

Enforcement Monitor

ETSC's Newsletter on Traffic Law Enforcement in the EU

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Editorial

Mid Term Review and Enforcement

The European target of a 50% cut in annual road deaths by 2010 can only be reached if traffic law is enforced more effectively. Police enforcement of rules covering speeding, drink driving and the use of seat belts alone can help avoid 14,000 fatalities by 2010, according to Commission estimates. Which is why the European Commission adopted a Recommendation on how Member States should improve their enforcement policies. ETSC continues to monitor how the Recommendation is being implemented at a national level.

This sixth Enforcement Monitor presents progress in traffic enforcement in Spain in more detail. Since the publication of ETSC's fifth Enforcement Monitor, the Commission has conducted its Mid-term Review of its Action Programme on Road Safety. The Commission reported a 17.5% reduction in road deaths across the EU between 2001 and 2005. It called upon all stakeholders to make an even greater effort in order to reach the target of reducing road deaths by 50% by 2010. Contrary to expectations legislative proposals on infrastructure, daytime running lights and retrofitting of blind spot mirrors for trucks did not accompany the publication of the Mid-term Review. Progress made under the Recommendation on Enforcement was mentioned as was the need to tackle offences committed by non-resident drivers. A new package of relevant legislation may now come in conjunction with the Mid-term Review of the 2001 White Paper on Transport.

This Enforcement Monitor gives a special overview of enforcement of seat belt and child restraints. This comes ahead of the new Directive 2003/20/EC which will come into force this May that extends the obligatory use of seat belts to occupants of all motor vehicles, including trucks and coaches. It also mandates the use of appropriate (UN-ECE standard) child restraint systems for all children travelling in passenger cars and light vans. Few countries are currently enforcing seat belt use with intensive, highly visible and well publicised blitz campaigns as proposed by the Enforcement Recommendation.

Feature: Seat Belt Use and Enforcement Introduction

One of the areas given lowest priority across the EU is enforcement of seat belt wearing: this is despite the fact that the life saving potential of wearing a seat belt or a proper child restraint is great. Universal seat belt use could prevent 6,000 deaths and 380,000 injuries every year in Europe according to a study by ICF Consulting.

A legal obligation to use safety restraints exists for both adults and children, yet usage rates still vary greatly across Europe. According to ETSC's latest data, seat belt wearing rates in the EU-25 are between 59% (Hungary) and 97% (France) for front seat occupants, and between 21% (Estonia) and 90% (Germany) for rear seat passengers.

Country	Wearing rate, front seats (%)	Wearing rate, rear seats (%)
Austria	77	56 (adults)
Belgium	66	not available
Cyprus	n/a	n/a
Czech Republic	75 (driver)	n/a
Denmark	84	63
Estonia	75	21
Finland	89	80
France	97	68
Germany	94 (driver)	90 (adults)
Greece	40 (2003)	15 (2003)
Hungary	59	20 (2003)
Ireland	85% (2003)	46% (adults, 2003)
Italy	n/a	n/a
Latvia	n/a	n/a
Lithuania	n/a	n/a
Luxembourg	88 (driver)	72
Malta	95 (driver)	43
Netherlands	86 (2003)	63 (2003)
Poland	71	49
Portugal	88 (driver)	25
Slovakia	n/a	n/a
Slovenia	81	40
Spain	86 (2003)	42 (2003)
Sweden	92 (driver)	79
UK	93 (driver)	83

Table 2 Seat belt wearing in the EU. Data are for 2004 unless otherwise specified.

New EU legislation

This May, a new Directive (Directive 2003/20/EC) will come into force that extends the obligatory use of seat belts to occupants of all motor vehicles, including trucks and coaches. The Directive includes the possibility to request temporary exemptions as regards the transport of a greater number of seated children than there are seat belts for local transport operations such as school buses. The European Commission is likely to grant such exceptions to at least three member states for this (See

the news section).

The new Directive also mandates the use of appropriate (UN-ECE standard) child restraint systems for all children travelling in passenger cars and light vans. There are different types of child restraints appropriate for different child ages, sizes and weights.

Enforcing the legislation

Seat belt wearing rates can be improved through a mixture of measures including police enforcement linked to education and information campaigns. According to the European Commission Recommendation, enforcement actions concerning seat belt use should be intensive, highly visible and well publicised. High levels of publicity are crucial for optimising the effects of enforcement. Enforcement actions should be carried out at least three times a year, with each action lasting at least two weeks. They should be carried out predominantly in those places where there is an increased accident risk. Actions can be combined with other enforcement actions, e.g. concerning drink driving or speeding. It is important that every detected offence is properly followed up and that sanctions are appropriate and dissuasive.

