International Transport Forum

Policy Recommendation on Comprehensive Road Safety Policy

Build road safety policy and initiatives on data and evidence

Road safety strategies benefit from being evidence-based, with a clear link between road safety policies and their impact on risk. Road safety data collection systems and research institutes can play a key role here. Therefore, investment in the capacity to collect, analyse and use data to inform policy interventions, and evaluate, monitor and report publicly on the effectiveness of interventions is encouraged, as in-depth analyses of previous accidents can support the selection of appropriate future interventions. Strengthening national crash data systems, including addressing under-reporting of road collisions where this is an issue, will be essential to support this effort. Resources should also be directed at the design and evaluation of interventions that reduce risk.

Think safety

Road safety policies have often been based on piecemeal improvements to current practice. We need to broaden our horizon by implementing policies on multiple levels following a risk-based or a comprehensive approach. By ensuring active involvement and cooperation from all stakeholders, we can pave the way toward achieving better road safety. Focusing on integrating measures on infrastructure, vehicles, traffic management and road-user behaviour could create multiplier effects and reduce risk when road users make mistakes. Ensuring a safe environment for all road users is a critical part of cross-agency integration.

Prioritise interventions where the greatest number of lives can be saved

A comprehensive, risk-based approach should be considered to tackle the most pressing problems, rather than trying to replicate policies wholesale from another jurisdiction. Travel in some developing countries is, for example, dominated by walking and the use of powered two-wheelers. Protecting all road users and creating safer conditions for travel should be the priority, ensuring that safety principles are adapted to the specific contexts, in particular where there are rapidly rising rates of car and powered two and three-wheeler motorisation. The recording of exposure data, for example travelling distance or time spent in traffic, allows for better understanding of the risk. Limited budgets may make it necessary to marry a long-term strategic vision with a pragmatic step-by-step implementation process. Cost benefit analysis can be a useful approach as it allows for comparison of effectiveness and prioritisation of interventions. Many tools have been created by governments and other organizations as possible guides to policy development at both local and national levels. These tools can be shared to help policy makers take the appropriate next steps for their context.

Safe speed management

Vehicle speeds are correlated to the energy and risk of collisions. Managing speed is important to improving road safety, as it contributes to crash likelihood and severity. In considering setting safe speed limits the road function, the

risk level and the mix of different road users should be taken into account. Other interventions should also be considered to support posted speed limits, such as roundabouts and road infrastructure design, etc.

Support safe behaviour

Supporting safe behaviour of all road users is essential to reduce the number of killed and seriously injured. This requires compliance with traffic laws, such as speed limits, seat belt use, use of personal protective equipment and helmets, and adherence to road signals, alongside fostering a culture of mutual responsibility and respect among road users. Road safety campaigns and education encouraging awareness, including on the issues of advanced technologies, distraction while driving and responsibility, can be efficient in this respect.

Accelerate deployment of vehicle technologies

Standards have been effective in informing safe vehicle designs. At the same time, the uptake of safety innovations, such as advanced braking systems for powered two-wheelers, advanced emergency braking, electronic stability control for light duty vehicles, and other safety enhancing technologies can be promoted. In addition, the safe adoption of technologies such as automated driving systems for automobiles and trucks can be accelerated by prioritising their safe operation on public roads and encouraging crash reporting in the context of appropriate regulatory frameworks and enabling commercial deployment. In the case of new vehicle technologies, countries are encouraged to continue to work together at fora such as the World Forum for the Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations to advance a globally consistent approach to new vehicle technologies that can be harnessed to improve road safety.

Engage with the corporate sector

The private sector can make positive contributions to road safety within their organizations, by incorporating road safety policies in their corporate activities and spreading good practice. All approaches focusing on enabling the private sector to provide a positive contribution to road safety are encouraged. To this end, a voluntary Global Road Safety Assessment Framework for Corporate Action and Reporting has been developed to accelerate the adoption of best practice across supply chains and to businesses in all countries. This corporate framework is designed for organisations of all levels, irrespective of size, nature of business and geographical extent. It is designed to be easy-to-access and simple to use, so users do not have to be road safety experts to evaluate their organisation's road safety "footprint". Businesses are encouraged to pilot reporting under this Framework, which can complement other efforts, or more detailed tools, aimed at advancing road safety, such as the FIA Road Safety Index.

Coordinate decision-making across government departments

Mechanisms to enable multisectoral cooperation can support the improvement of road safety outcomes. Appropriate ministries with responsibility for road safety, transport, infrastructure, and internal affairs should coordinate with other relevant ministries to achieve road safety. Police, emergency and health systems intervene to manage traffic and road trauma only after transport infrastructure has been designed and built. Interministerial road safety councils, and road safety data collection entities that report to them, and research institutes can help with strategic planning and coordination, providing advice to ministries, and guiding on the assessment of policies to take fuller account of all impacts.

The Council of Ministers of Transport of the International Transport Forum adopted this *Policy Recommendation on Comprehensive Road Safety Policy* at its meeting on 22 May 2025 in Leipzig during the ITF Summit on "Transport Resilience to Global Shocks".

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