

Concerns raised over European Parliament robotics report

Following the European Parliament's plenary vote today to approve its legal affairs committee report on civil law rules on robotics, Nicolas Jeanmart, head of personal insurance, general insurance and macroeconomics at Insurance Europe, said:

"While welcoming the European Parliament's overall work on robotics, certain aspects of this report are concerning: in particular, the report's call on the European Commission to consider a blanket compulsory insurance scheme for producers of robots to cover the damage caused by their robots.

"Compulsory insurance only works in specific cases and when certain market pre-conditions are met; such as the availability of sufficient claims data, a high level of standardisation and plentiful insurance capacity to manage risks and cover claims. This is not the case for robotics.

"In addition, the different technological innovations referred to in the report present different risks and raise different liability issues. Because of these differences, a single regulatory approach to all such emerging technologies would not work.

"Instead of boosting the insurance market, a compulsory insurance scheme would likely lead to a less dynamic insurance market and high premiums. This is because an obligation to insure new risks without sufficient information and data would oblige insurers to factor into their premiums the uncertainty around future claims. This could in turn deter producers of innovative, emerging technologies from placing their products on the market.

"The report also suggests that such a scheme could be complemented by a compensation fund to ensure reparation for damages where no insurance cover exists. However, such funds can introduce moral hazard; a situation in which producers feel less responsible for potential accidents caused by their products because the fund is financed either by taxpayers (for state-owned funds) or jointly by the producers (for funds capitalised by sectoral levies). This situation could lead to producers lowering their safety standards."

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Notes for editors

1. The European Parliament is also currently running a [consultation](#) on this report, which ends in April 2017.
2. For further information, or to be added to our mailing list, please contact Richard Mackillican, policy advisor communications & PR (tel: +32 2 894 30 69, mackillican@insuranceeurope.eu).
3. You can also receive Insurance Europe's news and press releases by:
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