



## EUREKA KISS project puts child safety first

The EUREKA E! 3079 KISS project is developing a new child car safety seat that is user-friendly, cheaper, lighter, and easier to fit into existing cars.

**The EUREKA E! 3079 'Klippan Isofix Safety System' project (KISS) brings together Finnish, Swedish and Estonian partners who have developed a universal car safety system for all children under the age of three. Their innovative concept for a rearward-facing seat could just be the most user-friendly safety seat ever designed. It is also cheaper, lighter, easier to handle and, more importantly, easily adaptable to any existing car. What's more, partners say the potential commercial market for KISS seats looks very promising.**

Most parents would do just about anything to keep their children safe, but today, many youngsters are still being injured in road accidents because of poorly installed child car seats. In fact, research shows a staggering 60% of current child safety seats are not used as intended. The problem, say experts, is not that parents are lazy or careless. The problem is that conventional seats are genuinely complicated to install, often including a number of separate parts. There are different car seats for different age groups and they do not necessarily fit correctly in all vehicles.

"You simply cannot skimp when it comes

to child safety," says KISS coordinator Bror Martin of Finland's Klippan. "The 'Klippan Isofix Safety System' (KISS) is a user-friendly rearward-facing car seat for all children under the age of three. What we've managed to create is a completely new product for an important international market. Our seat is competitively priced, simple to use, suitable for a range of ages and it has no separate parts. All of this means a significantly reduced risk of incorrect installation and, in the end, fewer

worldwide. The main benefit of Isofix is that the system creates a rigid link between the child seat and the car. As well as providing this extra solidity, it also removes the risk of slack installation – which is one of the key misuse areas for products installed with an adult seat belt. The rigid linking system also makes installation of the seat quicker than when using a seat belt. According to research, there could be up to 50 million cars with Isofix attachments on the European market in the next few years.

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**Bror Martin - Klippan, Finland**

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The new seats are designed to take advantage of the new 'Isofix' standard for car seat installation, which is being adopted by vehicle manufacturers

The KISS seat can also be installed using a regular lap and diagonal seat belt as many consumers will have two or more cars, only one of which may have Isofix anchorage points.



### EUREKA sense

The KISS concept makes sense for Europe on a number of levels, explains Martin. “Not only will it help keep our kids safe but it has also meant invaluable experience and know-how for participating European companies and suppliers, building competitiveness in the lucrative road transport equipment sector. If the product takes off as we think it will, it could also provide a source of valuable new jobs for EU workers, in fields such as car seat and safety equipment development, tool manufacturing and product manufacturing and assembly.”

The Klippan company originated the new car seat concept, but it needed to find suppliers and subcontractors who could produce parts at the right price while maintaining a high level of quality, explains Martin. “The EUREKA

to Regulation number 44 of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN-ECE R44) on ‘Child Restraint Systems’. To conform to this regulation, a child restraint must meet a series of design and construction requirements and pass a series of performance tests, including specialised impact tests. The seats will also be designed to comply with requirements of specific car manufacturers.

Once tested against official safety regulations, the product will be marketed in Europe as ‘Duologic’ seats by Graco, one of the world’s leading juvenile products companies.

### Market sense

In addition to the potentially lucrative consumer market for car safety seats, KISS child seats could be sold directly to

for rearward facing seats, including car manufacturers, of approximately another 100 000 seats per year, giving us a total potential market of around 200 000 units per year,” says Martin.

“Altogether, I would say this has been a great experience for our company and its partners,” he believes, “but we are really just at the beginning, at the start of a new phase. We do see a great potential for this product once it hits the market.”

A product testing phase at a car manufacturer and with retailers for the after market was launched in 2005.

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“Our initial market will comprise of the Nordic countries, where we can see ourselves eventually cornering 25% of the market, representing sales of up to 100 000 seats per year. We see an additional market in southern Europe



Project participants:  
Finland, Sweden, Estonia

Budget: 1 MEuro  
Duration: 27 months

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