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We make road traffic even safer, climate-friendly, and fairer

Federal Minister Andreas Scheuer:

“It is here! The Traffic Code amendment will come into effect April 28. I am delighted, because it will make our mobility safer, climate-friendly, and keep things fair! The new rules will strengthen the weaker road users in particular. We are creating more protection for cyclists and advantages for car sharing and electrically powered vehicles. And from now on, anyone who blocks the escape route will be punished more severely.”

Factual information:

Federal Minister Andreas Scheuer had presented the Traffic Code (StVO) amendment and other regulations in fall of 2019.

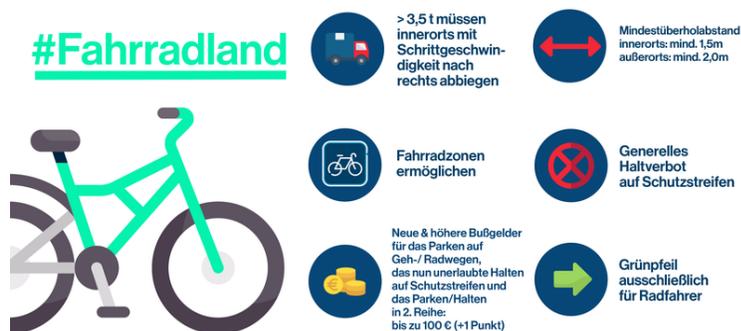
The 2nd Chamber of Parliament approved the amendment Feb. 14, 2020 with conditions.

The Cabinet took note of the amendment March 23, 2020 in the version with changes made by the 2nd Chamber of Parliament.

The amendment was published in the Federal Law Gazette (No. 19) on Monday, April 27, 2020, and thus enters into force Tuesday, April 28, 2020.

The amendment contains the following changes and new fines, among others:

New regulations to strengthen the bicycle traffic



Riding side by side with bicycles

A new version of the existing regulation clarifies that side-by-side driving of cyclists is in principle permitted. Cyclists must ride one behind the other only if other road users are obstructed.

Minimum motor vehicles passing distance

For motor vehicles a minimum passing distance of 1.5 m in within city limits and 2 m outside of city limits is required when passing pedestrians, cyclists and people with small electric vehicles. Up until now, the Traffic Code required only "sufficient lateral distance".

Walking speed for motor vehicles over 3.5 tons when turning right within city limits

For reasons of traffic safety, walking speed (4 to 7, max. 11 km/h) is required for vehicles over 3.5 tons when turning right within city limits. Violations can be sanctioned with a fine of 70 Euro. In addition, one point is entered in the driving aptitude register.

Passenger transport on bicycles

Persons may be carried on bicycles if the bicycles are built and equipped for passenger transport and the driver is at least 16 years old.

Green arrow exclusively for cyclists

The Traffic Code amendment extends the existing green arrow regulation to cyclists who want to turn right out of a cycle lane or constructional cycle path. In addition, a separate green arrow is introduced applicable only to cyclists.

Green arrow traffic sign for cyclists:



General ban of parking on bicycle lane road marking

Road markings for bicycle paths serve to separate bicycle and vehicle traffic with a dashed white line (sign 340 of the Traffic Code). Cars are not allowed to park there, but are still allowed to stop for up to three minutes. This often means that cyclists are unable to use the protective bicycle path continuously because parked cars block their way. A general ban on stopping is therefore being introduced.

Establishment of bicycle zones

In addition to 30km/h zones, bicycle zones will become possible in the future. The regulation is based on rules for bicycle lanes: There is a speed limit of 30 km/h for all traffic. Bicycle traffic may neither be endangered nor hindered.

Bicycle zone traffic sign



Parking ban extension in front of crossroads and junctions

We want to improve visibility between the road and cycle paths, thus increasing safety, especially for cyclists. Parking in front of intersections and junctions will therefore be prohibited at a distance of up to 8 meters from the intersections of the road edges if there is a road-accompanying bicycle path.

Simplification for freight bicycles

In order to be able to provide parking areas and loading zones especially for freight bicycles, we are introducing a special symbol "freight bicycle", which road traffic authorities can use.

Image freight bicycle



Traffic sign "bicycle expressway"

The traffic sign "bicycle expressway" is to be included in the Traffic Code in order to make it possible to mark cycle expressway routes irrespective of the road surface, e.g. on sandy ground.

Traffic sign "bicycle expressway ":



No passing of two-wheeled vehicles

Road traffic authorities can - e.g. in narrow places - order a ban on passing of two-wheeled vehicles (including bicycles) for motor vehicles. A new traffic sign will be introduced for this purpose.

Traffic sign Ban on passing single-, multi- wheeled vehicles for motor vehicles and motorcycles with sidecars:



Extension of the testing clause

So far, states already have the opportunity to test traffic control and safety measures on a temporary and local basis. The implementation of such traffic trials will be simplified by the Traffic Code amendment.

