

## EU Policy Watchdog: how can road safety be improved?

**Speeding, drink driving and non-use of seat belts** are the three major killers on European roads. The other major factors in road safety are **infrastructure** and the **vehicle**. In order to continue enhancing safety on EU roads ETSC proposes a number of measures in all of the above areas, ranging from legislative and regulatory improvements to technological innovations.

Currently the EU discusses a new reduction target and a new strategy for its *4th Road Safety Action Programme (RSAP) for 2011 – 2020*. ETSC proposes to adopt for the coming decade a shared target of **40% reduction of deaths and injuries with lasting effects** in each Member State. ETSC also recommends the EU to adopt a separate target of **60% reduction of child deaths** between 2011 and 2020.

To cope with technological challenges posed by modern mobile and motorised society we need modern technological solutions. **Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS)** technologies such as Intelligent Speed Assistance, Alcohol Interlocks and Seat Belt Reminders for all occupants, are already available and must be implemented in new cars without delay.

They must be accompanied by other legislative measures, such as a Directive to improve cross-border enforcement of traffic law which would allow the prosecution of traffic offenders all across the EU Member States. This essential piece of legislation is an absolute necessity for the European Union with its high - up to 30% in some countries - transit traffic.

## Research: Road Safety Performance Index Programme (PIN)

Started in June 2006, the ETSC's Road Safety Performance Index (PIN) is designed to help countries to improve road safety by comparing national performance and promoting best practice in all areas – road user behaviour, infrastructure, vehicles and general policymaking. Top level national experts from ETSC members' network and partner organisations in 30 countries guarantee that the published results are scientifically accurate and ensure that the conclusions are communicated back to national road safety policymakers. The PIN Steering committee, chaired by Prof. Richard Allsop of the University College of London, provides guidance to the PIN Programme Secretariat in preparing and publishing PIN Flash reports.

### PIN Programme findings show that:

- *The EU average yearly reduction in road deaths in 2001-2008 has been 4.4%, which is far behind 7.4% needed to halve road deaths between 2001 and 2010, as set out in the EU road safety strategy*
- *Over 8,000 people aged 65 years old and over are killed in the EU annually. By 2050 every third road death will be an elderly person*
- *At least 6,000 motorcycle and moped riders are killed in road crashes in the EU every year. While representing 16% of the total number of road deaths, they account for only 2% of the total kilometres driven*
- *Over 3,200 people are killed annually on EU motorways*
- *Seat belt wearing in the front seats of cars varies among European countries from less than 70% to more than 95%. Across Europe, over 13,000 lives were saved by seat belts in 2008; another 4,300 lives could have been spared if the rate of seat belt use were 100%*

## Safety in different transport modes

- *About 97% of all transport deaths in the EU occur on the road.*
- *Rail and air travel are the safest modes per distance travelled, followed by bus. For the average passenger trip in the EU, bus travel has a 10 times lower death risk than car travel, and the risks of air and train travel are still two times lower.*
- *Train, however, is much safer than plane per travel time: 2 deaths per 100 million passenger travel hours for rail versus 16 deaths for air travel.*
- *The mean annual number of train passenger deaths in the EU decreased from about 400 in the early 1970s to under 100 now, while the rail passenger kilometre increased from about 200 billion in 1970 to over 300 billion now.*
- *Air trips under 600 km have a higher death and serious injury risk per passenger kilometre than train trips. This is so because risks to plane passengers mainly arise during the take-off and landing phases. Only flights within the EU for longer ground distances than 800 km have a lower death risk per passenger kilometre than trips by train.*
- *Ferry travel risks, although liable to fluctuations, are estimated at 4 to 8 times those of train travel (0.25 deaths per 100 million passenger kilometres and 8 deaths per 100 million passenger travel hours).*

Most transport deaths in Europe occur on the roads which is why ETSC devotes most of its efforts to road safety issues. However, improvements can be made within the non-road modes as well, with more systematic and consistent data collection, the development of target setting and the monitoring of progress made, as well as the identification of risk assessment methods and criteria for safety measures.

The opening up of transport markets to competition should go hand in hand with stricter and more centralised safety control in the EU. ETSC is keen to work on these improvements together with the European Railway Agency, the European Air Safety Agency, the European Maritime Safety Agency and the EU institutions.

