

MEP Briefing

European Parliament Report on the Third European Road Safety Action Programme:
Mid-Term Review
Committee on Transport and Tourism

Rapporteur: Ewa Hedkvist Petersen

The European Transport Safety Council⁽¹⁾ welcomes the adoption of the Mid-term Review of the 3rd Road Safety Action Programme⁽²⁾. When the European Commission adopted its 3rd Road Safety Action Programme in 2003 (2003-2010) to halve the number of road accident victims in the European Union by 2010, it also committed to carry out a Mid-term Review in 2005 and to propose legislation if there was no drop in the number of deaths. A delay was incurred both in the publication of the Mid Term Review and in the publishing of a first *tranche* of road safety legislation, which had impact on losing valuable momentum making road safety improvements.

ETSC supports the draft report developed by the Rapporteur Ewa Hedkvist Petersen of the Transport Committee. It would ask MEPs to support in the

Report:

Recitals C, D, E, F, G and paragraphs 3, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 17, 18, 19, 22, 23, 24 and 26.

Amendments: 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 13, 14, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 26, 32, 37, 41, 56, 58, 71, 73, 78, 79, 82, 91

Given the short time available until 2010 ETSC would urge MEPs to raise three priorities with the European Commission and Member States:

1. Adopt road safety legislation without delay which will lead to saving lives in the field of infrastructure safety.
2. Improving traffic law enforcement in Member States and across borders with a Directive.
3. Launching an EU wide campaign tackling the main cause of death on Europe's roads: speed.

Facts and figures of road safety in Europe:

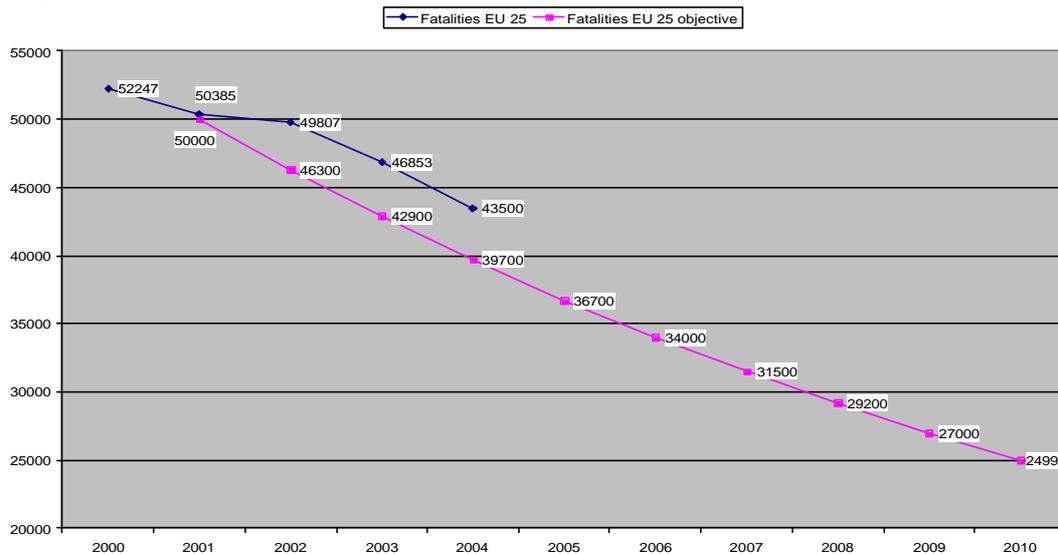
The 3rd RSAP promises to reduce by half the number of road deaths by 2010. This means a reduction of 25,000 at least of total deaths in the EU25 out of the 50,000 lives taken every year in road accidents.

Road transport remains the main cause of death among all EU citizens under the age of 45. It kills around 115 persons every day, the equivalent of a medium-sized plane

accident with no survivors. The costs of road accidents are estimated to be euros 180 billion.

Despite some laudable isolated national achievements, EU road safety policy is far from a success story and the gap between the best- and the worst-performing Member States is widening. The Commission estimates that, in 2005, approximately 41,600 people were killed on European roads, which means a reduction of only 17.5% since 2001, some way off the 25% needed for the EU to be on course to achieve the target of halving road deaths by 2010.

