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Press release | 01.03.2023

Greens/EFA Group welcome Commission proposals on road safety, call for an EU-wide speed limit

The Greens/EFA in the European Parliament welcome the road safety package proposed by the EU Commission today and call for a legislative proposal for a speed limit, as has long been common practice in all other EU Member States except Germany. The legislative package for more road safety includes, among other things, EU-wide standards for the acquisition of driving licences and for combating fraud in the issuing of driving licences, EU-wide common standards for training for more road safety and for the EU-wide enforcement of sanctions derived from traffic offences.

Ciarán Cuffe MEP, Greens/EFA member of the European Parliament's Transport Committee, comments:

"Common EU-wide standards for driving licences, training and the implementation of sanctions will create safer roads and protect lives. We welcome these revisions, but much more is needed to progress on road safety in the EU. As acknowledged by the Commission itself, speed limits are one of the best tools for reducing accidents and emissions on our roads and we call again on the Commission to introduce a recommendation on safe speed limits if it really believes in achieving its 'Vision Zero.'

"There are serious shortcomings in the investigations of cross border infringements. We need much better follow-up on breaches of road safety laws, stronger enforcement of existing rules and greater coordination and mutual recognition between Member States.

"Unfortunately the Commission has failed to extend the cross border enforcement directive to cover low emissions zones. Cities across Europe are calling out for the cross border action on drivers who flout the rules in low emission zones. Low emissions zones are essential to make our cities breathable and they must be respected."

Background
In its 2021 report, the European Parliament called for an EU-wide speed limit. According to the Commission, around 19,800 people died in road traffic accidents across the EU in 2021, the main causes being excessive speed (in around 30% of cases) and being under the influence of alcohol (in around 25% of cases).
On average, 100 young people die on the roads every week in the EU. With its "Vision Zero", the Commission has set itself the goal of reducing the number of road deaths and injuries to zero by 2050.

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