## Transport safety and environment

- *Road sector generates over 93% of EU transport and 20% of EU greenhouse gas emissions, with passenger cars responsible for around 12%*
- *Between 1990 and 2004 road emissions have risen by 26%*

Speeding in particular amplifies the environmental impact of road transport. Managing driving speeds is therefore a very effective carbon abatement policy. In the EU speeding also contributes to as much as one third of all road deaths. Reducing speed through the enforcement of speed limits and technologies such as Intelligent Speed Assistance can save lives and mitigate global warming at the same time.

- *At any one moment, 50% of drivers exceed legal speed limits (OECD data)*
- *Driven speeds on motorways in particular are well above the optimum level for fuel efficiency*
- *Controlling the speed of heavy vehicles, including vans and light trucks, can also play an important role in cutting CO<sub>2</sub>, especially considering the constant increase of freight transport*
- *In addition to bringing about great casualty reductions, fitting vehicles with Intelligent Speed Assistance has also been demonstrated to mitigate CO<sub>2</sub> emissions*

## ETSC publications: transferring knowledge into action

Numerous ETSC publications are prepared with the support of a pool of 200 independent experts across Europe.

ETSC **PIN Flashes** present in-depth analysis of different aspects of road safety across the European Union, Switzerland, Norway and Israel, comprising unique statistical data and comparisons of individual countries' performance.

ETSC **Fact Sheets** compile detailed data on both specialised road safety dossiers (speed, drink driving, enforcement, vulnerable road users) and on the national road safety situation across the EU.

ETSC **Reviews** translate research findings from across Europe into clear policy recommendations for EU and national policymakers.

ETSC **Policy Papers** summarise and spread among traffic experts the best practices in solving specific transport safety problems.

In its electronic newsletters – **Safety Monitor, Drink Driving Monitor, Speed Monitor** – ETSC informs the transport community on safety developments across the modes.

All of ETSC publications are available electronically and may be downloaded from its site. ETSC disseminates its newsletters by e-mail. To subscribe please write to [information@etsc.eu](mailto:information@etsc.eu).

## ETSC transport events

A number of transport safety events held by ETSC in Brussels and across Europe throughout the year serve as get-togethers for experts and officials at which experience is shared and new solutions to old problems are debated.

**Transport Safety Lunches, Dinners and Brunches**, held in Brussels, attract a crowd of EU policy-makers, lobbyists and experts to exchange their views on EU legislation in the making.

The annual **European Transport Safety Lecture**, organised in different European cities, proposes pan-European lessons to be learnt from recent developments in the host Member State.

At the **Annual Road Safety PIN Conference / Best in Europe Conference** countries which made best progress in reducing road deaths and injuries in the past year are awarded by ETSC for their achievements. The first PIN Award was given in 2007 to France which achieved the best reduction in road deaths since 2001. The second PIN Award was given in 2008 to Portugal, and in 2009 a joint PIN Award went to Spain and Latvia.

**Road Safety PIN Talks** are held in various EU capitals. National decision makers are confronted with both the successes and shortcomings of their road safety policy.

**Safe and Sober Talks** in different countries gather a large number of enforcement officers, public health and road safety experts discussing the best ways to fight drink driving among private and professional drivers.

**PRAISE** Seminars aim to discuss with relevant stakeholders the work-related road safety situation in different countries.

## ETSC - European Transport Safety Council

Founded in 1993, the European Transport Safety Council is an independent non-profitmaking organisation dedicated to the reduction of the number and severity of transport crash injuries in Europe

### What we do

ETSC provides an impartial source of science-based advice on transport safety issues to legislators and regulators from the European Commission, the European Parliament, Member States, as well as to the media and the industry. ETSC experts analyse transport safety data, identify accident causes and advise authorities on appropriate measures to reduce deaths and injuries across all modes of transport – road, rail, maritime and air. ETSC advocates a systemic approach encompassing measures to enhance the passive and active safety of vehicles, the safe design of infrastructure and the reliability of human performance.

### Where our funding comes from

ETSC's independence is fully maintained through a variety of funding sources including membership subscriptions, the European Commission grants, corporate sponsorship and public sector support.

### How we are structured

The Brussels-based Secretariat works in close consultation with ETSC's 43 members and more than 200 leading independent experts from 30 countries from across Europe.