Progress towards the EU 2010 target:

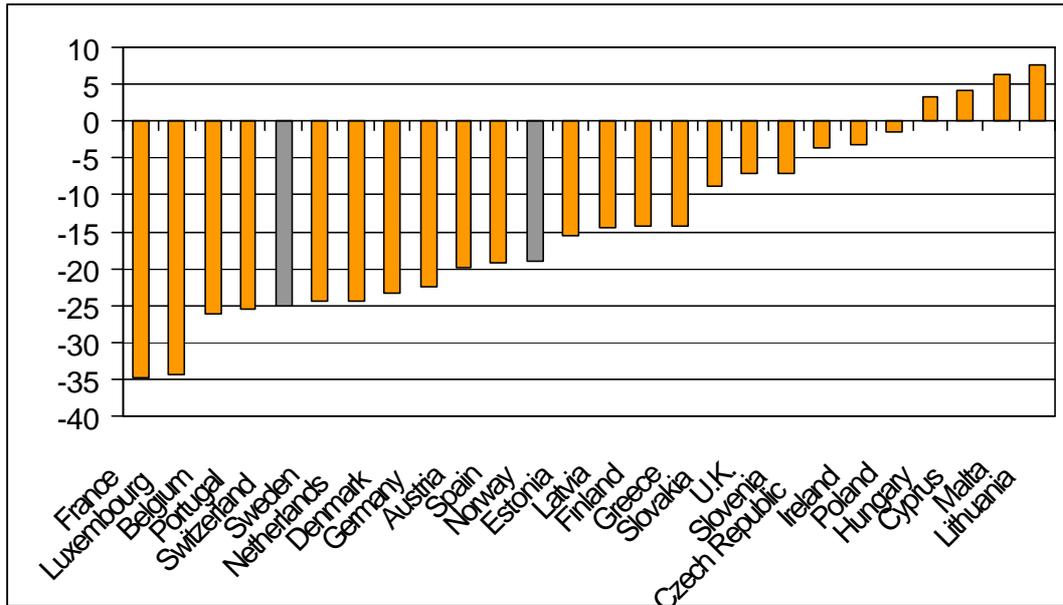


Increased inequalities within the EU and among road users:

The risk of death on EU roads is substantially higher for vulnerable road users (8-9 times higher for pedestrians and cyclists). The statistics for motorcyclists are also particularly worrying. If the actual trend continues, in 2010 one out of three road deaths might be a motorcyclist instead of one out of six today.

The average death risk in the Southern, Central and Eastern European countries (the "SEC Belt countries") is about three times higher than the EU average. Deaths continue to rise in certain Member States already at the bottom end of the table, such as Cyprus, Malta, Lithuania and Hungary.

Development in road deaths 2001-2005 (except Italy)



Achievements and failures of the 3rd RSAP:

The Mid-term Review, monitored national targets and measures implemented, and ETSC believes that it will only deliver its results if the analysis is also followed by action, including legislative if necessary. But there was no legislation proposal accompanying the Mid-term Review. The 3rd RSAP also failed to introduce a timescale for actions and a clear indication of which actions will deliver what kind of results. The Commission has now only four years to translate good intentions on paper into successful interventions on the road.

ETSC positions:

Mid Term Review of the 3rd Road Safety Action Programme

ETSC endorses the European Commission's approach and measures proposed in the White Paper and in the 3rd RSAP. However, it calls for a more urgent and robust approach by the EU and Member States. The EU can no longer delay and fail to implement known and affordable safety measures if it is to reach the set EU target. ETSC strongly supports the European Commission monitoring of national targets and implementation of measures. Most of the targets already set by Member States are challenging and achievable. But Member States have to pursue their effort as they could do much more.

Speed Management and Road Traffic Law Enforcement:

Overall, the focus should shift to those policy areas that are a priority on safety grounds and therefore offer the greatest scope for lowering death rates over the shortest timescale. On this basis the most important priority for policymaking is improving speed management. The Commission should commence work immediately on developing Community instruments that lower speeds, improve driving standards, and thus offer the largest opportunity to improve transport safety. This would

necessitate the Commission exploring how new technology can aid speed management, for example, through mandatory fitment of advisory intelligent speed adaptation devices. The Commission should also be examining what it can do to facilitate the use of other in-vehicle enforcement technologies such as seat belt reminders and alcohol interlocks, across the Community.

