European Transport Safety Council

NEWS RELEASE

EU Transport Ministers clinch deal to save lives on Europe's Roads

2nd December 2010, Brussels – **ETSC [1] strongly welcomes the conclusions on a political agreement on road safety and the Cross Border Enforcement Directive [2] adopted at today's Transport Council by EU Transport Ministers. The main objective of the new Directive is to introduce a system of exchanging information to enable the follow up of road safety related traffic offences committed by non-resident drivers. The swift adoption of the Directive would introduce equal treatment of foreign and resident drivers and most important, save lives on Europe's roads [3]. In their conclusions Ministers also endorsed the new target to reduce road traffic deaths by 50% by 2020[4].**

ETSC supports the new Directive as it would result in higher levels of safety through enforcement [5]. Enforcement is a means to prevent collisions from happening by way of persuading drivers to comply with the safety rules. Deterrence is based on giving drivers the feeling that they run too high a risk of being caught when breaking the rules. This Directive in its current form will reduce the current annual death figure of 35,000 on Europe's roads. Moreover the Directive would ensure that the principle of fair and equal treatment will be applied also to non-residents who at present are acting with impunity and escaping punishment whilst travelling abroad [6]. This also undermines the credibility of the existing enforcement system in countries where the national law is respected by residents but not by visitors.

Ministers also adopted conclusions in response to the European Commission's "Road Safety Policy Orientations 2011-2020". Ministers stressed that the level of road deaths and injuries are unacceptably high and aim towards the long-term "zero-vision" [7] for European road transport safety. They also encouraged employers to prepare road safety action plans to reduce road traffic collisions occurring whilst driving for work [8]. Moreover they gave their support to new technical solutions to counters problems such as speeding and drink/drug driving. As set out in ETSC's Response [9] to the 2020 Strategy, ETSC would much welcome these additional measures especially to tackle the three main killers of speeding, drink driving an non use of seat belts.

"Road safety is a matter affecting all EU citizens in their daily life. ETSC continues to give its strong support to the new Cross Border Enforcement Directive. With the swift adoption of this legislation and other road safety actions today the EU Presidency and Transport Ministers honour the renewed target of halving road deaths by 2020" said, Antonio Avenoso, ETSC Executive Director.

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

(2) EC Directive proposal 2008 on the proposal for a Directive facilitating the cross-border enforcement of traffic offences. ETSC position paper on CBE available here.

(3) According to the EC impact assessment study, the Directive would save between 350 and 400 road deaths a year. *Impact assessment on road safety enforcement and cross-border cooperation, Ecorys, March 2007.*

(4) EC Communication: Towards road safety area: policy orientations on road safety 2011-2020.

(5) See also:
ETSC 2010 4th PIN Report "Road Safety Target in Sight: Making up for lost time
ETSC, 2007. Traffic Law Enforcement across the EU: Time for a Directive
ETSC, 2007. Raising Compliance with Road Safety Law, 1st PIN Road Safety Report
ETSC, 2006. Traffic Law Enforcement across the EU – An overview
TISPOL European Traffic Police Network - https://www.tispol.org/

(6) Foreign drivers represent around 5% of the road traffic in the EU, whereas the share of non-resident drivers is 15% on average, of all speeding offenders. *Impact assessment on road safety enforcement and cross-border cooperation, Ecorys, March 2007.*

(7) Vision Zero - An ethical approach to safety and mobility. Original text in Swedish available here.

(8) Work related road safety, ETSC paper and European PRAISE project

(9) ETSC's response to EC communication EC communication "Road Safety Policy Orientations 2011-2020"