

NEWS RELEASE

ACCIDENTS INVOLVING YOUNG DRIVERS POSE A PROBLEM IN NORWAY

27 May 2010, Oslo – Strengths and weaknesses in Norway's road safety performance were discussed today at the 25th Road Safety PIN Talk organised by ETSC⁽¹⁾ in cooperation with its Norwegian member Trygg Trafikk, the Norwegian Public Roads Administration and with the support of Toyota. The special focus at the event was on young drivers.

At 45 road deaths per million population⁽²⁾, Norway's road safety record is very good as indeed are the records of other Scandinavian countries⁽³⁾. This also partly explains the somewhat slow progress that Norway demonstrated in reducing road deaths over the past years, down by 23% between 2001 and 2009 compared to the EU average of 36%. *"It is extremely difficult to maintain high pace of reductions for countries that have already exploited the best part of the potential of highly effective road safety measures,"* said Antonio Avenoso, ETSC Executive Director, during the PIN Talk.

However, there are still areas where Norway could make some improvements. Excessive and inappropriate speed, driving under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs and failure to wear seat belts remain key areas for policy intervention, according to the ETSC's PIN benchmarking analysis⁽⁴⁾. Young drivers should also be one of the main target audiences in both road safety law enforcement and related information campaigns.

Young people are more often involved in accidents than other age groups and have a disproportionately high risk of being killed in a road accident. The problem attracted special attention during the Talk and different experience on police enforcement in relation to young drivers was shared. The Norwegian Council for Road Safety also presented its three-year long "Girls take actions" campaign which is aimed at reducing the number of young people injured and killed on Norwegian roads. *"The number of killed and seriously injured young road users must be decreased,"* said Kari Sandberg, Director of Trygg Trafikk. *"We have to coordinate our efforts and consider different measures aimed at reducing threats facing young people on Norwegian roads, and 'Girls Take Action' is one of these."*

Finn Harald Amundsen from the Norwegian Public Roads Administration concluded by saying: *"Norwegian record is very encouraging but we need to keep an eye on difficult areas for policy intervention, such as the accidents involving young drivers, and explore possible measures that could be of help in addressing the issue."*



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 41 national and international organisations concerned with transport safety from across Europe. www.etsc.eu

(2) Based on provisional figures for 2009. The EU average is 78 road deaths per million population.

(3) *How far from Zero? Benchmarking of road safety performance in the Nordic countries*
http://www.etsc.eu/documents/copy_of_copy_of_copy_of_Road%20Safety%20in%20Nordic%20countries.pdf

(4) *PIN Flash 16 - Tackling the Three Main Killers on the Road*
<http://www.etsc.eu/documents/05.05%20-%20PIN%20Flash%2016.pdf>