Levels of enforcement

It is impossible to tell how many car occupants have been checked for the use of restraint systems by the police. But the proportion of inhabitants sanctioned for not wearing their seat belts can serve as a basis of comparison, in conjunction with the compliance levels in Figure 1, Figure 2 presents available data and shows that Slovenia apprehends a high number of offenders, while in most other countries, seat belt offences often go unsanctioned.

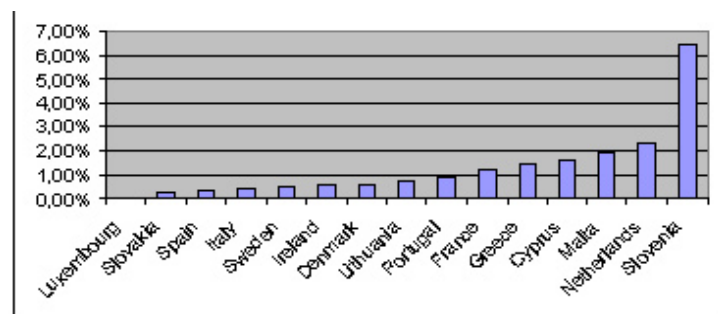


Figure 2 Seat belt offences per population (in %)

Good practice in enforcement

Few countries report to be undertaking rigorous and frequent checks as suggested by the Recommendation. Countries conducting such checks include Slovenia, the **Netherlands, Austria** and the region of **North Rhine Westphalia in Germany**. Police highlight the difficulty of checking both the front and the back as well as checking vehicles such as buses and coaches whose height is much higher than their view point, normally from a low police car. Success has been seen with the employment of a number of different instruments. For instance in **Malta** since 2002 local Council wardens have had the responsibility of enforcing seat belt wearing and have the power to stop and fine offenders.

Another good example comes from **Slovenia** which organises high visibility enforcement linked to media work with a seat belt enforcement campaign entitled: "Buckle Up Slovenia!". The two week long action, carried out three times a year, consists of preventative work which is then followed up by enforcement of non-compliance with the issuing of fines. Civil observers check all cars passing through a cordon and give information to a police check point further up the road of all who are not belted up to be stopped and sanctioned.

In **Austria** increased seat belt enforcement actions linked to campaigns are held during the year. Some include actions whereby those who were found not to be wearing seatbelts are able to immediately try the effect on so-called seat belt sleighs which are set up by the roadside. Austria also launched a seat belt campaign "Seat Belts Save Lives: Life has priority" which addresses Austria's low seat belt wearing rates. It has one component focusing on child seat belt wearing and another focusing on the front passenger (see the News section). It is also combined with police enforcement activities.

In the **UK** measures to enhance seat belt use have been a combination of enforcement and communication. From 1991 till now there has been a steady increase in seat belt use:

	1991	2004
rear passengers:	10 %	69 %
front passengers:	70 %	90 %
drivers:	69 %	90 %

There has also been a steady increase in the efforts of the special traffic enforcement units doubling from 45,000 hours in 2001 to 82,000 hours 2003. The amount of collected fines has also increased from 307,000 in 2002 to 362,000 in 2003. This

shows that even in countries with a high wearing rate big improvements can still be attained.



Photo: Police Wuppertal North Rhein Westfalia, Germany

To promote child restraint use in **Germany**, the police force from the town of Wuppertal in North Rhine Westphalia set up an advice centre for citizens in March 2004 where regular consultation talks take place. The public are particularly interested in the practical application of child restraints and advice on possible misuse. Police work directly with parents before the birth, training teachers in schools and organising information sessions for parents at school. They also monitor road traffic collisions resulting in injuries amongst children. In 2004 a total of sixteen collisions resulted in 18 injured children. Of these, 2 were not secured at all, ten were in child seats, 4 were secured by seat belts and 2 were secured. In 2005, 7 collisions resulted in 9 injured children of which 5 were unsecured, 3 were seated in child seats and 1 child was secured with a seat belt. This shows that in 2005, the number of collisions with injured children in vehicles was down by 15.5% and the percentage of injured children could be reduced by 8% from 2004. The injury statistics also show that a greater number of older children are injured than younger ones. They should focus on educating parents of older children as the cut-off point of 12 years or 150 cm tall for a child restraint is still not understood by many parents.

