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**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Working Party on Road Traffic Safety  
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**AMENDMENTS TO AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
1968 CONVENTIONS ON ROAD TRAFFIC AND ON ROAD SIGNS AND SIGNALS  
AND THE 1971 EUROPEAN AGREEMENTS SUPPLEMENTING THEM**

**Pedestrian crossings**

Note by the secretariat

Introduction

At its thirty-fourth session, the Working Party recalled that it had discussed the issue of behaviour at pedestrian crossings at its thirty-first session but decided, since there had been recent developments regarding pedestrian crossings in some ECE member countries, to consider reopening discussion on this subject using as a basis TRANS/WP.1/1998/4.

At its thirty-fifth session, the Working Party was generally in favour of reopening discussion on this subject and requested the secretariat to issue the latest resolution adopted by ECMT on this subject for its next session. It also requested members to send concise information on national legislation to the secretariat so that a document could be issued for its next session.

Information received from 15 Governments is reproduced below:

\* \* \*

## **Austria**

The Austrian Road Traffic Act states that drivers have to allow pedestrians who have already entered the pedestrian crossing or who clearly intend to do so to cross the carriageway; for this purpose, drivers shall approach the crossing only at a speed low enough not to endanger pedestrians and, if necessary, they shall stop. On the other hand, pedestrians are not allowed to step on to the carriageway immediately before an approaching vehicle so that the driver does not have enough time to react.

In no case do these provisions mean that the pedestrian has to give a sign that he intends to use the crossing.

## **Bulgaria**

In accordance with Bulgarian legislation the term “pedestrian crossing” means a part of the carriageway, marked or not by road markings designed for pedestrian traversing. At intersections a “pedestrian crossing” is the prolongation of the pavement or the verge on the carriageway. Pedestrian crossings may be signposted by road signs and may be marked by road markings.

### **The obligations for pedestrians, crossing the carriageway:**

- they shall use a road crossing whenever there is one nearby;
- before stepping onto the pedestrian crossing on the carriageway to take the distance and speed of approaching vehicles into account.
- once they have started to cross a carriageway, not to take an unnecessarily long route, and not to linger or stop on the carriageway unnecessarily.

Pedestrians are forbidden :

- to step suddenly onto the carriageway;
- to cross the carriageway in conditions of limited field of vision.

Pedestrians shall demonstrate their intention to cross the carriageway by the following signal – arm stretched vertically or horizontally and perpendicularly to the axis of the road. This signal does not suspend the obligation of pedestrians before stepping onto the pedestrian crossing on the carriageway to take the distance and speed of approaching vehicles into account.

### **The obligations for drivers approaching pedestrian crossings:**

When approaching a pedestrian crossing drivers (except drivers of rail-borne vehicles) are obliged to allow the pedestrians to cross the carriageway, decreasing the speed or stopping. When going around vehicles which have stopped at a pedestrian crossing, drivers (with the exception of drivers of rail-borne vehicles) are obliged to choose a speed permitting them to stop and allow pedestrians who have already stepped on the pedestrian crossing to cross.

If the vehicular traffic at a pedestrian crossing is regulated by traffic light signals or by an authorized official, drivers are obliged:

- \* to stop before the pedestrian crossing when the traffic light signal prohibits vehicles from passing;
- \* after the signal allowing vehicles to pass has shown, to allow pedestrians who have already stepped onto the pedestrian crossing to cross;
- \* not to stop or stay at the pedestrian crossing after the signal allowing vehicles to pass has shown.

When pedestrians demonstrate their intention to cross the carriageway by the following signal – arm stretched vertically or horizontally and perpendicularly to the axis of the road, drivers are obliged to stop and to allow the pedestrians to cross, without endangering the traffic.

When approaching a section of the road where on the carriageway or close to it, there are children, with or without a pedestrian crossing, drivers are obliged to decrease their speed or to stop if it is necessary.

## **Czech Republic**

The legislation of the Czech Republic contains provisions regarding behaviour at pedestrian crossings.

### **The Road Traffic Act and on changes of some acts, No. 361/2000**

#### **§ 2, letter dd)**

A pedestrian crossing is a place on a road intended for pedestrians crossing the street, marked by an appropriate road sign.

#### **§ 5 section 1, letter h)**

The duty of drivers except tram drivers is to enable pedestrians, who are at a pedestrian crossing or obviously want to use it, to cross the street safely; consequently drivers must approach pedestrian crossings at a speed so as to be able stop the vehicle before the pedestrian crossing if necessary.

#### **§ 54**

- (1) If a crossroads with controlled traffic, a pedestrian crossing, a place for crossing the street, overway or subway marked by road signs “pedestrian crossing” “overway or subway”, is nearer than 50 m, pedestrians must cross the street only at those places.
- (2) Otherwise than at a pedestrian crossing, it is allowed to cross the street only perpendicular to its axis. Before crossing the road a pedestrian has to make sure whether he can cross the road without endangering himself and other traffic participants. Pedestrians may cross a street only if doing so does not force drivers to change direction or speed suddenly.

