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**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Working Party on Road Traffic Safety

**AMENDMENTS TO AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 1968 CONVENTIONS  
ON ROAD TRAFFIC AND ON ROAD SIGNS AND SIGNALS  
AND THE 1971 EUROPEAN AGREEMENTS SUPPLEMENTING THEM**

**Proposals for amendments to the 1968 Vienna Convention  
on Road Signs and Signals**

Note by the secretariat

This document is a compilation of the proposals for amendments to the **Vienna Convention on Road Signs and Signals** definitively adopted by the Working Party on Road Traffic Safety (WP.1) at its forty-third session.

An **explanatory memorandum** can be found at the end of this document for the proposals submitted.

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## **I. Proposed amendments to the 1968 Vienna Convention on Road Signs and Signals**

### **A. Amendments to the main text of the Convention**

#### **ARTICLE 1 (Definitions)**

*Insert a new subparagraph (e) bis to read:*

“(e) bis. “Cycle lane” means a part of a carriageway designated for cycles. A cycle lane is distinguished from the rest of the carriageway by longitudinal road markings.”

*Insert a new subparagraph (e) ter to read:*

“(e) ter. “Cycle track” means an independent road or part of a road designated for cycles, signposted as such. A cycle track is separated from other roads or other parts of the same road by structural means.”

#### **ARTICLE 7**

*Replace the existing Article 7 by the following:*

“1. It is recommended that domestic legislation provide that, in order to make them more visible and legible at night, road signs, in particular danger warning signs, regulatory signs and direction signs shall be lighted or retroreflective, provided that this does not result in road users being dazzled.

2. Contracting Parties may also allow the use of fluorescent materials; in this case they shall define which signs may make use of these materials.

3. Domestic legislation should draw up rules for the use of lighted, retroreflective and fluorescent signs. It should also specify the situations in which each class of retroreflective materials shall be used.

4. Dark or light graphic elements of different colours in the signs may be differentiated by means of contrasting light or dark narrow strips respectively.

5. Nothing in this Convention shall prohibit the use, for conveying information, warnings or rules applying only at certain times or on certain days, of signs which are visible only when the information they convey is relevant.”

## **ARTICLE 8**

### Paragraph 3

*Amend to read:*

“3. Nothing in this Convention shall prohibit the addition, mainly in order to facilitate the interpretation of signs, of an inscription in a rectangular panel below the sign or in a rectangular panel containing the sign; such an inscription may also be placed on the sign itself, if this does not make the sign more difficult to understand for drivers who cannot understand the inscription.”

**ARTICLE 13** (Provisions applying generally to the signs described in Annex 1, Sections C and D to this Convention)

### Paragraph 2

*Amend to read:*

“2. Regulatory signs placed level with or shortly after a sign indicating the beginning of a built-up area shall mean that the rule applies throughout the built-up area, unless a different rule is notified by other signs on certain sections of the road in the built-up area.”

**ARTICLE 13 bis** (Special regulation signs)

*Insert a new paragraph 2 bis to read:*

“2 bis. Sign E, 11<sup>a</sup> shall be used for tunnels of 1,000 m or more and in cases provided for by domestic legislation. For tunnels of 1,000 m or more, the length shall be included either in the lower part of the sign, or on an additional panel H, 2, as described in Annex 1, section H. The name of the tunnel may be indicated according to Article 8, paragraph 3 of this Convention.”

**ARTICLE 26 bis**

### Paragraph 1

*Amend to read:*

“1. The marking of lanes reserved for certain categories of vehicles, including cycle lanes, shall be by means of lines which should be clearly distinguished from other continuous or broken lines on the carriageway, notably by being wider and with less space between strokes.”

**ARTICLE 29**

### Paragraph 2

*Amend the first sentence to read:*

“2. If road markings are painted, they shall be yellow or white; however, blue may be used for markings showing places where parking is permitted but subject to some conditions or restrictions (limit of duration, payment, category of user, etc.). ...”

### Paragraph 4

*Amend to read:*

“4. Road markings intended for moving vehicles shall be easily recognized in good time by drivers. They must be visible during the day and at night. It is recommended that such markings, especially in areas where lighting is insufficient, be retroreflective.”

#### **ARTICLE 29 bis**

“1. When permanent road markings are to be modified for a specific period, in particular because of road works or diversions, temporary markings shall be applied in colours different from the colours used for permanent markings.

2. Temporary markings shall take precedence over permanent markings and road users are required to conform to them. When the simultaneous presence of permanent and temporary road markings could be a source of confusion, the permanent markings shall be covered over or removed.

3. Temporary markings shall preferably be retroreflective and may be supplemented by beacons, cats eyes or reflectors with a view to improving traffic guidance.”

#### **B. Amendments to the Annexes to the Convention**

##### **Annex 1, section C, sub-section II (Descriptions)**

Paragraph 9. (Prohibition or restriction of standing and parking)

*Delete subparagraph (c) (vii)*

##### **Annex 1, section D, sub-section II (Descriptions)**

Paragraph 3. (Compulsory roundabout)

*Amend to read:*

“3. Sign D, 3 ‘COMPULSORY ROUNDABOUT’, shall notify drivers that they must follow the direction at the roundabout indicated by the arrows. If the roundabout is indicated by the sign D, 3 together with the sign B, 1 or B, 2, the driver in the roundabout has priority.”