Sanctions

Other countries have managed to substantially increase wearing rates through higher sanctions or rigorous application of fines. In Northern Ireland, since 2001 a fixed penalty fine is always given for non-seat belt wearing offences. This has translated into a real increase in the seat belt wearing rate of 67% to 77% (rear) and 86% to 91% (front) between 2001 and 2004. The use of child restraints

has already been made mandatory in a number of countries. In Austria, the new penalty point system means that drivers who do not properly secure their children will risk losing their driving licences for 3 months. Successes charted also in Malta include preparing for the change in legislation for child restraints and seat belts with campaigns coupled with enforcement whereby the police merely inform what the sanction would have been.

EU wide actions

EU wide approaches to campaigning on seat belt use and safety restraints include a project called "Euchires" focussing on children. It has done much to boost the profile of this area of enforcement. Stemming from a successful campaign run in the **Netherlands**, the campaign has run in ten other EU countries (**Belgium, Spain, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Sweden and Austria**). Led by the Belgian Institute for Road Safety, it is being co-funded by the European Commission. An interim report has now been published giving findings from each of the ten Member States.

The role of the European Traffic Police network (TISPOL) with their annual campaigns has also been very successful at raising the profile of this particularly low priority issue. It has encouraged countries to set up separate seat belt wearing campaigns. This year's EU wide seat belt enforcement campaign is due to concur with the official deadline for the new Directive, namely during the first two weeks of May.

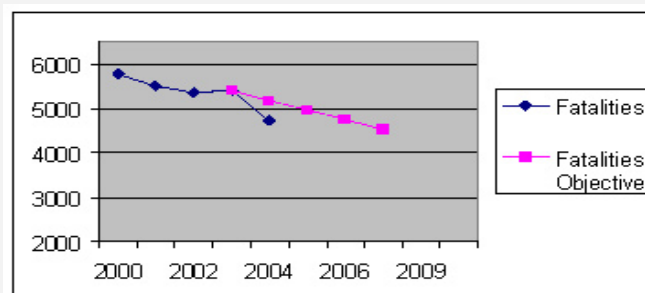
Seat belt reminders

Beyond enforcement linked to campaigns, research has shown that many of the non-wearers of seat belts would use their seat belt if they had an audible seat belt reminder installed in their cars. The European New Car Assessment Programme (EuroNCAP) provides added point bonuses for vehicles fitted with seat belt reminders. Today, most of the new vehicle models have some form of intelligent seat belt reminder for the driver seat.

In conclusion more attention must be paid to this often neglected area of enforcement, particularly as the seat belt is the most important safety device in a vehicle. A special effort must also be made this year with the entry into force of the new Directive on seat belt and child safety restraint use.

Country focus: Spain

Spain's death rate has been continuing to drop over the past years. In 2004, there was a further 13% reduction. This reduction is estimated to continue in 2005 by another 5%. A new Road Safety Strategic Plan has been prepared for the period 2005-2008. This strategy includes a clear aim to reduce deaths by 40% by 2008, based on the 2003 baseline. At present, Spain is ahead of its 2008 target.



A National Road Safety Observatory was set up in June 2004. Its aim is to research road safety and directly apply the results obtained to road safety policy. Catalonia and the Basque country assumed full autonomous powers on traffic safety including managing their own police agencies on traffic law enforcement. Catalonia has its own separate Road Safety Observatory.

Traffic law enforcement is carried out by Spain's different police bodies. This includes the local police, who are in charge of law enforcement in urban areas, the "Guardia Civil" who are in charge of law enforcement on the national road network and on minor roads outside urban areas, the Basque Police and the Catalonia Police who are in charge of law enforcement in interurban roads into the areas of the Basque Country and Catalonia. The Traffic General Directorate manages and runs traffic control centres and co-ordinates overall traffic management of the "Guardia Civil". Yearly Traffic Safety Action Plans and the aforementioned Road Safety Strategic Plan (2005-2008) include permanent enforcement actions covering alcohol, speed and safety belts. They also include special programmed campaigns and targeted ad-hoc actions. The past decade the task now is to work towards reducing them further.

