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EUROPEAN NEW CAR
ASSESSMENT PROGRAMME

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2 Place du Luxembourg
1050 Brussels
Belgium
T: +32 (0)2 400 77 40
F: +32 (0)2 400 77 41
Email: info@euroncap.com
VAT: BE 0465 041 160 & GB 740 565 340

Press Release

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Euro NCAP's Best in Class Cars of 2011

A solid safety record has become absolutely essential and indispensable for car manufacturers on the European market. Thanks to ever evolving technology, an array of new safety features and sophisticated systems are available to car buyers today. Euro NCAP's ratings are reflecting the progress made, highlighting cars designed to exceed consumer expectations on safety and those that fall short. After an intense year, it is time for Euro NCAP to announce which cars are the best in class for 2011.

Last year, Euro NCAP published the results for 53 new car models available on the European market, among which the first commercially available Electric Vehicles. Eleven cars achieved four stars whilst Euro NCAP's poorest result was achieved by Dacia Duster with three stars. To be selected safest cars of their categories, the following vehicles achieved a five star rating and showed good scores in each of Euro NCAP's four areas of assessment. The top achievers per category are:

- Small off-road 4x4 category: **Audi Q3**
- Supermini category: **Chevrolet Aveo**
- Small Family category: **Ford Focus**
- Small MPV category: **Mercedes B Class**
- Large Family category: **Volvo V60**

The runners-up in each category are the Chevrolet Malibu, Mercedes M Class, Toyota Yaris, Lexus CT200h, Opel Zafira, Hyundai ix20, and BMW X1. Special mention should be made of the **Ford Ranger**, the only pickup tested by Euro NCAP in 2011. The Ranger is the safest pickup yet tested by the organisation and scored highly in all areas of assessment, most notably in pedestrian protection.

With electric cars hitting Europe's roads this year, the organization released the results of four EVs. Plug-in vehicles are exposed to the same test conditions as their gasoline counterparts, while special attention is paid to battery integrity after a crash. The **Nissan LEAF** was the first of its kind to achieve Euro NCAP 5 star overall rating, placing itself amongst this year's best small family cars.

Euro NCAP rewarded several car makers for their advanced safety features not yet included in the rating scheme. The **Ford Focus**, offered with optional Active City Stop, Driver Alert Forward Alert and Lane Keeping Aid, made headlines as the first high volume car receiving four rewards. Top achievers **Mercedes B Class** and **Volvo V60** also were rewarded for Collision Prevention Assist and City Safety respectively, both are Autonomous Emergency Braking Systems (AEB). Dr Michiel van Ratingen, Euro NCAP Secretary General says: *"With Euro NCAP Advanced, we have already recognized a number of technologies offering safety benefits to consumers. The safety case for AEB systems is very strong and we are therefore strongly encouraging manufacturers to increase the availability of such systems on new cars. We are well underway to add the assessment of these systems to the overall rating and to make these systems a requirement for five stars in the future."*

In 2012, Euro NCAP introduces stricter standards by increasing the minimum score in the pedestrian assessment from 40% to 60%, reflecting the stepwise improvements introduced by automakers of the last years in this field. While a number of carmakers already have demonstrated that cars can be engineered to pass the new limit, the increased demands will challenge others to improve the safety for vulnerable road users.



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The full list of top achievers vehicles tested in 2011 is published on the [website](#). Next results will be released on 22nd February 2012. For more media information, please contact Marie Brasseur, Euro NCAP Communications Manager at marie_brasseur@euroncap.com or +32 2 4007746.

About Euro NCAP

Euro NCAP organizes crash tests on new vehicles and provides motoring consumers with a realistic and independent assessment of the safety performance of some of the most popular cars sold in Europe. Established in 1997 and backed by several European Governments, motoring, consumer and insurance organizations, Euro NCAP has rapidly become a catalyst for encouraging significant safety improvements to new car design. Visit our website: www.euroncap.com