE MESSAGES ENCOURAGE SAFER DRIVER BEHAVIOUR MORE THAN FEAR TACTICS

A new study has shown that films demonstrating responsible behaviour could lead to young drivers taking fewer risks on the road than if they only saw videos aimed at provoking fear of accidents.

Over one million people are killed in road accidents each year and drivers below the age of 25 account for nearly half of road deaths.

The publication of the study coincided with a change of tone in France's latest road safety campaign. While earlier campaigns tended to concentrate on traumatic events, the latest is a celebration of life's special moments with the implication of what could be missed when life is cut short.

[More information](#)



MILLIONS OF CHILDREN MISSED OUT ON ROAD SAFETY EDUCATION DURING COVID-19 LOCKDOWNS

Children across Europe missed out on road safety lessons and tests for cycling and walking safely amid Covid-19 lockdowns and school closures, according to a new report by the European Transport Safety Council (ETSC), the Flemish Foundation for Traffic Knowledge (VSV) and Fundación MAPFRE. However, several education experts consulted for the report found that lockdown boosted innovation in delivery methods, tools and working practices which could lead to improved outcomes in the future.

Regarding future provision of road safety education, a majority of the experts consulted considered that the digitisation of teaching would continue. But some aspects of road safety education cannot be delivered remotely, such as bicycle training. Some experts warned that remote learning should not replace face-to-face teaching due to the difficulties of maintaining engagement with the material via a remote setting.

Experts also expect that road safety education should evolve to reflect changes in mobility that have been accelerated by the pandemic, such as a preference for walking and cycling to school.

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HOW WILL THE FUTURE UK-EU RELATIONSHIP IMPACT ROAD SAFETY?

The transition period is over and a deal has been done. What will the implications be for road safety regulation and cooperation now that the UK has left the EU and a new trade deal has been signed? The biggest changes are where no agreement was reached and/or EU rules no longer apply to the UK.

The EU legislation on cross-border enforcement of traffic offences no longer applies, meaning the UK is not able to easily follow-up on traffic penalties such as speeding tickets from foreign-registered drivers. The same is true for EU Member States vis-à-vis UK drivers. Bilateral agreements between the UK and EU Member States could change this in the future, as could a future UK-EU agreement at some point.

The UK is also no longer party to the EU target to reduce road deaths and injuries by 50% by 2030. It currently has no equivalent national target but has committed to the similar global goal set out in the recent Stockholm Declaration.

The UK will no-longer provide detailed data on road deaths and serious injuries to the EU CARE database, an important source for benchmarking of road safety performance in Europe. However, the UK will still be working with other international organisations such as the International Transport Forum and ETSC's own Road Safety Performance Index programme.

[More information](#)



RUSSIA CONSIDERS BUILT-IN BREATHALYSERS FOR CARS TO CURB DRINK DRIVING

Russia is considering fitting cars with devices that breathalyse drivers to clamp down on drink driving and is looking at ways to encourage manufacturers to install them in vehicles fresh off the production line.

Russia has for years been trying to improve road safety and, though official statistics show the situation improving, around 17,000 Russians died on the country's roads last year, much higher than in many other countries.

Installing alcohol interlocks would introduce new costs for carmakers and likely be opposed by many carmakers at a time when demand for new cars is under strain because of the pandemic.

Russians have long had a reputation as ferocious drinkers, but alcoholic consumption has fallen by an estimated 43% from 2003 to 2016, according to a World Health Organization study last year. Russia remains a nation of heavy drinkers, but the study linked the fall in consumption to higher alcohol excise taxes, policies clamping down on home-made alcohol and the raising of the minimum price for vodka.

[More information](#)



EUROPE EXPORTS MILLIONS OF OLD, DANGEROUS CARS TO AFRICA – UN REPORT

Millions of old, polluting and unsafe cars are being exported from richer regions to African nations every year, according to a new report from the United Nations Environment Programme.

The report, based on an in-depth analysis of 146 countries, found that some two-thirds have 'weak' or 'very weak' policies to regulate the import of used vehicles. However, it also shows that where countries have implemented measures to govern the import of used vehicles – notably age and emissions standards – these give them access to high-quality used vehicles, including hybrid and electric cars, at affordable prices. For example, Morocco only permits the import of vehicles less than five years old and those meeting the EURO4 European vehicles emission standard.