New penalty point system

In Spain, Parliament approved at the end of June 2005 a new penalty point scheme, which is expected to start operating this July 2006. The system is modelled on the French one. Drivers will receive an initial credit of 12 points and lose between 2 and 6 points for different types of traffic offences. They can recover up to 4 points by attending a 12-hour road safety risk awareness course. To recover a driving license that has been withdrawn, offenders have to undergo 24-hour risk awareness training. They can re-apply for a new license only after six months. Professional drivers will be able to accelerate the timing for participating in the course but penalty points will be the same as for other drivers. Drivers who do not violate any traffic rules for at least three years will gain up to three points extra. Speeding will result in the loss of between 2 and 6 points, depending on the level of driving over the limit. Drink driving over 0.5 BAC mg/ml will result in the loss of 6 points. Driving without a seat belt will result in the loss of 3 points.

According to a public opinion survey about the new penalty point system conducted by the Directorate General for Traffic in December 2005, 74% agreed with the introduction of the system, 67% were of the opinion that it would lead to a reduction in crashes and 70% believed that it would support good driving habits. A total of 88% supported the consequence of loss of license in case of a serious offence and 80% supported the need for a rehabilitation course in order to regain the license. Finally, 67% stated that they were not "personally worried" about the introduction of the penalty point system.

The DGT's plan for diffusion of the penalty point system began with the launch of a website in January www.permisoporpuntos.es. This interactive website provides an informative and simple overview of the Spanish system but also introduces examples of penalty point systems in other EU countries. Courses for trainers for the rehabilitation courses began in February. In March, an educational campaign was launched in a series of conferences. In April a "call centre" will be set up and an international conference held. In May an "information pack" will be sent to all drivers. In June an intensive TV, radio and newspaper campaign will be launched.

According to the Traffic General Directorate the system could reduce the number of road deaths by 10-15% and will substantially contribute together with other measures to the national target of reducing traffic deaths by 40% in 5 years.

New plans for combating speed

Moves are underway to dramatically step up fixed speed enforcement networks in Spain. A second wave of cameras are to be introduced as part of Spain's plan to increase its fixed safety camera network by 500 new radars to be installed between 2005 and 2007. The plan aims to reduce excess and average speed and to increase speed enforcement.

The government announced the introduction of a further 41 fixed safety cameras last December, bringing the total number of new radars up to 88 since July 2005. Their use has so far been evaluated positively. Between August and November 2005 over 100,000 offences were tracked using the cameras previously in place. In areas where safety cameras are active the number of vehicles traveling at over 140 km/h was reduced by 40%.

Drink driving: more efforts are needed

Both random and evidential tests are carried out to enforce the legal BAC limit of 0.5 mg/ml and the lower 0.3 mg/ml limit for professional and novice drivers. Although nearly 3 million breath tests were carried out in 2004 this does not represent a high enough proportion of the drivers in this large country. The problem still persists that 30,3% of all of drivers involved in fatal collisions in 2004 had a BAC limit of over 0.5 mg/ml.

Special campaigns have been aimed at addressing this serious issue, such as the special drink-drive campaign run over Christmas: "If you drink don't drive". This was accompanied by increased enforcement by police. Another media campaign was also run on returning to everyday life after the festivities entitled: "Happy Return". Running between 22nd December and 8th of January, it also focused on drink driving as well as seat belt use and speeding.

Seat belt wearing: look to the rear

Spain reinforced its law on seat belt use in 2004, introducing an obligation for children of three years and under to use an approved restraint system. Blitz actions are carried out as part of campaigns on seat belts. Most recent data for 2003 show that front seat belt wearing rates are at 86% and rear rates are at 42%. Available data in the records of the Traffic General Directorate reveal a clear rising seat belt use tendency. The number of non-belted deaths is also dropping slightly from 32.7% in 2004 to 30.5% in 2005.

Cross-border enforcement

Spain also has a large problem with dealing with heavy numbers of non-resident drivers. Currently non-resident drivers receive an on-the-spot fine if detected committing a traffic offence by police. However as speed enforcement becomes automated, this will be more difficult to follow up. Spain has therefore also taken an active role in the EU research projects directed at developing a system for cross border enforcement of traffic offences.

In conclusion, the introduction of the new penalty point system will surely make a positive contribution to reducing road deaths. However, long-lasting impact of the system will depend on strong police enforcement before, during and after its introduction. Enforcement in Spain is on the road but more can still be undertaken.

