



PRESS RELEASE

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Many European motorway rest areas unsuitable for short breaks

The Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) Eurocouncil calls upon national road authorities from all European Member States to set and enforce minimum quality standards for motorway rest areas with the view of improving road safety. A recent EuroTest investigation, led by the German automobile club ADAC, reveals an uncomfortable reality on European motorways: of 101 European motorway rest areas investigated, only 11% could get a rating of "Very Good".

"The Directive on road infrastructure safety management*, issued last November, represents a valuable initiative, on the basis of which further action is absolutely required", says Wil Botman of FIA European Bureau in Brussels. "The provision of good, sufficient and safe motorway rest areas should form an integral part of road infrastructure safety management. Relaxation is essential for safety on long distance trips by users of car or motorcycle."

With road transportation representing 80% of all types of transportation, it is regretful to see so many rest areas along the European motorways not being suitable at least for short breaks, not to mention relaxation. On the contrary, Europe should set an example of good road infrastructure management for the rest of the world.

The motorway rest area investigation was based on a comprehensive check list composed of 70 test items broken down into four categories: traffic and parking, outdoor facilities, sanitary facilities and personal safety.

Almost half of the rest areas inspected could not be used for relaxation due to being too close to the motorway and lacking any noise protection system. Almost one third of the facilities provided no sanitary facilities.

Many of the facilities inspected failed to provide designated parking or sanitary facilities for disabled. When it comes to safety and security, many rest areas were either poorly lit at night or not at all, with no emergency phones or video surveillance. Other shortcomings included potholes in the road surface, parking without any road marking, rubbish in the green areas and either no or shabby picnic tables.

Hardly any country was able to come up with good facilities across the board. Good facilities were found in Austria and Croatia.

For detailed results of the Motorway Rest Area inspection visit: <http://www.eurotestmobility.com>

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1. * reference made to the EU Directive 2008/96/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council issued on 19 November 2008, on road infrastructure safety management.
2. The Motorway Rest Area inspection included 101 motorway rest areas in 16 European countries as follows: 20 in Germany, 12 in Italy, 10 in France, 10 in Austria, 8 in Spain, 6 in the Netherlands, 6 in Switzerland, 5 in Belgium, 4 in Denmark, 4 in Croatia, 4 in Norway, 4 in Sweden, 3 in Hungary, 2 in Slovenia, 2 in Czech Republic, as well as 1 in Slovakia.
3. The inspection was conducted between 16 April and 10 May 2009 and covered 31,000 kilometres.

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