

NEWS RELEASE

Nordic Road Safety Competition: *On the road to Zero*

7 September 2009, Tylösand – Strengths and weaknesses in road safety performance of five Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden) were presented today at the Tylösand seminar in Sweden by ETSC⁽¹⁾. These findings are released in the new ETSC benchmarking study on road safety performance *“How far from Zero?”* Published during the Swedish Presidency of the EU, the report once again stresses the need for a strong leadership from this European road safety heavy-weight⁽²⁾.

The road safety performance of Nordic countries is still well above the EU average, but the gap between this region and the rest of Europe is shrinking over time. All Nordic countries have been less successful in reducing serious and fatal injuries than EU member states in the past decade. The differences between Nordic countries are also becoming less significant over time. Sweden, the country with the highest level of road safety worldwide, has the slowest rate of improvement, while Denmark is catching up with the others.

Speeding and driving under the influence of alcohol remain key areas of policy intervention in the Nordic countries according to the ETSC’s analysis. The report also brings a number of targeted recommendations for each country. Elderly safety is a specific area of concern in Finland, while child safety deserves more attention in Norway. Denmark should extend its automated safety camera system along the country’s motorway network and Iceland should improve the passive safety of its roads. Sweden, despite its leading position, should strive to enhance passive safety of motor vehicles for more effective pedestrian protection.

“The Nordic countries and especially the EU Presidency holder, Sweden should maintain their strong leadership in the development and deployment of ITS technologies”, said Antonio Avenoso, ETSC Executive Director. *“Progress should be made to improve safety of powered two wheelers”.*

“Being a leader in road safety performance in Europe is highly motivating for us and represents a great challenge in our search for effective road safety measures. We are simply trying to give life to the Vision Zero”, said Claes Tingvall, from the Swedish Road Administration (SRA).

The full report can be downloaded from www.etsc.eu

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Notes to Editors:

(1) 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 42 national and international organisations concerned with transport safety from across Europe. See <http://www.etsc.eu>

(2) Memorandum to Swedish Presidency:

http://www.etsc.eu/documents/ETSC%20Press%20Release%20Swedish%20Presidency_final.pdf