News

Police enforcement

National approaches

In the **Czech Republic**, a nationwide campaign has been launched on changes in the Czech Highway Code which will come into force on 1st July 2006. These changes include the introduction of a penalty point system, daytime running lights and mandatory child restraint devices. With the new penalty point system comes an increase in the sanctions. High penalties target drink driving, speeding, not wearing a seat belt and mobile phone use. The lowest fine will be set at 1,500 crowns (approximately 50 EUR). Police will also be able to confiscate the driving license on the spot for serious offences. The aim of this campaign with the slogan "It is better if I check myself rather than to

be checked by the police!" is to inform the general public about changes in the Highway Code which will come into force on 1st July 2006. Billboards, posters, TV and radio spots and special website are the main media formats of the campaign which will run until the end of August. The traffic police will also increase enforcement activities from 1st July, when the new legislation comes into force. Before that they will inform drivers during regular checks by distributing leaflets on the amendments of the Highway Code.

On 31 March 2006, a new sanction regime entered into force for traffic offences in **Belgium**. According to the amended Traffic Law, fixed fines for the most common traffic offences are now 50-100-150-220 euros while they used to be 50-150-175-550 euros. A new progression of speeding fines has also been introduced that reflects more accurately the severity of the speed limit violation. The new sanction regime is based on a major evaluation of the previous law, which took effect only two years ago. The new penalties aim to reflect more clearly the level of risk posed by the various offences: The bigger the risk of leading to an accident, the bigger the penalty.

Romania's General Police Inspectorate has launched a national campaign starting on 19th of January lasting until the 31st of July. The aim of the campaign is to reduce the number of deaths by 5%. This comes ahead of a new traffic law which will apply from 1st of September 2006. The new law introduces a new sanction regime that includes a "demerit points system" with points for speeding, drink driving and the non-use of seat belts, among other offences. Romania also launched the automatic traffic speed cameras on the busiest road in the country in December 2005.

The Transport Committee in the UK is running an inquiry into the effectiveness of traffic policing entitled: "Traffic Policing and Technology: getting the balance right". PACTS published a significant research report on this topic, "Policing Road Risk: enforcement, technologies and road safety", in September last year. The Committee notes the drop in operational traffic officer numbers by 21% between 1999 and 2004 on the one hand and more intensive use of technologies such as speed and red light cameras, breathalysers and Automatic Number Plate recognition on the other. The reduction of the BAC limit from 0.8 mg/ml to 0.5 mg/ml was also discussed by Mr. Hughes of ACPO: "I think it is a good idea to bring us in line with the levels identified in other Western Euro-

pean nations as being appropriate (published as part of uncorrected transcripts). He also wanted to see more drink driving enforcement, giving the example of the recent reinforced Christmas drink driving campaign in the UK. The discussion also included exchanges on the role of technology such as safety cameras vs. visible policing by officers. A transcript of the uncorrected evidence is available on the Transport Committee's website. Contributions to the inquiry will be published and the inquiry is likely to be held May or June.

Also in the **UK** the Road Safety Bill was debated in the House of Commons on 8 March 2006. It will now be discussed in detail at committee stage. Of particular relevance is the proposed measure of introducing pilot alcohol ignition interlock programmes for repeat drink drivers. The Bill also addresses the issue of seat belt wearing and aims to increase the penalty for not ensuring children wear their seatbelt.

In **Germany**, more and more drivers are recorded in the central register of traffic offenders of the "Federal Bureau of Motor Vehicles and Drivers", the penalty point system administration. At the end of 2005, 8,200,000 drivers were registered, which means an increase of 7.6% compared to the beginning of the year. This was caused by better enforcement and a higher density of checks. The highest increase in offences came from drivers not using hands-free speaking systems for their mobile phones while driving. The number of those offences increased by more than 100% compared to 2004. Male drivers represent the majority with 80,7% of all traffic offenders. More than half of both male and female drivers got points due to exceeding the speed limit.

Ireland introduced 31 new penalty point offences in April 2006. This will enlarge the penalty point system to 35 offences. The Minister for Transport Martin Cullen announced the new offences as part of a major crackdown on irresponsible driver behaviour. Among the new offences are failure to obey Stop/Yield signs or traffic lights, illegal overtaking and failure to wear child restraints. He also announced that a new high level Government Road Safety group, (of the Ministers for Transport, Justice, Finance, Health and Education) is to be formed.

Enforcing speed limits

Section control in **Scotland** has so far had a very positive impact in both reducing deaths, injuries and speeds. During the first six months of its operation, no-one has been killed and only one person has been seriously injured on the 29-mile section of the A77 in Ayrshire, Scotland. This compares to a total of 20 people killed and 95 seriously injured between 2000 and 2004. Only 49 drivers have been caught speeding, whereas previously police would catch as many during a week. Speed has dropped by nearly 90% on the dual carriageway sections and by 80% on the single carriageway sections.