ETSC welcomes the creation of a European road safety campaign, but only if it makes concrete, easy to implement, results-oriented proposals and is strongly linked to police enforcement. The launch of a campaign was agreed by the EU Presidency, Member States and the European Commission and would consist of billboards along major highways and motorway service stations⁽³⁾. Speed should however be the focus, as speeding, followed by drink driving is the single most important cause of traffic death and injury across Europe.

ETSC would also support the proposal of a Directive that ensures that all Member States achieve high standards in enforcement, in all areas covered by the EC Recommendation on traffic law enforcement (2003). Traffic law enforcement measures, due to their strong impact on road safety in the short term and their cost-effectiveness, in combination with awareness raising activities, are the most important instrument to reach the EU target of halving annual road deaths by 2010.

ETSC would also urge the Commission to come forward with a Directive to improve cross-border enforcement of traffic law in order to avoid that non-resident drivers flout traffic laws when travelling abroad as they do not fear punishment.

In addition, those speaking for the automotive industry as a whole should look towards what they can responsibly contribute to safety rather than repeatedly claiming improving car technology is too costly.

Road Infrastructure Safety

ETSC also calls for the swift adoption of a Directive on road infrastructure safety. Such a Directive should allow for a substantial improvement of the road network, introducing an EU harmonised system of road safety impact assessment, road safety audits, network safety management and road safety inspections on the Trans-European Road Networks.

These procedures should also be extended to the road network which is not part of the TENs and the EU should make the granting of funds conditional to the application of the above mentioned procedures.

The European Commission and Member States should deliver a transport system designed and accessible to all users including more vulnerable road users. At present a fifth of all road deaths are pedestrians (EU 15). Public transport accessible to all users should be promoted which carries a lower risk than private vehicles¹.

Recommendations to the Commission and Member States:

- Introduce performance indicators in national road safety programmes.

¹ See Vulnerable Road User Organisations In Cooperation across Europe (VOICE) Position on Mid Term Review of the Third Road Safety Action Programme Road Safety: We must do more www.etsc.be/Voice

- Establish a European methodology for independent road accident investigation and improve accident data collection, analysis and dissemination.
- Introduce technologies such as seat-belt reminders, alcohol interlocks and intelligent speed adaptation devices at national and European level.
- Develop best practice guidelines for the elaboration of transport plans and policies that take all road users into account using "design for all criteria". These should then form the basis of a recommendation.
- Organise an EU wide campaign along the EU's motorways on road safety tackling speed.

Legislation –Adopt without delay:

- Directive that ensures that all Member States achieve high standards in traffic law enforcement of speeding, drink driving and seat belt use.
- Directive on infrastructure safety.
- Directive on retrofitting of blind spot mirrors for trucks.

Legislation - Table without delay:

- Directive on daytime running lights.
- Directive on cross-border enforcement, while Member States continue to account for their progress made in implementing the European Commission's Recommendation on enforcement.
- Directive mandating the fitment of Intelligent speed adaptation devices.

For more information:

Cost-Effective EU Transport Safety Measures, ETSC (2003)
 Transport safety performance indicators in the EU, ETSC (2001)
 The Safety of Vulnerable Road Users in SEC-Belt Countries, ETSC (2005)
 In-Car Enforcement Technologies Today, ETSC (2005)
 Traffic Law Enforcement across the EU (2006)
 A Methodological Approach to National Road Safety Policies ETSC (2006)
 Road Safety Audit, ETSC Fact Sheet (2005)
 ETSC Response to the EC Consultation on Blind Spot Mirrors (2006)
 ETSC Response to the EC Consultation on Infrastructure Safety (2006)
 Cost-Benefit Analysis of Road Safety Improvements, ICF Consulting (2003)

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Notes:

- (1) 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 35 international and national organisations concerned with transport safety from across Europe.
- (2) [For the EC press release including links to the Communication see: http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/06/202&type=HTML&aged=0&language=FR&guiLanguage=en](http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/06/202&type=HTML&aged=0&language=FR&guiLanguage=en) . For an ETSC Briefing on the review see www.etsc.be/briefings
- (3) Transport Council Conclusions 27th of March.