



INTERNATIONAL
FEDERATION OF
PEDESTRIANS

Minister Infrastruktury
Andrzej Adamczyk
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Poland

9 of July 2019

Subject: Request to change the Polish law granting more protections to pedestrians and implementing new rules and regulations to reduce the speed of motor vehicles in urban areas, especially approaching unsignalized zebra crosswalks

Dear Minister Adamczyk,

It was called to our attention that in Poland motorised traffic only have to yield to Pedestrians after they have started to cross a Zebra Crossing.

The **Vienna Convention** establishes in its ARTICLE 21 Behaviour of drivers towards pedestrians 2. (b) that *"If vehicular traffic is not regulated at that crossing by traffic light signals or by an authorized official, drivers shall approach the crossing only at a speed low enough not to endanger pedestrians using, **or about to use**, it; if necessary, they shall stop to allow such pedestrians to cross."* Poland is one of the Contracting Parties to the Vienna Convention on Road Traffic from November 8, 1968, having signed its ratification on August 23 1984.

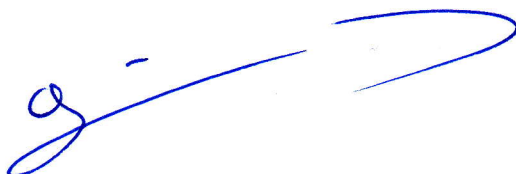
In 2015 Poland had the second worst pedestrian fatality rate in the European Union. In the years 2007-2012, 9101 pedestrians were killed and 71328 injured on Polish roads. Almost 30% of pedestrian injury crashes took place at unsignalized zebra crosswalks. Especially at risk are older people - almost 73% of pedestrians killed were 55 years or older (1). Every third road crash in Poland involves a pedestrian as a participant or, most of the time, a casualty. In 50 km/h areas (test points in towns and villages) nearly 40% of drivers exceed the speed limit and in non-built-up areas with a speed limit of 70 km/h, nearly 30% of drivers go over the prescribed speed limit, a clear indication of the need to apply speed management solutions and enforcement (2). Still according to Marcin Budzynski et al., in certain cases, **the driver increases the speed of approach to the crossing when a pedestrian is waiting to cross.**

Meanwhile, the report by the *Instytut Transportu Samochodowego (ITS)* "Badania zachowań pieszych i relacji pieszy-kierowca", made public this week, concluded that:

- 85% of drivers do not reduce their speed approaching the zebras, in the urban areas
- 90% of drivers do not reduce their speed approaching the zebras, outside the urban areas

In most European countries, pedestrians have priority at zebra crossings **even when they are about to use it** - complying with the text of the Vienna Convention. Therefore we would like to request to change the Polish law granting more protections to pedestrians and implementing **new rules and regulations to reduce the speed of motor vehicles in urban areas, especially approaching unsignalized zebra crosswalks.**

Sincerely yours,



Geert van Waeg
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(1) Olszewski, Piotr & Szagała, Piotr & Wolański, Maciej & Zielinska, Anna. (2015). Pedestrian fatality risk in accidents at unsignalized zebra crosswalks in Poland. *Accident Analysis & Prevention*. 84. 83-91.

(2) Marcin Budzynski et al 2017 IOP Conf. Ser.: Mater. Sci. Eng. 245 042064



COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Adam Bodnar

Warsaw, 31/07/2019

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Mr
Geerd van Waeg
President
International Federation of Pedestrians
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Dear Mr. President,

in reference to your letter of July 9th, I wish to thank you for contributing to the ongoing debate on safety of pedestrians in Poland. I am happy to inform that my position on the subject as the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Republic of Poland remains constant. I consider current situation as a threat to human rights. Despite Ministers' negative response to my latest address in this matter, I intend to continue my work on amending the Road Traffic Act to safeguard rights of pedestrians and to reverse the alarming trend in statistics for road traffic accidents in Poland.

Yours sincerely,