



***BIKER UNION E.V.***

Die Interessenvertretung für Biker, Rocker und Motorradfahrer



## Motorcycle Safety Policy

# Feasible without the Rider's Rights Organisations ?

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## **Agenda**

- 1. The Motorcycle Scene in Germany**
- 2. The Context of Motorcycle Safety**
- 3. Recent Road Safety Activities**
- 4. Conclusions and Recommendations**



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## Powered Two Wheelers (PTW) in Germany

- app. 4,0 M. registered motorcycles
  - app. 1,9 M. PTW with insurance plates
- ⇒ more than 5 M. riders (m/f) of mofas, mopeds, scooters, motorcycles, m/c sidecars, trikes and quads



## Characteristics of the Rider's Community

- Motorcyclists are distinct individualists
- Nevertheless, they often meet
  - for joint rides
  - at scenic roads
- Strong groupings by type of m/c (touring, chopper, sports bikes, off-road bikes, streetfighter etc.), but also by brand and model
- The Internet is a communication platform also for non-organised riders





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## The organised Rider's Community

- Brand clubs (e.g. Harley Owners Group, local BMW clubs)
- Brand and model oriented “Stammtische” (e.g. BMW GS-Stammtische in many German cities)
- “Stammtische” open for all riders
- M/C clubs with and without back patches (national und international back patch clubs, but also a large number of local family clubs)
- Rider's Rights Organisations





## Rider's Rights Organisations

- Low organisation level in Germany
- Several organisations; only a few with more than local presence
- Volunteer organisations
- MID Motorrad Initiative Deutschland e.V., the co-ordination body of German RRO
- FEMA, the European Federation of 24 national RROs; office in Brussels



## Main Areas of Activities

- Representation of rider's interests (e.g. lobbying; co-operation with authorities, institutions and different bodies; participation in the legislation process)
- Improvement of rider's image
- Fight against discrimination
- Road safety
- Organisation of biker events



## Current political Issues (1)

- PTW as environmental-friendly alternative in individual mobility
- Motorcycle-friendly road infrastructure (road repair, guard-rails, roadside obstacles)
- Road bans for motorcycles
- Intelligent transport systems





## Current political Issues (2)

- Implementation of the 3rd EU Driving Licence Directive on national level
- Emission limits including enforcement
- Filtering on motorways
- Daytime running lights for cars





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## **Biker Union e.V.**

- Biggest RRO in Germany
- Founded in 1986
- App. 4.500 members nation-wide
- 10 regional offices and app. 65 “BU-Stammtische” as local contact points; represented in all federal states
- Independent from political influence
- No commercial interests





## Our Slogan

- Riding together, celebrating together
- Fighting together for our rights,
- To preserve the fascination of motorcycling for the future





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## The special Situation of Riders

- Fundamental differences in mechanics between two-wheelers and four-wheelers
- Different lines-of-sight and limited field of vision compared with cars
- High physical and mental strain
- No protective body in case of an accident
- Technical safety features derived from cars are rarely applicable

## Additional Influences

- Riding a PTW is a complex and demanding task; even minor faults may have fatal consequences
- Riding a bike is still seen as a “playground for tough guys”
- Modern sports bikes have performance data comparable to formula-one racing cars
- Some manufacturers highlight the performance characteristics of their products in their marketing activities





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## Motorcycle Riders, willing to commit Suicide ?

- “Having fun” without consideration for others became socially acceptable during the last years
- Especially male beginners and “re-born riders” of mature years tend to fight against their “midlife-crisis” riding a bike
- Modern communication systems limit the risk of prosecution of traffic offences
- The Internet is the ideal platform for showmanship attracting imitators

## **Motorcycle Riders are not willing to commit Suicide !**

- According to statistics more than 50 % of all fatal motorcycle accidents are not caused by the rider
- Only a small minority of riders belong to the group of “high-risk takers”
- The problem:
  - They show-up in large numbers especially at so called “motorcycle roads”
  - They refuse to listen to arguments
  - They have a high impact on the image of riders in the public







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## Recent Road Safety Activities

- Influence on the “high-risk takers” (“speed freaks are no heroes”)
- Long-standing co-operation with the police and other institutions in local road safety campaigns
- European Agenda of Motorcycle Safety
- Part of the working group developing the MVMot
- Hambach Biker Festival ( MID)
- Co-operation with DVR





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## Hambach Biker Festival

- Motto “pro road safety - against discrimination“
- Ceremony at the historic castle - biker demonstration against road bans - big biker party
- Presentation of road safety projects by external speakers
- Awarding the price “The motorcycle-friendly City in Germany”
- 12th Festival in 2010



## Co-operation with DVR (1)

- Contributions to the scripts for the Videocasts “Fierek’s Workshop”
- Active part launching the campaign “Runter vom Gas“



## Co-operation with DVR (2)

- Inputs for the Internet presence of the campaign “Runter vom Gas“
- Presentations at conferences and road safety events





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## Conclusions (1)

- PTW are one of the most fascinating means of transport of our time
- PTW are not cars with two wheels !
- Awareness of risk and thinking ahead are **the** survival strategy of any PTW rider
- However, not every rider sticks to the rule “Don’t drive faster than your guardian angel is able to fly”



## Conclusions (2)

- Riders are not a suitable target group for road safety “education”
- The enhancement of law enforcement measures by the police is limited by a lack of resources
- Law enforcement measures have only limited effects to increase road safety; after a short period of time the accidents are taking place at neighbouring roads





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**A sustainable improvement of road safety can only be achieved in close co-operation of all stakeholders !**

**Rider's Rights Organisations must be integral part of these activities !**



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We are the experts in all PTW related issues

We have a lot of experience to properly assess the effectiveness of road safety measures for PTW

We have direct access to the target group and communicate on peer-to-peer level



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**RRO took up their responsibility and are willing to play their part – despite limited resources in volunteer organisations**

**Benefit from our experience; involve us in your projects at an early stage !**



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**Thank you for your attention !**