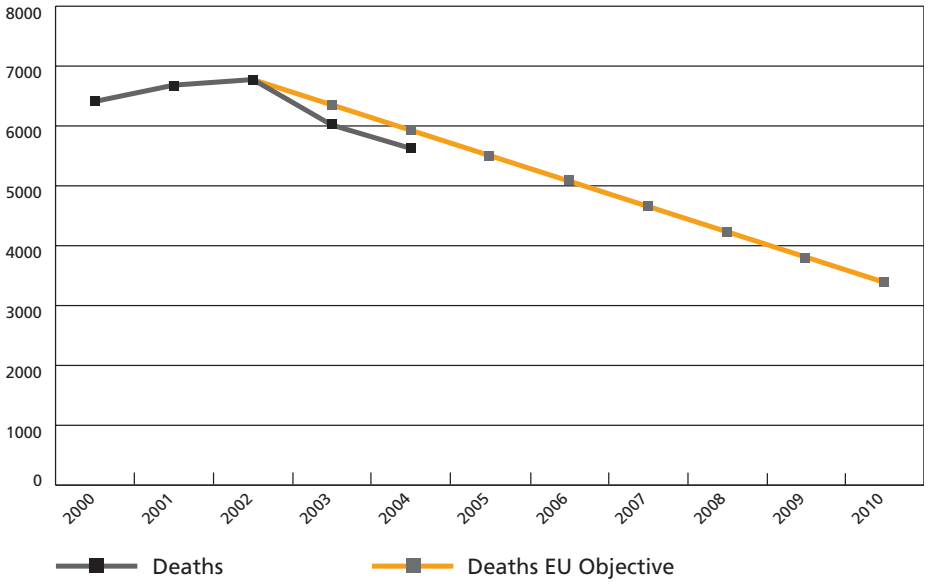
6.13 ITALY



General Road Safety: Italy has a below EU average level of deaths of 97 per million. Italy's fatality levels have been decreasing over recent years. A National Road Safety Plan was established in 2002 to integrate organisational capabilities of both national and decentralised subjects responsible for road traffic and safety. A National Road Safety Council including the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure and the National Council of Economics and Labour was set up and its secretariat is co-ordinated by RST[10]. It is responsible for following up the implementation of the Road Safety Plan. The 2002 Plan elaborated priorities for road safety including enforcement both in general and in particular areas such as speeding.

The Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure, the Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Justice are responsible for road traffic legislation and enforcement regulation. As part of devolution a large part of the management of the national road network and enforcement of road safety has been transferred to the regions and provinces that are the operative level. The police are vested with the authority to develop new strategies and modify existing ones for the enforcement of traffic rules. The national police in Italy are made up of the State Police, including the National Traffic Police, the *Carabinieri* (body of the Italian army) and Municipal Police.

For the National Enforcement Plan annual guidelines are published by the Ministry of Interior for the National Police and the *Carabinieri* providing targets for increasing enforcement activities in the field of road safety with the aim of reducing deaths. These set an operational framework and prescribe the use of different enforcement technologies. No national enforcement plan for all of Italy's police forces exists nor is planned.

Speed: Italy employs a mixture of mobile, laser and fixed camera devices to enforce speed limits. Fixed cameras for enforcing speed limits for use by the national police on national roads are currently being type approved. Fixed speed cameras have been installed by local authorities. However there is no record of how many are currently in use throughout the different municipalities in Italy.

Alcohol: In Italy, the legal blood alcohol level is 0.5 mg/ml. The new penalty point system attributed the highest sanction possible to a drink driving offence. Moreover, the driving licence can be suspended for between 15 days and three months. This offence is also dealt with as a penal sanction and not an administrative one. Re-testing is necessary to retrieve the driving licence. This process also includes checking to determine alcohol dependency.

[10] RST is a consultancy realising studies, analysis and developing projects on behalf of public bodies in the field of transport and mobility.

Drink driving is enforced both randomly and on an evidential basis. Random breath testing was introduced in 2003. Drink driving enforcement is carried out during evening, night time, early morning and at other times as well. Enforcement focuses on high-risk roads. In the absence of breath testing devices the report of a policeman based on the driver's drunken behaviour is sufficient to charge an offender for drink driving. An increase is planned in the number of devices so that they are available for every patrol car for random tests.

Seat belts: Non seat belt wearing was included as an offence in the new penalty point system introduced in 2003. Five points can be lost for not being properly belted. Seat belt checks are undertaken in combination with other checks on all roads at all times. Separate blitz actions are carried out annually. The number of seat belt checks conducted is not collected.

Follow-up of offences: Both criminal and administrative sanctions apply. All detected alcohol and seat belt offences are followed up. Sanctions are linked to seriousness of the offence. For speeding offences, the legal responsibility rests with the driver where recognition problems arise. A special provision exists for novice drivers who have passed their driving license. They loose double points if charged for any infringement.

Information: The presence of automated speeding cameras and mobile camera speed checks are indicated on the roadside. There was a special big campaign to introduce the new penalty point system in 2003. The campaign featured seat belt wearing, helmet use, alcohol consumption and speeding, careless driving and the motivation of not loosing points. Campaigns are carried out in co-operation with the Ministry of Interior, National Police and *Carabinieri* and are linked to peak periods such as holidays. The Italian National Police and *Carabinieri* also participate in TISPOL's increased enforcement campaigns. Some local authorities also carry out road safety campaigns but their frequency, focus and intensity depend on the priorities set by the local government.

In conclusion, speeding offences have increased from 50,000 to 74,000 and the deaths caused by speed were reduced slightly between 2003 and 2004. Drink driving checks increased as did offences, whereas drink driving deaths have decreased slightly. Impact of seat belt enforcement is difficult to assess due to lack of data.

Recommendations:

- Prepare a co-ordinated enforcement plan for all of Italy's police forces.
- Implement the enforcement relevant commitments made under the Road Safety Plan.
- Extend the automatic speed enforcement network and evaluate its impact.
- Invest in breath testing devices for use by all police forces.
- Prepare annual campaigns linked to enforcement on all three areas.
- Introduce co-ordinated centralised data collection for checks, offences and deaths and injuries collected data from all police forces and current statistical bodies in Italy.