A new study conducted by the Austrian Road Safety Board (KfV) provides further evidence of the positive impact section control has on safety in **Austria**. Speed enforcement is a priority for Austria's police forces: in 2003 more than 35% of fatal accidents on roads in Austria were caused by inappropriate speeding. Austria has introduced two fixed and one mobile section control systems with another coming into force in May 2006. Bid invitations for another six facilities will be held during this year. A cost-benefit analysis was undertaken including both impact on road traffic emissions and accident costs as benefits and installation and maintenance as costs. This shows a cost/benefit ratio of 5.3 based on an evaluation of one of the four section control systems in Austria. According to Christian Stefan of the Austrian Road Safety Board, "benefits will be further increased once mutual recognition of criminal and financial penalties are introduced in the European Union, enabling the follow up of all non-resident drivers breaking the speed limit".

A different approach to combating motoring offences including speeding, non seat belt and child restraint use and use of mobile phones is being used by the Transport Police Group in Oxfordshire, **UK**. Mobile cameras are being used in conjunction with mobile road signs to warn motorists about road safety offences they are committing. The scheme works by using traffic cameras to catch motorists committing the offences, and then operators at a base can issue a variety of warnings to be displayed on the signs. The aim is to warn drivers, get the road safety message across and not penalise them.

Cyprus will launch a pilot speed enforcement project in mid-April. Approximately 28 units with thirteen cameras are being placed on roads. The

combined speed and red light cameras are being placed in urban roads at nine junctions with the rest being placed on rural roads. Seven new mobile cameras will come into use for the police at different points. Press work will be undertaken by the police and the government on the day of the launch and a leaflet has also been prepared to inform drivers. This pilot project aims to pave the way for the introduction of more safety cameras in 2007.

The **Swedish Road Administration (SRA)** has on request of the government developed a new system for speed limits on all roads. If the suggestion (supported by NTF) will be adopted, the lowest speed limit will be 30 km/h in urban areas with many unprotected road users and the highest 120 km/h on the safest part of the motorway network. In between, there will be a progression of 40-50-60-70-80-90-100-110, depending on the safety classification of the road. The SRA and the local municipalities will use EuroRAP and the Swedish Vision Zero criteria concerning human abilities to withstand crash forces to set the speed limits on the individual roads. The tolerance level for the operation of speed cameras will be reduced from about 10% of the limit to no more than 5 km/h. In Sweden, 700 new digital cameras are to be installed which will be live at all times before the summer. The cameras will be connected to a central unit in Kiruna where the speed offences will be administered.

Enforcing blood alcohol levels

In **Cyprus** the legal blood alcohol level was recently reduced from 0.9mg/ml, the highest in the EU, to 0.5 mg/ml. The new law reducing the BAC limit to the European average is part of Cyprus's effort to reach the 2010 target of reducing road deaths by 50%. The European Commission Recommendation on a 0.5 BAC limit was also cited as a basis for this change. A special 0.2 mg/ml BAC limit for new drivers (first three years) and professional drivers was also proposed but not passed. However this may be raised again after the upcoming general elections. Random and evidential breath testing is undertaken with the benefit of roadside testing equipment. Of the 32 blood tests taken on drivers killed in crashes in 2005, 13 of them (40.6%) exceeded the BAC limit, which was 0.9 mg/ml at that time.

Switzerland, has recorded a 20% drop in road deaths in 2005 from 510 to 409. The Swiss Council for Accident Prevention pointed out that the lower 0.5 BAC limit as well as random breath testing have led to a 25% reduction in drink driving deaths. Both measures have been in place since January 2005. Deaths caused by inappropriate speeds have also decreased by 15%.

In **Belgium**, the biggest ever 'Bob' designated driver campaign was run from the 1st December 2005 to the 15th January 2006. During the six week period a total of 157,038 drivers were tested and this represented an increase on the previous year. Enforcement focused on less frequented roads as drivers often choose certain types of roads in order to avoid controls.

Enforcing Seat Belt Wearing

Austria's Transport Minister Gorbach launched a new seat belt campaign made up of a new TV spot, posters and increased police enforcement in early March. The campaign was launched during the EU Informal Transport Council meeting in Bregenz. It focuses on raising the front passenger seat belt wearing rate and is part of its campaign "Seat Belts Save Lives: Life has priority" which stresses how essential the use of seat belt is to save lives in traffic accidents. First results from another Austrian campaign focussing on child restraints show that the use of child seats increased from 75% to 90% on rural roads and 100% on motorways. The TV spot won the first prize at the International Road Safety Campaign competition in Tunis in December 2005.