##### **Annex 1, section E, sub-section II (Descriptions)**

Paragraph 9. (Signs notifying the entry or exit from a tunnel where special rules apply)

*Replace the existing subparagraphs by the following:*

“(a) Sign E, 11<sup>a</sup> ‘TUNNEL’ indicates a section of road passing through a tunnel and on which special traffic rules apply. It is placed at the point from which these rules apply.

(b) In order to warn road users in advance, sign E, 11<sup>a</sup> may be placed in addition at a suitable distance before the point where the special rules apply; such sign shall show, either in its lower part, or on an additional panel H, 1, as described in section H of this Annex, the distance between the point at which it is set up and the point from which these special rules apply.

(c) Sign E, 11<sup>b</sup> 'END OF TUNNEL' may be placed at the point from which the special rules no longer apply."

*Insert a new paragraph 14 to read:*

"14. Signs indicating a stopping place in case of emergency or danger

Sign E, 17 "EMERGENCY STOPPING PLACE" indicates a place which shall only be used by drivers for stopping or parking in case of emergency or danger. If this stopping place is equipped with an emergency telephone and/or an extinguisher, the sign shall bear the symbols F, 14 and/or F, 15 either in its lower part or on a rectangular panel placed below the sign. This sign has two models, E, 17<sup>a</sup> and E, 17<sup>b</sup>."

**Annex 1, section F, sub-section I** (General characteristics and symbols)

Subparagraph 2

*Amend the last sentence to read:*

"2. ... The symbol shall be black or dark blue, except symbols F, 1<sup>a</sup>, F, 1<sup>b</sup>, F, 1<sup>c</sup> and F, 15, which shall be red. The symbol F, 14 may be red."

**Annex 1, section F, sub-section II** (Descriptions)

Paragraph 2. (Miscellaneous symbols)

*Add the new symbols F, 14 and F, 15 below:*

"F, 14 'EMERGENCY TELEPHONE'"

"F, 15 'EXTINGUISHER'"

**Annex 1, section G, sub-section V** (Indication signs)

*Insert a new paragraph 11 to read:*

"11. Signs indicating emergency exits

(a) The signs G, 23<sup>a</sup> and G, 23<sup>b</sup> indicate the location of emergency exits.

(b) The signs G, 24<sup>a</sup>, G, 24<sup>b</sup> and 24<sup>c</sup> are examples of signs to indicate the direction and distance of the nearest emergency exits. In tunnels, they shall be placed at a maximum distance of 50 m apart and at a height of 1 to 1.5 m on the sidewalls.

(c) The signs G, 23 and G, 24 have a green ground and the symbols, arrows and distance indications are white or of a light colour."

**Annex 3** (REPRODUCTION IN COLOUR OF SIGNS, SYMBOLS AND PANELS REFERRED TO IN ANNEX 1)

*Reproduction below of the new signs and symbols introduced in the above proposed amendments:*



**E, 17<sup>a</sup>**



**E, 17<sup>b</sup>**



**F, 14**



**F, 15**



**G, 23<sup>a</sup>**



**G, 23<sup>b</sup>**



**G, 24<sup>a</sup>**



**G, 24<sup>b</sup>**



**G, 24<sup>c</sup>**

## **II. EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM (Justification of the proposed amendments)**

### **Article 1**

Since cyclists are a particularly vulnerable category of users, it is proposed to introduce into the 1968 Vienna Convention on Road Signs and Signals new measures to improve and favour their safety. In addition to this article, these measures also concern Article 26 bis below.

In this context, it is proposed to add definitions of the concepts of “cycle lane” and “cycle track” (subparagraphs (e) bis and (e) ter) corresponding to the two forms of adaptation of the infrastructure for cycle traffic. These two definitions will at the same time be incorporated into the 1968 Convention on Road Traffic which is the subject of a separate amendment.

### **Article 7**

The aim of the proposed amendment is to reinforce conditions of visibility and legibility of road signs by recommending the use of retroreflective materials and by permitting the use of fluorescent materials for signs to be specified by domestic legislation.

### **Article 8, paragraph 3**

The serious accidents in several European tunnels in 1999 and 2001 revealed the importance of clear and harmonized signs at the entrance to and inside tunnels in order to provide better information to help drivers to adopt appropriate behaviour, particularly in the event of an incident. In order to reinforce safety in tunnels, it is proposed to introduce a number of measures in this Convention to improve and reinforce signs at the entrance to and inside tunnels. In addition to this article, these measures concern Article 13 bis, Annex 1 (section E, sub-section II; section F, sub-sections I and II, section G, subsection V) and Annex 3.

The proposed amendment to this article has as its aim the addition of the word “mainly”, so as to permit other particulars to be included on panels covered in this article, such as, for example, the names of tunnels, and indications intended only to facilitate interpretation of the signs.

