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Further topics:

- Roof box and rack: top-level safety
- Automated emergency braking: Added safety for pedestrians and cyclists
- Fuel discount discontinued: time to step off the gas



*Heads-up on Country Roads:
Harvesters on the Move Again*

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Hazards during Harvest Season

Sharing the Road with Combine Harvesters

“Drivers need to be especially alert when driving outside urbanized areas during harvest season,” notes DEKRA accident researcher Andreas Schäuble. “You’ll quite frequently encounter heavy, slow agricultural vehicles, some of which will be extra wide. When these join traffic with fast-moving passenger cars, trucks or motorcycles, there is a very real risk of danger.” Crashes involving combine harvesters, tractors or other agricultural machinery can easily cause serious or even fatal injuries, even at speeds of no more than 60 or 70 km/h. What to look out for:

Sudden surprises. Take extra care on curvy or undulating roads. Other typically hazardous locations are junctions and crossroads. When unexpectedly facing an oncoming tractor with laden trailer or a combine harvester joining the road ahead, there is often little time to react and brake. Reduce your traveling speed accordingly, keep your attention on the road and stay alert.

Driving in the dark. Take extra care in twilight conditions or during the hours of darkness. When the weather is hot in the harvest season, agricultural vehicles often operate late into the night. They can be hard to see, especially if cargo or dirt is covering their lights. The danger is real. Our experts would like to remind operators to ensure that all light fixtures are easily visible.

Overtaking. Overtaking remains a cause of the most serious accidents. For example, when an agricultural vehicle turns left onto a field track while being overtaken. On narrow roads, never overtake unless you are absolutely sure the conditions are safe. This also applies where narrow roads won’t leave you with much safety distance to either side. When it is safe to overtake, announce your intention by briefly sounding your horn.

Dirt-covered roads. Harvest season inevitably brings dirtier road surfaces. This can increase braking distance and the risk of skidding. Rain or dew can turn dirty roads very slippery.

The experts’ advice: “Leave a larger safety margin than usual, be prepared for unexpected situations, be ready to brake, and remain focused.” Crash tests show: Crashing into agricultural machinery carries a risk of death for people in cars that even seat belts and airbags cannot always prevent. (DEKRA Info)



*Roof Racks et al:
Don't Play Fast and Loose*

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Tips for Using Roof Boxes, Bike Racks, and the Like

Top-level Safety

Your trunk will often prove too small for everything you need to take on vacation. But adding cargo space is a cakewalk: That's what roof and rear racks and roof boxes are for. But DEKRA cargo expert Martin Kugele knows that drivers need to observe some key points to make sure cargo equipment doesn't fail at its job. Time and again, poorly fastened racks, boxes, bicycles, or surfboards come loose while driving and fling across carriageways, putting the remaining traffic at risk.

For safe driving, **proper mounting** of racks, boxes, and cargo is absolutely essential. This means observing the manufacturer's operating instructions and using the supplied tools. Racks or rails need to match any special mounting components. All connections must be fastened firmly. All fastenings need to perfectly withstand vibrations even during prolonged driving and must remain secure even when hit by strong gusts of wind.

In addition: Never exceed the **weight** permissible for the vehicle's roof or rear-end load. Check your vehicle's owner manual. Depending on your vehicle's size, maximum roof load will lie somewhere between 50 and 100 kilograms. This is your vehicle's permitted limit for the entire rack assembly and cargo together!

No matter how chaotic the start of your journey is, never forget to go through the **departure check**. Are all fasteners in place and firmly locked? Is the folding rear rack definitely engaged? Has the cargo inside the roof box been lashed down firmly and cushioned to the front to prevent it from sliding about, even under hard braking? Don't forget to check your cargo from time to time during the journey.

Keep in mind that your vehicle's **driving characteristics** will change when fully loaded. A higher center of gravity will cause it to tilt more than usual when cornering. Braking distances will be longer and crosswinds will have greater impact. Look out: Greater speeds increase the forces acting on the cargo exponentially. Kugele notes: "Limiting your driving speed to 130 km/h is recommended. Also check the information provided by the manufacturers." (DEKRA Info)



*Labor Market: Businesses and the
Transforming Economy*

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DEKRA Labor Market Report 2026

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AI is the hottest topic on the labor market right now, with how the technology will affect future demand for experts and skilled labor at the forefront of discourse. So it's all the more surprising that the DEKRA Labor Market Report 2026 finds AI (as yet) conspicuously unmentioned in the majority of vacancy postings.

"Don't let a lack of AI skill requirements in vacancy postings fool you: Businesses are undergoing transformation right now," explains Katrin Haupt, Managing Director of DEKRA Akademie. "HR needs to understand that AI is reshaping the face of labor – and that the workforce needs to be empowered to engage proactively and responsibly in this reshaping."

