



NEWS RELEASE

Brussels, 3 November 2006

EU Transport Ministers told:
“ make tracks to achieve the 2010 EU road safety target now!”

Transport Ministers from across the EU gather today in Verona for their informal Council meeting on road safety under the leadership of the Finnish EU Presidency. The European Transport Safety Council (ETSC)⁽¹⁾ calls for ministers to focus their discussion on efforts to reach the shared EU target to halve annual road deaths by 2010⁽²⁾.

The first ranking published under the Road Safety Performance Index (PIN)⁽³⁾ of the (ETSC) has shown that fast progress in road safety is possible for every country, whatever its starting point. France, Luxembourg and Belgium have been able to cut yearly road deaths most effectively between 2001 and 2005. Also top performers in road safety such as Sweden and the Netherlands as well as laggards such as Latvia, former bottom-of-the-class, have reduced road deaths by more than 20%. But the data gathered by the ETSC also show that the majority of the EU countries will have difficulty in contributing their share of reaching the EU target. Among the countries which have progressed least over the last years are Lithuania, Hungary, Ireland and Poland⁽⁴⁾.

As seen from those countries that have made rapid strides, EU priorities should include improving infrastructure and road traffic enforcement. Whereas a draft Directive has been presented on infrastructure safety⁽⁵⁾, we still await a long-announced public consultation on a Directive to enhance co-operation on the cross border enforcement of traffic offences. ETSC stresses the need to ensure that all Member States are aiming to achieve high standards in the enforcement of legislation regarding drink driving, speeding and seat belt use according to the best practice set out in the EC Recommendation on enforcement⁽⁶⁾.

This annual meeting of Ministers allows road safety to take centre stage on the transport agenda. At this important moment, ETSC's Executive Director Jörg Beckmann states: *“Empty words and non-committal conclusions from our Transport Ministers are not enough. European citizens deserve concrete actions to combat the daily death toll on Europe's roads.”*

ETSC calls on EU Ministers to show tough political leadership by following up a set of strong conclusions from their meeting in Verona. They should lose no time in outlining next steps towards reaching the EU 2010 target.

For more information please contact ETSC Jolanda Crettaz jolanda.crettaz@etsc.be or Graziella Jost Graziella.jost@etsc.be +32 2 230 4106.

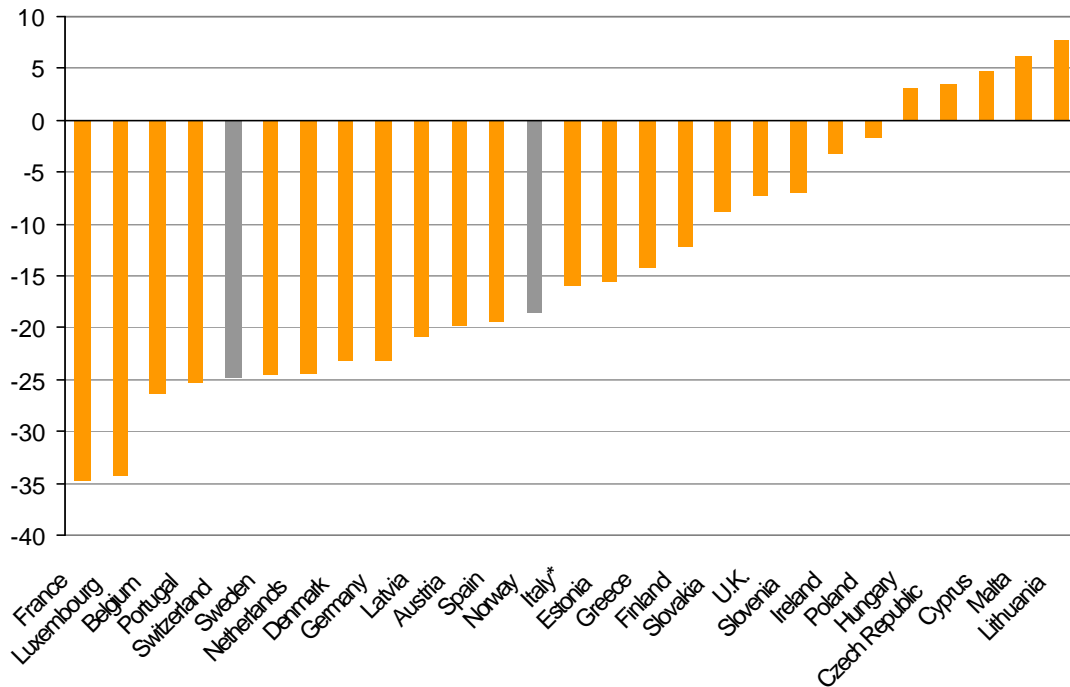
Notes to Editors:

(1) The European Transport Safety Council (ETSC), founded in 1993 is a Brussels-based independent non-profit making organisation dedicated to the reduction of the number and severity of transport crashes in Europe. The ETSC seeks to identify and promote research-based measures with a high safety potential. It brings together 35 national and international organisations in membership, as well as leading transport safety experts from across Europe. See www.etsc.be

(2) The EU has set itself the target of halving road deaths from 2001 to 2010. In 2003, a Road Safety Action Programme was adopted and in February 2006, the European Commission carried out a Mid-Term Review of this Programme. See http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road/roadsafety/rsap_midterm/index_en.htm

(3) The Road Safety Performance Index was set up in June 2006 to compare Member States' performance in all areas of road safety. It receives financial support from Swedish Road Administration and Toyota Motor Europe. See <http://www.etsc.be/PIN>.

(4) Reduction in road deaths 2001-2005 (in %). Source: CARE and national data



*2001-2004

For more details, see Flash 2 under www.etsc.be/PIN.

(5) See the ETSC response to the Commission's Public consultation on "Road infrastructure safety management on the trans-European networks". www.etsc.be

(6) Commission Recommendation on enforcement in the field of road safety (2004) http://europa.eu.int/smartapi/cgi/sga_doc?smartapi!celexplus!prod!CELEXnumdoc&lg=en&numdoc=32004H0345