The Netherlands recently conducted a review of its exports and found that most vehicles did not have a valid roadworthiness certificate at the time of export. Most vehicles were between 16 and 20 years old, and most fell below EURO4 European Union vehicles emission standards. For example, the average age of used vehicles exported to Gambia was close to 19 years old, while a quarter of used vehicles exported to Nigeria were almost 20 years old.

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INDIA NEEDS TO INVEST \$109 BILLION TO HALVE ITS ROAD CRASH FATALITIES IN NEXT DECADE: WORLD BANK REPORT

India needs to invest an estimated extra USD 109 billion in road safety over the next decade to halve its crash fatalities, the World Bank said in a report released on a day when at least 35 people were killed in four separate accidents in the country. The bank said such an investment will bring economic benefits equivalent annually to 3.7 per cent of the GDP.

India has one of the highest rates of road crashes in the world. Every year, about 150,000 people lose their lives on India's roads, and more than five times that number are injured or maimed for life, the report said. Road crashes also impact economic growth, costing the economy between 3 to 5 per cent of GDP a year.

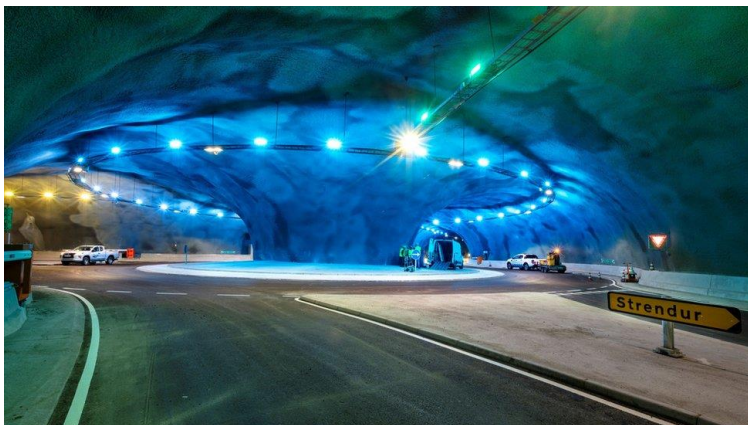
"South Asia's road safety crisis is unacceptable but preventable. The good news is that South Asian countries recognise the urgent need to protect their people, save lives, and sustain their journey toward greater prosperity. We at the World Bank stand ready to support their efforts," said the World Bank official.

[More information](#)

ROAD SAFETY IN THE MEDIA

Faroe Islands: Inside the undersea tunnel network

The Faroe Islands are set to open an under-sea roundabout following more than three years of construction. The underwater tunnels connect the islands of Streymoy and Eysturoy in a network some 6.8 miles (11km) long. The network was scheduled to open on 19 December.



The tunnel network will cut down the travel time between the capital Torshavn and Runavik, from an hour and 14 minutes to just 16 minutes. The lowest point of the tunnel network is 187m (613ft) below sea level.

The Faroe Islands, a series of 18 islets in the North Atlantic located halfway between Iceland and Norway, constitute an autonomous region of Denmark. In order to ensure the safety of those using the tunnel, the steepest incline is no more than a 5% gradient.

[More information](#)

The Airbag Jeans Could Make Motorcycle Riding So Much Safer

No matter how many safety precautions they take, motorcycle riders are still about 28 times more likely than a car passenger to die in a crash due to the prone nature of the rider. The thing that people love about riding—the sensation of being open and close to nature—is the very thing that makes the whole thing so dangerous. But a new invention, airbag jeans, is looking to



solve that. And they already seem much more useful than parachute pants.

A company called Airbag Inside Sweden AB recently designed a prototype of a new form of outerwear that might make riding safer for motorcyclists. Despite looking like a regular pair of jeans, they're lined with airbags that will be triggered if a rider falls off his bike.

The jeans are tethered to the bike, so the trigger here is similar to the safety clip on a treadmill: pull the cord, and you'll have a pair of inflated pants.

The goal is to reduce lower-body impact for riders. We've had inflatable vests for riders for decades now, but no one has actually figured out how to make sense of lower-body protection yet. Until now, that is.

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