

NEWS RELEASE
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European Driving Licence – driving road safety forward

The European Transport Safety Council⁽¹⁾ welcomes the political agreement reached today by Transport Ministers on the proposal for a Directive on driving licences. This decision will enhance road safety amongst novice drivers, improve cross-border enforcement and fight against driving licence tourism across Europe.

The Directive will replace the 110 different models in current use throughout the EU with a harmonised European driving licence, making police checks a lot easier. The Directive will put an end to driving licence tourism by ensuring a coherent and pan-European application of driving licence withdrawals. The Member States who had continued blocking the adoption of the Directive agreed to go along with the new compromise offered by the Austrian Presidency. This will apply subsidiarity enabling EU Member States to choose the length of their administrative renewal period between 10 to 15 years.

"In its Mid-term Review on the Third Road Safety Action Programme the European Commission highlighted agreement on driving licences as a priority. The Council of Ministers has achieved agreement on this dossier. ETSC urgently calls upon the European Commission to propose the initiatives required for the EU to meet its road safety target of halving fatalities by 2010" said Jörg Beckmann, ETSC Executive Director.

The Austrian government should now ensure a quick adoption of the Directive by the end of their Presidency to avoid any more delay in introducing the road safety benefits this Directive will yield.

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Notes to Editors:

- (1) The European Transport Safety Council (ETSC) is a Brussels-based non-profit making organisation dedicated to the reduction of transport crashes and casualties in Europe. ETSC seeks to identify and promote effective measures on the basis of international scientific research and best practice. The Council brings together 33 international and national organisations concerned with transport safety from across Europe.
- (2) ETSC Fact Sheet "Driving Licencing":
http://www.etsc.be/documents/Fact_Sheet_Driving%20licence.pdf