- (3) From the moment a pedestrian walks onto a pedestrian crossing or a street, he must not stop there or stay there unnecessarily. A blind pedestrian signals his intention to cross a street by waving his white blind stick in the direction of the crossing. Pedestrians must not enter a pedestrian crossing or a street if priority vehicles are coming; if he is on a pedestrian crossing or a street he has to leave space for priority vehicles to pass immediately. Pedestrians must not enter a pedestrian crossing or a street immediately in front of an approaching vehicle. Pedestrians have to give right of way to trams.
- (4) A pedestrian must not cross railings or other barriers on a street.

## **Denmark**

The Danish rules are the following:

### **The Danish Road Traffic Act:**

Section 27,  
subsection 6.

At a pedestrian crossing where traffic is controlled by police or by traffic signals, a driver shall give way to pedestrians who are crossing the carriageway on the crossing, even if permission to pass the pedestrian crossing has been indicated by the traffic light signal or by signals from a police officer. If such a pedestrian crossing is situated at an intersection, a driver who is to pass the crossing after having changed direction at the intersection shall drive suitably slowly and shall stop, if necessary, to allow pedestrians on the pedestrian crossing or about to enter it to pass.

subsection 7.

Drivers approaching an uncontrolled pedestrian crossing shall adjust the speed so that pedestrians on the crossing or about to enter it will not be endangered or impeded. If necessary, a driver shall stop to allow such pedestrian to pass.

subsection 8.

As far as possible, a driver shall avoid stopping a vehicle on a pedestrian crossing.

## **Finland**

There are rules for both pedestrians and drivers regarding behaviour at pedestrian crossings.

The driver approaching a pedestrian crossing must adjust his/her speed so that, when necessary, he/she is able to stop the vehicle before it. The driver of a vehicle must give free passage to a pedestrian on the pedestrian crossing or to one just entering and stepping onto it.

A pedestrian entering onto a pedestrian crossing or otherwise onto the carriageway must watch out for approaching vehicles and pay particular attention to their distance and speed.

## **Georgia**

Behaviour at pedestrian crossings is regulated in Georgia by the National Law on Road Traffic Safety (Chapter V, Clauses 20-43), which was adopted on 28 May 1999. The Law was prepared by the Ministry of Interior and ratified by the Parliament of Georgia, and though it takes into account provisions of relevant International Agreements and Conventions, it still needs to be aligned with these documents.

## **Israel**

The law in Israel requires pedestrians to cross a road in a crosswalk, tunnel or bridge, if one is available “nearby”.

The law requires that prior to stepping into a crosswalk, the pedestrian must take every precaution to prevent an accident, when a vehicle is approaching at a distance which might not be enough for stopping safely.

The law requires the pedestrian to cross a road at a reasonable speed and in a straight (and shortest) line and without delay while on the road.

The law requires that a driver who approaches a crosswalk in which there are pedestrians at the time, will enable them to complete their crossing safely and even stop if necessary to facilitate pedestrian safety.

The law requires drivers to always slow down when approaching a crosswalk and to stop, if necessary, to permit safe crossing of people in the crosswalk.

Other duties apply as well, however Israel has not yet extended this obligation of the driver to cases where a pedestrian is about to enter a crosswalk, or makes a gesture about an intention to use the crosswalk.

Israel applies quite strict (= high) warrants for the marking of crosswalks on roads, because of the problem of scarce use of unwarranted crosswalks.

## **Latvia**

When approaching a pedestrian crossing a driver has to be ready to slow down or stop to let pedestrians cross. When a pedestrian has stepped onto a crossing, the driver has to give way.

At a pedestrian crossing controlled by lights, drivers have to give way to pedestrians who are still crossing after the signal for vehicles has changed to green.

It is prohibited to overtake or park on pedestrian crossings and closer than 5m before crossings.

## **Malta**

Regulation 89 of the Motor Vehicles Regulations of 1994 outlines procedures for the appropriate usage by both motorists and pedestrians at designated pedestrian crossings and pedestrian crossings controlled by traffic signals. The required behaviour of these road users at pedestrian crossings may be summarised as follows:

- At designated pedestrian crossings marked with traverse white banded road markings, drivers of vehicles approaching the pedestrian crossing must give way to a pedestrian who is waiting on the footpath to cross or in the process of crossing the road.
- At pedestrian crossings controlled by traffic signals (manual or automatic operation) pedestrians must abide by the traffic light signal being displayed.
- Pedestrians are not permitted to linger unnecessarily when making use of a pedestrian crossing.

