

To:
Ursula von der Leyen
President of the European Commission
European Commission
Rue de la Loi 200
1049 Brussels

2nd of December 2025

Re: Establishing an EU Road Safety Agency

Dear President von der Leyen,

As European civil society organisations committed to reducing deaths and serious injuries on Europe's roads, we are writing to urge the European Commission to create an EU Road Safety Agency. Competitiveness is central to the future of European vehicle-making, as outlined in the Commission's recent Industrial Action Plan for the Automotive Sector. In the global race for trustworthy automated mobility, a failure to put a European Road Safety Agency in place risks both safety shortcomings and competitive disadvantage for the EU.

Road transport remains the only major mode without a dedicated EU authority for safety, unlike aviation (EASA), maritime (EMSA) or rail (ERA). This gap leaves Europe exposed to fragmented oversight, inconsistent enforcement, and unequal protection for citizens across Member States.

The need for centralised oversight of automated vehicles

The development and deployment of partially and fully automated vehicles is advancing rapidly, often through complex cross-border pilot projects and software-based updates that transcend national regulatory capacity. While ongoing updates to legislation will strengthen requirements, the absence of a central authority limits the EU's ability to ensure consistent interpretation and supervision.

A specialised road safety agency could:

- coordinate testing, approval, and monitoring of automated driving systems;
- assess market performance and incident data from across the EU and commission independent crash investigations;
- provide independent advice on emerging safety technologies;
- support the preparation of draft regulations.

Such functions are already exercised by the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) for drones and by the European Union Agency for Railways (ERA) for interoperability and certification – models that could be adapted for the road sector.

The urgency of coordinated vehicle recall enforcement

The fragmentation of vehicle recall enforcement further illustrates the need for an EU-level agency. Recent national actions, such as France's temporary immobilisation of 800,000 vehicles fitted with defective Takata airbags, exposed serious gaps in enforcement across the Single Market. While some Member States took decisive measures to protect consumers, others lacked the mechanisms or resources to do so promptly, resulting in uneven risk for drivers and passengers.

This episode followed earlier cross-border crises – including diesel emissions manipulation – that revealed how national authorities alone cannot guarantee consistent follow-up, transparency, or consumer notification across the Union. A European agency could ensure that recall decisions are swift, harmonised, and effectively enforced, with a single EU-wide platform for monitoring and public information.

A framework for coordinated safety leadership

An EU Road Safety Agency would complement national authorities, not replace them. It would provide a single hub for:

- consistent supervision of vehicle safety systems and technologies;
- coordination of market surveillance and recall enforcement;
- research and data analysis supporting EU road safety targets; and
- independent recommendations to the Commission and Member States.

Creating such an agency would fill a critical gap in the EU's transport safety architecture and demonstrate a tangible commitment to the Vision Zero goal of eliminating road deaths by 2050. It would also enhance Europe's global standing as a standard-setter for safe, sustainable, and innovative mobility.

As a reminder, in its strategy for sustainable and smart mobility, the European Commission committed to 'explore options to further support safe, smart and sustainable road transport operations under an existing agency or another body'. Although there was a consultation on this in 2023, we still await the outcome.

We therefore call on the European Commission to consider establishing an EU Road Safety Agency in its forthcoming financial and legislative planning.

Yours sincerely,

Antonio Avenoso, Executive Director, European Transport Safety Council

Laurianne Krid, CEO, European Cyclists' Federation

André Sobczak, Secretary General, Eurocities

Barbara Stoll, Director, Clean Cities Campaign

William Todts, Executive Director, Transport & Environment

Karen Vancluysen, Secretary General, POLIS

Geert van den Waeg, President, International Federation of Pedestrians

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Apostolos Tzitzikostas-Commissioner for Sustainable Transport and Tourism

Stéphane Séjourné – Executive Vice President for Prosperity and Industrial Strategy

Olivér Várhelyi – Commissioner for Health and Animal Welfare

EU Ministers of Transport