### **Article 13, paragraph 2**

According to amendments to the 1968 Convention on Road Signs and Signals which entered into force on 30 November 1995, there are four signs to indicate the beginning of a built-up area (E,7<sup>a</sup>, E,7<sup>b</sup>, E,7<sup>c</sup> et E,7<sup>d</sup>). On the sign E,7<sup>b</sup>, the name of the built-up area does not appear while it is indicated on the other three.

The purpose of the proposed amendment is therefore to bring the coverage of the sign E,7<sup>b</sup> into line with that of the other three by replacing “giving the name of” with “indicating the beginning of” in Article 13, paragraph 2 in order to identify the point as from which the rules applicable to the built-up area as a whole may be indicated, using the appropriate signs.

**Article 13 bis, paragraph 2 bis (new)**

For obvious safety reasons, it is essential that the special requirements applicable in tunnels and as defined in article 25 bis of the 1968 Convention on Road Traffic should be clearly understood and complied with. In view of the fact that these rules are valid only if the tunnel carries a special sign (sign E,11<sup>a</sup>), it is proposed that it should be mandatory to install this sign at the entrance to all tunnels of 1,000 m or more (domestic legislation may also prescribe it for shorter lengths). Once tunnels in all Contracting Parties carry a simple standard sign, which in all States signifies the same traffic regulations, drivers - particularly in international traffic - will no longer have any hesitation as to the behaviour they should adopt. Safety in tunnels will thus be reinforced.

**Article 26 bis**

The amendment consists in adding cycle lanes to the lanes which may be marked on the carriageway for certain categories of vehicles.

**Article 29**Paragraph 2

The current provisions of Article 29, paragraph 2, of the 1968 Convention on Road Signs and Signals state that blue may be used for markings on the carriageway showing places where parking is permitted or restricted. The scope of this provision does not match that of paragraph 9, (c), (vii) of Annex 1, section C, sub-section II, which states that blue bands at a height of approximately 2 m on lampposts, trees, etc., bordering a carriageway, or lines on the kerb, may notify the fact that the duration of parking is limited but parking is not subject to payment.

The aim of the proposed amendment is the further clarification of the use of blue markings to indicate that although parking is permitted in the places so marked, it is nevertheless subject to some conditions or restrictions (limit of duration, payment, category of user, etc.). At the same time this amendment involves the deletion of subparagraph (c) (vii) of paragraph 9 of Annex 1, section C, sub-section II (also see below).

Paragraph 4

The aim of the proposed amendment is to reinforce the visibility of road markings and to specify the conditions in which these markings must be made visible.

**Article 29 bis (new)**

The aim of the proposed amendment is to introduce into the Convention provisions which can currently be found in the Annex to the Protocol on Road Markings, Additional to the European Agreement supplementing the Convention (6. Ad Article 29 of the Convention, "Additional paragraphs to be inserted immediately after paragraph 2 of this Article"), concerning the visibility and legibility of temporary road markings. Its objective is to extend its application to all Contracting Parties to the Convention and to specify the conditions in which these temporary road markings should be placed on the roadway.



**Annex 1, section C, sub-section II, paragraph 9**

The proposal is to delete subparagraph (c) (vii) which becomes unnecessary because of the proposed amendment to Article 29.2.

**Annex 1, section D, sub-section II, paragraph 3**

The lack of precision of the existing wording of paragraph 3 leaves the way open for differing interpretations of the rules of priority to be applied at roundabouts. Sign D, 3 is addressed to drivers entering the roundabout. However, neither the Convention on Road Traffic nor the Convention on Road Signs and Signals define the priority rules which apply to drivers already in the roundabout. The aim of the amendment proposal is therefore to make it legally clear that the driver in the roundabout has priority over drivers entering the roundabout when the sign B, 1 or B, 2 is displayed at the approaches together with sign D, 3.

**Annex 1, section E, sub-section II, paragraphs 9 and 14**

The aim of the amendment proposed in paragraph 9 is to define in greater detail the meaning of sign E, 11<sup>a</sup> "TUNNEL" as well as the conditions for its use at the entry of a tunnel and, if necessary, as an advance sign before the tunnel entry.

As regards the proposed amendment to paragraph 14, its aim is to introduce a new sign, already used by a number of countries, to indicate a stopping place, taking the form of a widening of the carriageway (lay-by), which drivers must only use in case of emergency or danger. This sign may be supplemented by an indication of the presence of an emergency telephone (symbol F, 14) and/or an extinguisher (symbol F, 15).

**Annex 1, section F**

**Sub-section I**

The aim of the proposed amendment is to introduce two new symbols, red in colour, linked to notions of danger or emergency. The symbol F, 15 (extinguisher) must always be red. The symbol F, 14 (emergency telephone) may be black or red. This proposal should be linked with that of sub-section II.

**Sub-section II**

The aim of the proposed amendment is to add the two new symbols referred to in sub-section I and in section E, sub-section II, paragraph 14 above.

**Annex 1, section G, sub-section V**

The aim of the proposed amendment is to harmonize signs indicating emergency exits which are of primordial importance in tunnels.

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