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## Cutting car accident claims in the EU

According to recent studies, European motorists want to buy safer cars but are put off by what they think of being a high price for car safety features that could bring down the number of car accident claims.

Some motorists also do not fully understand the benefits of electronic stability control

(ESC), for example, and other high-end technology systems and the role they play in preventing car accidents and reducing the number of car accident claims.

Vivian Reding, European Commissioner for Information Society and Media says, "Together with industry we are working hard to develop intelligent safety systems. Member states and stakeholders must ensure that these dramatically important and efficient technologies are quickly taken in use in all markets in Europe. These survey results underline how strongly Europeans feel and why we must all act now."

The European Commission has recognised motorist concerns and is trying to raise awareness and release more information to the public about intelligent safety systems.

Road safety is shifting more and more to in-car systems that could reduce the number of car accidents. This involves advanced information communication technologies (ICTs) which help to develop intelligent safety systems to save lives and reduce the severity of personal injuries.

The rapid deployment and take-up of these systems would benefit all road users. This requires, however, that car buyers and others are informed about safety systems and understand their benefits.

As a part of the Intelligent Car Initiative, launched in February 2006, the Commission initiated two surveys to learn about the attitudes of drivers towards safety systems designed to reduce car accident claims.

The surveys were performed in all 25 EU Member States and allowed the EU Commission to understand users' attitudes towards new technologies and their level of knowledge and to decide on further actions, like public demonstrations, media events and campaigns.

The survey showed that for the majority of motorists, safety is of high importance when buying a car but they don't want to pay extra for safety systems. This could be because they feel that cars should be safe without having to pay for the privilege.

Safety and fuel consumption are the top criteria next to price in choosing a car. Over 80 per cent of Europeans want ESC (electronic stability control) in their car and ESC is perceived as an extension of the already well-known ABS.

Over 70 per cent of Europeans want in-car emergency call (eCall) in their ar, which can save lives if a car accident occurs. The European Commision has welcomed the recent public-private communication platform "eSafetyAware!" to promote safety technology.

**What is the eSafety Aware programme?** Esafety aware is a programme to improve public awareness of in-car safety systems designed to reduce car accidents and car accident claims.

The programme focuses on commercial awareness campaigns chaired by the Foundation of the International Automobile Federation (FIA). It has 26 founding members representing motoring clubs, road safety authorities, road operators and insurance providers.

The campaigns are designed to improve public awareness about safety features like ESC, which can reduce the incidence of road traffic accidents by 20 per cent.

Europe still has more than 41,000 road-related deaths every year and the personal and financial cost for families is extremely high.

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## About the Author

Car Accident Advice Line <http://www.car-accident-claim.com> helps people to claim compensation after they have been injured in a car accident that was not their fault. You can call us now on 0808 143 43 42

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