In **Belgium**, new provisions will come into force in May transposing the new European Directive into Belgian law. The new law will require the use of child restraint systems that are adapted to the child's weight and size for all children less or equal to 1.35 m. The Belgian Road Safety Institute (IBSR/BIVV) has also published a new information brochure aimed at parents on the proper safety restraints. Police enforcement will accompany the new law. Drivers will first be informed before and during a brief 'period of grace' and then non-compliance will follow with sanctions in the following months.

In **Portugal**, a study on child safety restraints was conducted by the Association for the Protection of Child Safety (APSI). One year after the entry into force of the new Road Safety Code, APSI is analysing progress at a national level, and concludes that, in spite of the significant increase in the intention to protect children, there is still much to be done to improve levels of safety. The study aimed to monitor the evolution of the level of use of child retention system for children, the evolution of the adequate retention system and their correct use. The study found that in 2005, 20.7% of children between 0 and 12 years travelled without any protection. Where child restraints were used, 53.3% of them were incorrectly used. There has been a rise of 25% in the restraint use by 4-12 year olds from 2004. In this group, the intention to protect is 76% which is an absolute record in this age group and this is due without a doubt to the new rules set out in the Highway Code. Between 1998 and 2003, the level of child restraint use increased by 42% for children between 0 and 12 and the death rate of children between 0-9 decreased by 45%. APSI also concludes that there should be more and better controls and better training of enforcement officers, health care and sales assistants. come into force this May 2006 and extends the obligatory use of seat belts to occupants of all motor vehicles. It includes a transition phase of five years lasting until April 2008 from when Member States must ensure that for local transport operations, including for school buses, the number of seated children may not be greater than there are seats available fitted with safety belts.

Finland is planning a special campaign to inform the public about the new EU Directive on safety restraints and the changes in legislation. The target groups will be coach passengers and professional drivers. The police will run a special enforcement week focusing on this in the first week of May.

As the **UK** gears up for the new child restraint legislation which will come into force in September, advice and support is also offered by local authorities. An examples comes from Gwent where the Council is offering parents the chance to have their child car seats tested a part of the a drive to identify unsuitable or poorly fitted equipment. A team of experts provided help and advice to parents at local supermarkets in March. When Blaenau Gwent Trading Standards carried out a similar event three years ago, 86% of the 91 seats tested failed. Of the

problems identified, 68% were remedied there and then.

A concerted action to raise the level of seat belt wearing and use of child restraints is being run in the county of **Buckinghamshire, UK**. The county's road safety team identified 6 sites around schools where observations had shown that up to 40% of drivers and passengers were not wearing their seat belts. Average seat belt wearing figures for the UK from 2004 show a much higher 93% average front seat and a 83% rear seat rate.

Following observations, an education phase took place, involving children and their parents in the local schools. Next, police officers stopped and diverted non-compliant drivers and passengers to speak with a Council Road Safety Officers who offered them the opportunity to have the £30 fine waived by attending a two-hour seatbelt awareness workshop. The seat belt awareness course explored the benefits of using a seat belt and discussed counter arguments as to why they are not worn. Unfortunately, the take-up level was quite low but this may be because a driver is only issued with a £30 fixed penalty and not given any penalty points on their licence. Follow-up monitoring sessions revealed that varying degrees of success were achieved, at one site there had been no change in behaviour, whilst a 20% increase of people wearing their seat belts was observed at another. Overall, figures show that seat belt wearing compliance has gone up 6% from an average of 70% before education to 76% after.

Vehicle Technology

DG Information Society and Media presented the **Intelligent Car Initiative i2010** on 23 February 2006, following a communication adopted 8 days earlier. i2010 wants to raise awareness about the safety, anti traffic congestion and environmental potential of ICT technologies built in cars or infrastructure. i2010 does not yet include any activity on enforcement technologies or the road safety priorities of speed, seat belt use and DUI. ETSC and the VOICE campaign on vulnerable road users have contacted the Commission seeking to remedy this situation. See ETSC press release: 2010 – e-safety that matters and the Communication of the European Commission.

