

URGENT MATTER: Critical concerns regarding Italian Road Safety Legislation and ask for help

**Dear Mr. Jean TODT,**

First of all, I hope you are well. I make this heartfelt appeal to you, in view of your visit to Italy next week.

As you prepare to present the “Streets for life” campaign on next Monday, alongside with the Italian Minister of Infrastructure and Transport Matteo Salvini, we feel it is critical to inform you of the serious concerns we have regarding the recent legislative actions proposed by the Italian government, which are not only anti-scientific but also contrary to best practices recognized internationally.

I am in fact writing to you on behalf of the Italian Association for Road Traffic Victims (AIFVS) and 26 other Italian NGOs representing road traffic victims. As you well know, given the proximity you have always shown towards road victims' associations, we're advocating tirelessly for a safer and more just approach to road safety in Italy.

As you know just as well, given your specific expertise, Italy ranks last in Europe in terms of macro-statistics on road mortality, with 53 deaths per million inhabitants (as opposed to 20-25 ones in the most virtuous countries and, for example, 36 deaths per million inhabitants in Spain). Furthermore, despite the UN Decade of Action for Road Safety global target (reduce road traffic deaths and injuries by at least 50%) and the EU's long-term goal to move as close as possible to zero fatalities in road transport by 2050 ("Vision Zero") in Italy the number of fatalities over the past four years has remained nearly constant, with slightly more than 3,000 deaths each year, approximately 8 per day!

Excessive speed is identified as the leading cause of death in road collisions, with 3 out of 4 collisions occurring in urban areas (Istat 2023), where various road users (drivers, motorcyclists, cyclists, e-scooter riders, and pedestrians) coexist.

**The reform of the Italian Road Traffic Code (Codice della Strada), currently before the Senate, and other related legislation, have several provisions that are of deep concern.**

Despite few positive steps, such as stricter measures against driving under the influence of alcohol and drugs, **the overall direction of these reforms poses significant risks to road safety because it does not act in favour of road safety and even seems to go in the opposite direction.**

Key concerns include:

**1) Speed Limits and Automated Enforcement:** The proposed legislation includes provisions that could allow for an increase in speed limits and imposes severe restrictions on the use of speed

cameras and other automated enforcement tools. These measures ignore the well-documented correlation between speed and the severity of accidents, especially in urban areas. The potential easing of speed enforcement directly contradicts the goal of reducing road fatalities.

**2) Vulnerable Road Users:** The reforms significantly roll back protections for cyclists and pedestrians, including limiting the applicability of bicycle lanes and other safety measures designed to protect these vulnerable road users. For instance, the proposed legislation stipulates that when overtaking a cyclist, a vehicle driver must maintain a distance of one and a half meters only 'where road conditions allow it,' contrary to best international practices where the one and a half meter distance must always be observed for the protection of human life. This disregard for non-motorized traffic participants is contrary to the global shift towards promoting safer, more sustainable modes of transport.

**3) LEZ and Pedestrian Zones:** The proposed changes to the regulations governing low emissions and restricted traffic zones (LEZ) and pedestrian areas would make it easier for unauthorized vehicles to enter these spaces, undermining the safety and health benefits these zones provide. This is a stark regression from practices that have proven effective in reducing traffic-related incidents and improving public health in urban areas.

**4) Municipal Autonomy:** The reforms significantly curtail the powers of local governments to implement traffic safety measures tailored to their specific needs, such as speed limits in urban zones and the use of speed enforcement tools. This centralization of authority not only conflicts with the principle of subsidiarity but also hampers local efforts to enhance road safety based on community-specific data and needs.

**Given the above points, we respectfully urge you to leverage your influence and public platform to advocate for a revision of these proposed legislative changes. Specifically, we request that you publicly and privately encourage the Italian government to include the evidence-based recommendations of road safety experts and road traffic victims associations like ours before the final approval of the new Road Traffic Code.**

Despite being summoned to official parliamentary hearings, **not a single request from our associations has been included in the proposed new Traffic Code.** This exclusion only exacerbates our concern that the voices of those most affected by road tragedies are being ignored.

Your intervention could be pivotal in ensuring that Italy does not regress in its commitment to road safety but instead moves forward towards achieving the goals set out by the United Nations in reducing road fatalities and injuries.

To provide you with further context, we have included two attachments in Italian that delve deeper into the issues we have highlighted. We hope you and your staff find them useful in understanding the severity of the situation and the **need of Your intervention**.

Thank you Mr. Todt for your attention to this critical issue. I remain at your disposal for any further information or discussion.

Yours sincerely,

Filippo Randi

on behalf of AIFVS - ASSOCIAZIONE ITALIANA FAMILIARI E VITTIME DELLA STRADA APS alongside with AFVS - ASSOCIAZIONE FAMILIARI E VITTIME DELLA STRADA ETS, ALINA ART FOUNDATION, ASSOCIAZIONE ALBA: LUCI SULLA BUONA STRADA, ASSOCIAZIONE ANGELI SULL'ASFALTO, ASSOCIAZIONE ANDREA NARDINI, ASSOCIAZIONE DAVIDE MARASCO, ASSOCIAZIONE DOROTHY DREAM, ASSOCIAZIONE GABRIELE BORGOGNI, ASSOCIAZIONE LORENZO GUARNIERI ONLUS, ASSOCIAZIONE MANUEL BIAGIOLA, ASSOCIAZIONE MARCO PIETROBUONO, ASSOCIAZIONE MASSIMO MASSIMI ONLUS, ASSOCIAZIONE SONIA TOSI ODV, BASTA VITTIME SULLA STRADA STATALE 106 - ODV FONDAZIONE MATTEO CIAPPI ONLUS, AVISL ONLUS - ASSOCIAZIONE VITTIME DI INCIDENTI STRADALI, FONDAZIONE CLAUDIO CIAI ETS, FONDAZIONE LUIGI GUCCIONE ENTE MORALE, FONDAZIONE MICHELE SCARPONI ETS, INSIEME PER FABRIZIO APS, NON CORRERE, ACCORRI! - GRUPPO PER LA SICUREZZA STRADALE, RETE VIVINSTRADA, ROSE BIANCHE SULL'ASFALTO ASSOCIAZIONE, VIVERE MEGLIO LA CITTÀ - COMITATO IN MEMORIA DI LUCIA POZZI.

In allegato:

- lettera familiari Senato.pdf
- documento “in direzione sbagliata e pericolosa.pdf”