

Press release: Call for new European standard for collision safety in buses

A new European standard for collision safety in buses should be developed, recommends a new academic report launched at Busworld.

The Institute of Transport Economics presented the findings at a seminar at Busworld on Tuesday. The report "Safety in bus transport in Europe" commissioned by Public Transport Norway, provides an overview of available safety measures in buses, and aims at aiding purchasers and authorities to set good safety requirements in bus contracts and regulations.

The researchers recommend that several measures should be made mandatory in bus transport, including fleet management systems to facilitate a soft driving style, safety culture measures, safety management systems, and crash protection for bus drivers.

- As of today, these measures are not legally required in bus transport, although research shows that they are very effective in preventing accidents. Today, there are also no separate safety standards for buses, which are instead subject to collision standards for heavier vehicles. We recommend that a separate European standard should be developed for collision safety in buses, which is specifically adapted to the use of such vehicles, says Head of Research Tor-Olav Nævestad at The Institute for Transport Economics.

Norway's Minister of Transport Jon-Ivar Nygard opened the seminar in Brussels. Norway has over the last five years experienced several fatal accidents involving bus drivers, also at low speeds.

- In Norway, we have worked systematically to improve bus safety, but as a small country we are completely dependent on working together with the major international bus manufacturers. That is why it is important for us to be present at Europe's largest bus fair and clearly show that there is a great demand for solutions for better driver and road safety in buses, says Transport Minister Jon-Ivar Nygård.

As a result of the recent accidents in Norway, all parts of the Norwegian bus industry – public transport authorities, operators, unions and regional authorities – have joined forces in advancing the safety agenda and reaching out to cooperate with the European bus industry.

- Many public transport companies already set strict requirements for safety in their bus contracts. An important goal of our work is to increase knowledge in Norway and Europe about which safety measures are available, so that both authorities and purchasers can more easily request the best and most effective solutions, says Siv Wiken, chair of Public Transport Norway.

Busworld is Europe's largest bus fair, where the entire European and international bus manufacturer and supplier industry is present. In 2019, around 40,000 participants from 143 countries took part, and there were over 500 exhibitors from 37 countries present at the fair, and even more participants are expected this year.

- Driver and traffic safety is a very important topic for the bus industry. We at Busworld experience great interest and commitment from our exhibitors and visitors in developing even safer and better security solutions, even though buses and coaches provide already today the safest passenger transport modes. We believe that cooperation across actors will make an important contribution to making bus transport even safer for drivers and other users in the future, says Jan Deman, Managing Director of Busworld Foundation.

Facts:

- The Public Transport Association, Busworld Foundation and Ruter, in collaboration with KS, NHO Transport, Spekter, Yrkestrafikkforbundet, Fellesforbundet, Fagforbundet and Norsk Jernbaneforbund, are the organisers of the Driver Safety Seminar at Busworld in Brussels on 10 October at 1400-1700.
- Speakers at the seminar include Norwegian Minister of Transport Jon-Ivar Nygård, representatives of the European Transport Workers' Federation, public transport companies from London, Madrid, Brussels and Oslo, and major bus manufacturers such as Scania and Van Hool.
- At the seminar, the Institute for Transport Economics will launch the report "Safety in bus transport in Europe: Status of safety and discussion of measures benefitting drivers, passengers and other road users", commissioned by the Norwegian Public Transport Association.
- Busworld is Europe's largest bus fair, where the entire European and international bus manufacturer and supplier industry is present. In 2019, around 40,000 participants from 143 countries took part, and there were over 500 exhibitors from 37 countries present at the fair, and even more participants are expected this year.
- The project is supported with NOK 350,000 from the Ministry of Transport's grant scheme for traffic safety.

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