## **Netherlands**

Dutch legislation is formulated as follows:

"A driver of a vehicle should give priority to pedestrians and to those who are handicapped while driving a special vehicle for handicapped people, when they cross a pedestrian crossing or are apparently going to do so."

This rule does not apply in cases when "priority vehicles", like ambulances, fire engines and police cars (when they have sound and light warnings) are approaching a pedestrian crossing. In these cases these priority vehicles have priority and pedestrians and handicapped people in their special vehicles should give way.

## **Poland**

Regulations concerning behaviour at pedestrian crossings are included in:

The Road Traffic Act: drivers approaching a pedestrian crossing are obliged to exercise extra care and to give way to pedestrians on the crossing. Overtaking on pedestrian crossings and before crossings is forbidden except at crossings where traffic is regulated by traffic light signals.

Decree of Minister of Transport and Maritime Economy on road signs and signals: drivers approaching a pedestrian crossing are obliged to lower their speed sufficiently so as not to endanger pedestrians already using or about to use the crossing.

## **Portugal**

At pedestrian crossings, before stepping on to the carriageway, pedestrians must make sure that they will not cause an accident by considering the distance and speed of approaching vehicles.

Drivers approaching a pedestrian crossing must give way to pedestrians that have already started crossing.

Overtaking in the vicinity of a pedestrian crossing is forbidden in Portuguese legislation. It is also forbidden to overtake on a pedestrian crossing.

## **Romania**

A driver must give priority to pedestrians at pedestrian crossings when the pedestrian is starting to cross the road, is already crossing the road or when they have showed the driver an obvious intention to cross the road. Drivers must reduce their speed in the vicinity of pedestrian crossings.

Pedestrians must cross the road at pedestrian crossings when they are sure that it is safe to do so.

## **Slovakia**

### 1. Behaviour at pedestrian crossings

#### A Behaviour of pedestrians at a pedestrian crossing

Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic Nr. 315/1996 Coll. on Road Traffic in wording of latter amendments, Article 53 (Pedestrians),

"par 2)

Pedestrians at a pedestrian crossing shall keep to the side appropriate to the direction of their movement. Crossing the carriageway elsewhere than at a pedestrian crossing must be perpendicular to the axis of the carriageway. Pedestrians shall not step onto the carriageway without first making sure that they can do so without danger. Once they have stepped on the carriageway, they shall not linger or stop unnecessarily. Pedestrians shall not step on to the carriageway if vehicles using warning signals are approaching. If a pedestrian has already stepped onto the carriageway, they shall leave the carriageway without delay in order to allow the vehicles to pass.

par 3)

Pedestrians crossing a road at a pedestrian crossing shall show respect to approaching vehicles and shall not cross the road alone but in groups. Pedestrians have the same obligation towards the drivers turning into the road, which pedestrians are crossing. In other cases, pedestrians are allowed to cross the carriageway only if, taking the distance and speed of approaching vehicles into account, shall not force drivers of such vehicles to change direction or speed."





B. Behaviour of drivers towards pedestrians

Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic Nr. 315/1996 Coll. on Road Traffic in wording of latter amendments, Article 4 (Duties of a Driver), par 2 f)

"A driver must give way to pedestrians crossing a carriageway at a pedestrian crossing, and must neither endanger nor restrict them. For this purpose the driver must stop their vehicle. This rule does not apply to drivers using, in accordance with this Law, special warning signals; such drivers must not endanger pedestrians."

**United Kingdom**

Rules for motorists:

- You **MUST NOT** park on a crossing or in the area covered by the zigzag lines. You **MUST NOT** overtake the moving vehicle nearest the crossing or the vehicle nearest the crossing which has stopped to give way to pedestrians.  
Laws: Zebra, Pelican and Puffin Pedestrian Crossings Regulations and General Directions 1997 (ZPPPCRGD) regs 18, 20 & 24 & Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984 (RTRA) sect 25(5)
- **Zebra crossings:** As you approach a zebra crossing you **MUST** give way when someone has moved onto a crossing  
Law: ZPPPCRGD reg 25
- **Pelican crossings:** These are signal-controlled crossings where flashing amber follows the red 'Stop' light. You **MUST** stop when the red light shows. When the amber light is flashing, you **MUST** give way to any pedestrians on the crossing. Laws: ZPPPCRGD regs 23 & 26 & RTRA sect 25(5)
- Pelican crossings which go straight across the road are one crossing, even when there is a central island. You **MUST** wait for pedestrians who are crossing from the other side of the island. Laws: ZPPPCRGD reg 26 & RTRA sect 25(5)

Rules for pedestrians:

- You **MUST NOT** loiter on zebra, pelican or puffin crossings  
Laws: ZPPPCRGD reg 19 & RTRA sect 25(5)
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