European Transport Safety Council

Road Safety PIN

NEWS RELEASE

Embargoed until 22nd June

ESTONIA RECEIVES ROAD SAFETY AWARD 2010
Road deaths cut by half in Estonia since 2001

***22 June 2010, Brussels* – Estonia and Ireland have been recognised with the "2010 Road Safety PIN Award" [1] at the 4th ETSC[2] Road Safety PIN[3] Conference[4] in Brussels today for their sustained efforts in reducing road deaths. Since 2001 road deaths have been cut by half in Estonia, this makes the country the one with the fourth best progress in the EU.**

As revealed today by ETSC's latest PIN Report[5] **Latvia**, **Spain**, **Portugal** and **Estonia** achieved the best reductions in road deaths between 2001 and 2009, all above 50%. If this trend is sustained in 2010, **Estonia** will be among the few countries to reach the EU road safety target by the end of the year. Road mortality has been halved: from 146 deaths per million inhabitants in 2001 to 75 in 2009 (still above the EU27 average of 70).[6]

The urgent need to tackle road safety has been recognised only recently by the Estonian government but progress since then has been fast. Reasons for this recent improvement are manifold. Fines for major traffic offences, in particular speeding and driving under the influence, were increased under the new Traffic Law. Police enforcement was intensified in combination with awareness and education campaigns. The Estonian Road Administration conducted an extensive high risk site removal scheme in the last four years. Still, more investments are needed to separate high-speed traffic and pedestrian flows, move more traffic away from rural roads to motorways or install median barriers on dual carriageway roads.

Estonia has achieved a great success but to leave the group of countries with a higher level of road mortality new measures must be taken. Speeding remains one of the main concerns and poses a particularly grave threat to vulnerable road users. The sixteen safety cameras installed in 2009 should grow into a nationwide automated safety camera network covering more of the high risk sites. While the use of seat belts has become more widespread on the front seats (88%), wearing levels are still disturbingly low on the rear seats (63%).

Talking at the PIN Conference, Minister Parts said: "*We have carefully applied the different EU Directives and Regulations on driving and resting time, technical requirements for vehicles and driving licences. Changes brought about by the application of EU legislation have undoubtedly helped to improve the road safety situation on our roads. We are now committed to enshrining a culture of road safety among Estonian drivers".*

"*Estonian authorities and road users have demonstrated their firm commitment to enhancing safety,"* said ETSC Executive Director Antonio Avenoso. *"All the institutions vested with road safety responsibility in Estonia must do more in order to move closer to the core of EU countries with acceptable road safety levels.*"

You can download ETSC 4th PIN Report at www.etsc.eu/PIN-publications.php. For more information please contact Graziella Jost, PIN Programme Manager at ETSC, graziella.jost@etsc.eu, mob. +32 (0)4 98 51 65 62 or Rasmus Ruuda, Public Relations Counselor, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, Estonia, rasmus.ruuda@mkm.ee, mob. +372 (0)53 44 44 17.

Notes to Editors

(1) On the 22nd June 2010, a joint **Road Safety PIN Award 2010 for Outstanding Progress in Road Safety** will be given to Mr. **Juhan PARTS**, Minister of Economic Affairs and Communications, Estonia, and to Mr. **Noel DEMPSEY** T.D., Minister for Transport, Ireland.

In 2007, the first PIN Award was given to Cécile Petit, Interministerial Delegate for Road Safety in France. In 2008, the second PIN Award was given to Mário Lino, Minister of Public Works, Transport and Communications of Portugal. In 2009, a joint PIN Award was given to Justo Zambrana Pineda, State Secretary, Ministry of Interior, Spain and Nils Freivalds, State Secretary, Ministry of Transport, Latvia.

(2) **The European Transport Safety Council (ETSC)** 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 41 national and international organisations concerned with transport safety from across Europe. www.etsc.eu

(3) **The Road Safety Performance Index (PIN)** was launched in June 2006 to compare country road safety performances. It currently includes the 27 countries of the EU, as well as Israel, Norway and Switzerland. The Road Safety Performance Index (PIN) receives financial support from the Swedish Transport Administration, the Norwegian Public Roads Administration and Toyota Motor Europe. www.etsc.eu/PIN.

(4) The PIN Conference Agenda is available at http://www.etsc.eu/PIN-events.php. Minister PARTS and other speakers' presentations will be available at the same address.

(5) You can download **ETSC 4th PIN Report 2010, Road Safety Targets in Sight: Make up for lost time** and detailed figures for Estonia in the Annexes at www.etsc.eu/PIN-publications.php.

(6) Fig.1: Percentage change in road deaths between 2001 and 2009



** Provisional estimates were used for 2009 as final figures for 2009 were not yet available at the time of printing. ** UK 2009: ETSC estimate for the whole UK based on EC CARE Quick indicator for GB only.*