



## NEWS RELEASE

### Strong commitment needed to sustainably improve road safety in Romania

*15 April 2013, Bucharest* – “We are very happy to see such high-level representation and interest from the decision-makers, both from the Romanian Parliament, but also from the three government ministries present here today. I hope this strong interest will translate into a fruitful cooperation, involving road safety stakeholders in Romania, which will lead to the adoption of a road safety strategy to enable Romania to healthily contribute to reaching the EU road safety target,” said Antonio Avenoso, ETSC<sup>1</sup> Executive Director in his welcome address to the Road Safety PIN<sup>2</sup> Talk attendees in Bucharest.<sup>3</sup>

Radu Stroe, the Minister for Internal Affairs, noted the need for a coherent public policy to improve road safety, including also a revision of the traffic law. Valeriu Zgonea, the President of the Romanian Chamber of Deputies, agreed with Mr. Stroe and said the Romanian Parliament will give its full consideration to any legislative projects aimed at improving road safety. Mr. Stroe added that amendments to traffic legislation should be complemented through educational measures, such as making road safety classes compulsory in public schools. Dr. Raed Arafat, Secretary of State in the Health Ministry, presented the latest developments of the emergency rescue systems, highlighting the crucial role of effective and professional emergency intervention in reducing the consequences of traffic collisions.

The opening session was followed by discussions and exchanges of good practices on ways to improve road safety in Romania and the afternoon debate focused on reducing road risks for young people and novice drivers. Mircea Steriu, ETSC Communications Manager and PIN Programme Officer, addressed the need to adopt a road safety strategy which would assign clear roles and responsibilities for the stakeholders involved, highlighting that road safety performance is correlated with the subsequent process of translating a strategy into concrete actions. Chief commissary Lucian Dinita, the Director of the Romanian Traffic Police, echoed the call for improved cooperation between institutions and said that the lack of a dedicated road safety budget for the Traffic Police, coupled with a lack of involvement from other stakeholders, lead to an increase in the number of road deaths in 2012 after several years of commendable progress. The presentation by Ilona Buttler of the Motor Transport Institute in Poland allowed comparisons between the two countries, explained the process of adopting the Polish Road Safety Strategy, and highlighted the need for a strategy to be put in place in order to focus stakeholders' efforts to improve road safety. Szabolcs Schmidt, Head of the Road Safety Unit within the

European Commission, presented the latest Commission data on road deaths within the EU and also stressed that each member state has a role and a responsibility to reach the EU target of halving road deaths by 2020.

Luana Bidasca, ETSC Policy Officer, presented the results of the PIN analysis of road risks faced by young people, noting that they are more at risk when using the roads all over Europe and that, additionally, young males are four times more likely to die on the roads than young females. She also highlighted the size of the problem at the EU level, with road deaths accounting for 21% of all the deaths within the 15-30 age group in the EU. Chief commissary Costin Tatuc, Deputy Director of the Traffic Police, presented Romanian data, showing involvement in collisions of young people, but also the fact that in 29% of serious collisions, young people are to blame for the event. He also presented several awareness campaigns run by the Traffic Police and called for a renewed cooperation with the Ministry for Education in order to improve road safety education in schools. Rik Dhoest, of the Belgian Federal Traffic Police presented the Belgian situation and he also focused on the measures for compulsory road safety education in Belgium.

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### Notes to editors:

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<sup>1</sup> ETSC is a Brussels-based organisation dedicated to reducing the numbers of deaths and injuries in transport in Europe. The ETSC seeks to identify and promote research-based measures with a high safety potential. It brings together 47 independent non-profit making national and international organisations concerned with transport safety from across Europe. [www.etsc.eu](http://www.etsc.eu)

<sup>2</sup> The Road Safety Performance Index (PIN) programme receives financial support from Volvo Group, Volvo Trucks, the Swedish Transport Administration, the Norwegian Public Roads Administration and Toyota Motor Europe. [www.etsc.eu/PIN.php](http://www.etsc.eu/PIN.php)

<sup>3</sup> The programme of the PIN Talk and the speakers' presentations are available at <http://www.etsc.eu/PIN-events.php>