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Road safety in Europe as a public health priority

Motion for a resolution

tabled by the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only those who have signed it

In Europe, road traffic injuries are a major public health problem, as they cause the premature death of some 120 000 people every year, with low-income countries having road traffic fatality rates nearly three times higher than high-income countries. In addition to these deaths, about 2.4 million people are estimated to be seriously injured (requiring hospital admission) each year.

Road traffic injuries, in addition to the pain and suffering they cause, have a serious economic impact, as they are a strain on health systems' resources and lead to the loss of up to 3% of the GDP. This situation is unacceptable all the more so as the risk factors leading to road traffic injuries and efficient ways to prevent them are well known. Legislation on vehicle speed, drink-driving, use of seat-belts, helmets and child restraints, as well as improved vehicles and roads have already saved tens of thousands of lives.

The protection of health enshrined in Article 11 of the European Social Charter (revised) and the right to life enshrined in Article 2 of the European Convention on Human Rights involve positive obligations for States within the context of road safety. Having regard to these rights, the Parliamentary Assembly calls on member States to take all necessary measures with a view to ensuring road safety in Europe.

