



NEWS RELEASE

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Strengthening the safety of vulnerable road users

In a policy paper⁽¹⁾ published today, the European Transport Safety Council (ETSC)⁽²⁾ has made more than 60 recommendations on how to effectively improve the safety of pedestrians, cyclists and users of motorised two wheelers. The paper is the result of studying the safety situation in those countries of Southern, Eastern and Central Europe where the road risk is higher than the European average (the so-called "SEC Belt" countries).⁽³⁾

ETSC's recommendations pertain to all three pillars of road safety work: users' behaviour, the infrastructure and the vehicle. Strikingly, most of the measures concern standards for cars and their drivers, rather than setting requirements for pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists themselves.

With speed being a major factor in both likelihood and severity of a crash, ETSC says legal speed limits must be properly enforced, especially in urban areas. To assist drivers, Intelligent Speed Adaptation should be introduced in cars. To bring down accidents involving drink driving, the EU should impose a legal blood alcohol level of no more than 0.5mg/ml, which drivers must be brought to adhere to. Furthermore, the EU should mandate the use of daytime running lights by all vehicles. Lorries that are already on the market should be retrofitted with blind spot mirrors, and high standards for forgiving car fronts should be adopted to lessen the impact of a crash.

Concerning the vulnerable road users themselves, it is of course vital that they avoid dangerous behaviour and protect themselves. Helmet use among motorised two-wheelers must be brought up to 100%, including moped riders. Anti-locking braking systems (ABS) should be made mandatory for all motorcycles. Based on the experience of the European New Car Assessment Programme (EuroNCAP), the EU should also consider the possibility of setting up a European New Motorcycle Assessment Programme (EuroNMAP).

" The execution of these measures at EU and national levels can substantially reduce the number of vulnerable road users' deaths all over Europe. EU legislation should therefore no longer be delayed, especially in the area of daytime running lights and infrastructure safety" , says Jörg Beckmann, ETSC's Executive Director. To make sure policymakers take up their responsibility and execute the proposed measures, ETSC has set up a network of NGO's termed VOICE, Vulnerable road users Organisations In Cooperation across Europe

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Notes to Editors:

(1) The report "The Safety of Vulnerable Road Users in the Southern, Eastern and Central European Countries ("The SEC Belt")" is available from the ETSC Secretariat or can be downloaded from www.etsc.be. The information presented in this report is the result of a consultation process involving leading independent transport safety experts from across Europe.

(2) 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. It brings together 27 international and national organisations concerned with transport safety from across Europe.

(3) Every year almost 18,000 vulnerable road users are killed in road crashes, making up 36% of all road deaths in the EU-25. The risk of being killed in traffic is highest for motorised two wheelers, but also pedestrians and cyclists run a risk that is at least 7 times higher than faced by car occupants.