Only 165 vacancy postings noted that prospects would be using AI in their jobs or that relevant skills were a requirement: A mere 1.8 percent of the 9,301 analyzed vacancies. The spotlight falls on two areas in particular: IT workers and information/design workers. More than 1 in every 10 vacancy postings notes affinity with AI as a requirement.

In software engineering, 1 in every 5 vacancies (20.1%) requires AI skills. Among skilled marketers, proficiency with IT tools is required almost as frequently (19.7). Third place goes to the area health, social and legal consultancy. 1 on every 10 (10.9%) of all legal worker vacancies require skills in using AI applications.

The results match those of other studies. According to a study by the ifo Institute, AI deployment is most widespread in the service industry in the areas advertising and market research, among IT service providers, and with legal consultants and accountancy firms. A bitcom survey shows 41 percent of surveyed businesses to be deploying AI, with 48 percent planning or considering to. In terms of the Labor Market Report, the apparent lack of reflection of this development in vacancy postings comes as a surprise: "It may be that many businesses are still testing the waters or that they prefer not to deter prospects with little AI experience," the report notes. (More details at www.dekra-arbeitsmarktreport.de) (DEKRA Info)



Bus Stops: Children at Risk

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Riding the Bus to School

Take Care at Bus Stops

School buses are generally considered a safe means of getting to school. But accidents will still occur. Bus stops are among the most frequent sites of accidents on the way to school, particularly when students embark or disembark. DEKRA's accident experts explain what parents and children should do to improve safety when riding the bus to school. "You need to be especially careful at bus stops," says accident researcher Markus Egelhaaf. "You'll often have lots of kids gathering there, buses arriving and stopping, and other traffic driving past. But you can reduce risks by observing a few simple behaviors." Here are some key rules:

Wait calmly and don't run or play. Running about, shoving each other, or playing tag at bus stops can result in children stepping or falling onto the road.

Keep a safe distance to the curb. Children should keep at least 1 meter away from the curb at all times. When approaching or departing a bus stop or when braking, buses' rear ends often swing out across parts of the waiting space.

Pay attention when the bus arrives. Stay back until the bus has fully stopped and opened its doors. Don't try to "stop" a bus once it begins departing.

Let others get off before you get on. Allowing disembarking passengers to get off first prevents crowding and tripping at the bus's doors. Plus, everybody gets to embark more quickly.

Don't hustle and embark in orderly fashion. Being patient helps to avoid accidents. Carry schoolbags close to your body so no one gets caught or tangled.

Never rush across the road to catch a bus you might miss. Rushing when you're late makes it easy to overlook other vehicles when darting across the road. Play it safe: Wait calmly and take the next bus. And leave home on time in future.

"Parents can really help their children use the bus safely to travel to school. Preparing properly, acting as a guide, and leading by example are all really important," Egelhaaf notes. Parents should make bus trips part of everyday family life early on and take bus rides together with their children. "This way, taking the bus will become a natural choice and your kids will learn all the key lessons about bus stops, timetables, and how to behave on the bus from an early age." (DEKRA Info)



*Driver Assistance Systems: Better
at Avoiding Accidents*

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Added Safety for Pedestrians and Cyclists

Automated Emergency Braking Initiates Braking Maneuver

A new EU regulation promises safety improvements for pedestrians and cyclists: As of 7 July 2026, all newly registered passenger cars and light commercial vehicles are required to possess an automated emergency braking system capable not only of detecting imminent collision with vehicles, but also with pedestrians and cyclists, and which can trigger emergency braking. The DEKRA road safety report "Technology and Humans" states that technological features in motor vehicles have substantial potential to protect pedestrians and cyclists from harm. "In particular, sensor systems that recognize pedestrians and cyclists are constantly improving, and they offer a great opportunity to significantly reduce the number of accidents between motor vehicles and vulnerable road users." (DEKRA Info)



*Voting with Your Wallet: How to
Save Fuel when Driving*

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Fuel Discount Discontinued

Time to Step off the Gas

The so-called fuel discount ended with the passing of June, with drivers back to paying steeper prices for refueling. But there are ways to bring down your fuel expenses by driving more economically. Which is a win for your wallet and for the environment, too. So how to turn a cold shoulder to higher costs? Expert organization DEKRA says the effective way is to pursue a balanced driving style that anticipates what lies ahead. This means resisting kickdowns, applying measured acceleration, driving at low revs, allowing the vehicle to roll, and avoiding sporty driving. It also pays to cut the engine whenever you don't need it running and to clear out all unnecessary baggage from your vehicle. In addition: Make sure your tires are at full pressure, only run electric consumers when really necessary, have your vehicle serviced regularly, plan routes sensibly, and join driving pools. You can usually also complete shorter trips on foot or by bicycle. (DEKRA Info)