### Examples of past and ongoing projects

**PRAISE - Preventing Road Accidents and Injuries for the Safety of Employees** - was launched in 2009 in order to gather best practices on work-related road safety and disseminate them among employers, the EU institutions and national governments. PRAISE receives financial support from the European Commission, the German Road Safety Council (DVR), Fundación MAPFRE, and the Swiss Council for Accident Prevention (bfu). [www.etsc.eu/PRAISE.php](http://www.etsc.eu/PRAISE.php)

**ShLOW! - 'Show me How Slow'** - programme started in 2008. It trains dedicated students from ten EU countries to undertake speed management activities within their local surroundings. ShLOW is funded by the European Commission. [www.shlow.eu](http://www.shlow.eu)

**Roads to Respect** programme, currently in its fourth year, focuses on encouraging local authorities to treat high risk infrastructure sites through the intervention and according to rehabilitation projects prepared by students from different EU countries. [www.etsc.eu/R2R.php](http://www.etsc.eu/R2R.php)

Anti-drink driving campaigns, **Safe and Sober** and **Drink Driving Policy Network**, have the objective of improving local, regional and national policies for the prevention of alcohol misuse in both private and commercial road transport. [www.etsc.eu/DD.php](http://www.etsc.eu/DD.php)

**SEC Belt**, implemented in 2004-2006, sought to overcome the 'North-South' and 'West-East' Divide in European transport safety and to contribute to improvements in the Southern, Eastern and Central European countries. The project focused on six priority areas: user behaviour, vehicle technology, road infrastructure, road technology, information and databases, evaluation of national road safety policies. [www.etsc.eu/secbelt.php](http://www.etsc.eu/secbelt.php)

**VOICE - Vulnerable Road User Organisations In Cooperation Across Europe** - project, realised in 2006-2008, aimed to raise awareness of the risks for and the needs of vulnerable road users. [www.etsc.eu/Voice.php](http://www.etsc.eu/Voice.php)

**Enforcement Programme** monitored throughout 2004-2007 the progress of EU Member States in improving traffic law enforcement. [www.etsc.eu/enforcement-etscprogramme.php](http://www.etsc.eu/enforcement-etscprogramme.php)

## ETSC Members

Accident Research Unit - Medical University Hannover (D)  
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Automobile and Travel Club Germany (ARCD) (D)  
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Comité Européen des Assurances (CEA) (Int)  
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European Federation of Road Traffic Victims (Int)  
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### ETSC'S SPONSORSHIP PROGRAMME

ETSC seeks an open and constructive dialogue with key transport safety players. It facilitates contacts between its members and sponsors. In its growing sponsorship consortium, ETSC brings together organisations to help match European Commission funding. In 2009, the following sponsors supported ETSC: **KeyMed, Shell International, Volvo Group, Toyota Motor Europe, Diageo** and **3M Europe**. ETSC also receives public sector support from the Swedish Road Administration and the Norwegian Public Roads Administration.



### There are over 1.3 million road accidents in the EU each year that:

- Kill nearly 40,000 EU citizens, the population of an average European town; or over 100 people every day – the equivalent of a medium-sized plane accident with no survivors. Some 40% of all victims (17,000 people) are vulnerable road users: pedestrians, cyclists, moped and motorcycle riders
- Cause more than 3 million injuries if under-reporting is taken into account
- Account for more than 93% of all passenger transport accident costs
- Are the leading cause of death for EU citizens under 50 years old

## Road Safety is a right and a responsibility for all

Road safety has seen impressive improvements over the past several decades. While back in 1972 the number of road deaths in the current 27 EU member states reached its peak of 93,000, it has since then gone down to 39,000 in 2008. This happened despite a threefold increase in the distance of motor vehicle travel in these countries during the same time (from 1.2 to 3.6 trln. vehicle kilometers in the EU15; data for East European countries unavailable).

The impetus to road safety efforts was given when the EU committed to cut road deaths by 50% by 2010 in its White Paper on the Common Transport Policy and its *3rd Road Safety Action Programme (RSAP) for 2003 – 2010*. Significant progress has been made since then, with several countries reducing the number of road casualties in double digits.

Combining over 40 national road safety organisations from the EU countries, Switzerland and Norway, ETSC possesses a wealth of expert information enabling it to carry out detailed research on road safety in the pan-European context and to advocate effective measures for road safety problems and high-risk areas. By addressing the key road safety problems and by setting priorities ETSC through its projects, programmes and campaigns contributes to reducing carnage on EU roads.