A further opening of road traffic law to traffic trials requires a change at the legislative level, which is to be addressed in a further step in 2020.

Increased opening of one-way streets for bicyclists in opposite direction

As part of an overall revision of the general administrative regulation to the Traffic Code in 2020, responsible road traffic authorities are to be called upon to examine the possibility of opening one-way streets for cyclists to ride in the opposite direction. The aim is to increase the number of one-way streets opened in the opposite direction.

Car sharing and electrically powered vehicles: measures for clean mobility



Car-Sharing

We create advantages for car sharing vehicles in order to particularly promote this form of mobility.

The planned amendments to the Traffic Code are based on the Car Sharing Act, which creates conditions for responsible road traffic authorities to designate parking spaces for car sharing in a legally secure manner.

Among other things, a new symbol will be introduced, which will serve as the basis for additional signs enabling car-sharing vehicles to park with priority, and a sticker to identify car-sharing vehicles, which must be attached to the windshield in a clearly visible position.

Traffic sign car sharing



Car sharing sticker



Parking areas for electrically powered vehicles

The Traffic Code amendment makes it clear that the responsible road traffic authorities may highlight parking areas for electrically powered vehicles by means of a symbol on the road surface.

Introduction of a sign for “multi-passenger cars”

It is true that the clearance for a special bus lane for passenger cars with multiple occupants has been deleted. However, the newly introduced symbol can now be used by road traffic authorities, for example, to carry out traffic surveys.

Sign for passenger cars with multiple occupancy:



Explicit ban on speed camera apps

The Traffic Code amendment expressly stipulates that speed camera apps, e.g. on smartphones or in navigation systems, may not be used while driving. This already applied before, but is now made clear once again.

New regulations for oversized and heavy transports

For applications for permits and exemptions for large and heavy transport operations, the rules concerning the appropriate authority will change. In addition, there will be nationwide uniformed fees in the future. These regulations will come into force in January 2021.

New rules on fines

Neue Bußgelder für...

	... unberechtigtes Parken auf einem Schwerbehinderten-Parkplatz.		... unerlaubte Nutzung der Rettungsgasse: 200- 320 € +2 Punkte +1 Monat Fahrverbot
	... rechtswidriges Parken an engen oder unübersichtlichen Straßenstellen bzw. im Bereich einer scharfen Kurve.		... das verbotswidrige Parken auf Geh-/ Radwegen, das nun unerlaubte Halten auf Schutzstreifen und das Parken/Halten in 2. Reihe: bis zu 100 € (+1 Punkt)

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The Traffic Code amendment will be accompanied by new or increased fines - in particular for illegal parking on sidewalks and bicycle paths, as well as unauthorized stopping on bicycle lane road markings, and second-row parking and stopping. Fines for these traffic violations have been increased from the current level of 15 Euro up to 100 Euro.

In the case of more serious violation, there is also provision for a point to be entered in the driving aptitude register: if other road users are hindered or endangered as a result of unlawful parking or stopping in the second row and on bicycle lane road markings, or parking on sidewalks and bicycle paths, if damage to property has occurred or if the vehicle is parked on the sidewalk or bicycle path for more than an hour.

The classification of the violation shall be determined by the local competent authorities.

Parking and stopping

In addition, fines for unauthorized parking in a severely disabled parking space will also be increased from 35 to 55 Euro.

In addition, a new offence for unauthorized parking in a car park for electrically powered vehicles will be introduced (warning fee: 55 Euro).

The fine for illegal parking in narrow or unclear road spaces or in the vicinity of a sharp curves will also be increased from 15 to 35 Euro.

The general stopping and parking offence will be punished with a fine of up to 25 Euro instead of 15 Euro.

Rescue Lane

The unauthorized use of an escape route is also prosecuted and punished in the same way as the failure to form an escape route. Fines between 200 and 320 Euro, as well as a one month driving suspension are possible. In addition, these violations are subject to the entry of two points in the driving aptitude register.

Also, new is the imposition of a driving ban for failing to create a rescue lane even if there is no imminent danger or obstruction.

In addition, further fines will be increased. In particular, fines will be doubled in the event of incorrect turning operations or a breach of the obligation to exercise due care when entering or leaving a vehicle.

Speed offences

Driving suspensions will be imposed for one month for speeding violations lower than before. This now applies within city limits if the speed limit is exceeded by 21 km/h.

Other violations of rules

The illegal use of sidewalks, left-sided bicycle paths and hard shoulders by vehicles is punishable by a fine of up to 100 Euro instead of 25.

So-called car posing can also be effectively punished: The Traffic Code amendment allows the fine for causing unnecessary noise and avoidable exhaust gas pollution as well as unnecessary driving back and forth, to be increased from up to 20 to up to 100 Euro.