Road Infrastructure

Austria organised a High Level Meeting on "Infrastructure Safety" on 24-25 January 2006 in Vienna. Representatives of Member States participated in order to discuss road infrastructure safety management and a planned new EU Directive. Speakers included the Austrian Minister of Transport, representatives from the European Commission, alongside experts on Road Safety Impact Assessment and Road Safety Audit, including Prof. Richard Allsop of ETSC. Conclusions from the conference were discussed at the informal meeting of Transport Ministers in Bregenz, Austria on 2-3 March 2006.

Cross Border enforcement

At the **EU Transport Council** meeting of Ministers in Brussels on March 27, Transport Commissioner Jacques Barrot stressed his support for taking forward the cross-border enforcement dossier. Commissioner Barrot promised to propose a measure which would focus more specifically on cross border enforcement of traffic law and on non-use of seat belt, speeding and drink driving. This would follow on from the EU Council framework decision on the application of the principal of mutual recognition of financial penalties agreed by the Justice Ministers in 2005. He saw "a consensus between Member States to intensify co-operation. If a driver commits an offence whilst travelling abroad they should be sure that the offence will be sanctioned and will be followed up."

The **Czech Republic** reports that a total of 260 road accidents (out of a total of 1,382 accidents in 2004) under the influence of alcohol were caused by non resident drivers from Slovakia (175), Austria (17), Poland (24), Hungary (6) and Germany (38). Ninety deaths of a total of 1,382 were attributed to non-resident drivers from Slovakia (33), Germany (28), Poland (23), Hungary (3), Austria (3) in 2004. Speeding was the main cause of road collisions caused by non-resident drivers followed by wrong overtaking, not giving way and drinking and driving in last place.

Austria is setting up a new pilot project to combat speeding by non-residents using section control. According to ASFINAG, the Austrian highway operator, 60% of speeders on its motorways come from abroad and 15% of all speed offenders are Germans. Although a bi-lateral agreement between Germany and Austria allows for following up traffic offences, this is hampered by certain legal barriers. Radar pictures taken by section control

cameras are currently not valid for prosecuting traffic offences committed by German speeders. This is because German law only recognises photos as evidence which show the driver - therefore pictures have to be taken from the front. On the S16 in the region of Vorarlberg, Austria is going to test a new section control system which takes pictures from the front and thus enables follow-up prosecution under German law. Nevertheless, at present tickets being sent to the home of foreign offenders are seldom paid. However, the EU Council framework decision on the application of the principal of mutual recognition of financial penalties which was agreed upon in 2005 and must be implemented in the Member States by 2007, ensures that offences are followed through rigorously across all borders not just between Germany and Austria. Dr. Othmar Thann, Director of the Austrian Road Safety Board (KfV), stressed the need to transpose this Decision as quickly as possible into Austrian law in order to be able to follow up sanctioning non-resident offenders more effectively.

A new agreement between **Ireland** and the **UK** will affect cross border traffic. UK drivers who are disqualified in Ireland will no longer escape disqualification when they return home and vice versa. The agreed behaviors covered include reckless or dangerous driving, hit and run driving, drink-drug driving, speeding and driving whilst disqualified. The UK and Ireland share similar road traffic laws and there is a substantial volume of traffic between the two countries each year. The basis for this co-operation is the 1998 Convention on Driving Disqualifications. This agreement was signed by all the then EU 15 Member States but has so far only been ratified by Spain and Slovakia.

TISPOL conducted a campaign to improve safety for bus and coach passengers involving 16 countries across Europe at the end of January. Over 40,000 vehicles and drivers were checked. The operation detected 105 drivers who were found to be driving whilst under the influence of excess alcohol or drugs and 94 vehicles who had disqualified drivers at the wheel. A total of 2,639 speeding offences were also clocked up alongside 734 tachograph offences and 456 drivers who had exceeded their hours.

Police across Europe joined forces from March 13th to 19th in a cross-border campaign coordinated by **TISPOL** targeting dangerous heavy goods vehicles. Focusing on Europe's major traffic routes, thousands of police officers from over 20 countries took part in 'Operation Mermaid'. This

operation was the first major operation in which the TISPOL developed Traffic Documentation System was used. This new system, involving Belgium, France, Germany, Holland and the UK documentation, enables police to access documents relating to vehicles, drivers and the movement of goods by road within those countries that have agreed to take part. TDS enables officers to overcome any language barrier when checking the validity of foreign vehicle or driver documentation and is seen as a major tool in the fight against the use of Europe's roads for any form of illegal activity. The system has been developed by the Dutch Traffic Police on behalf of TISPOL.

European Action

The Commission published the Mid-term Review of the 3rd Road Safety Action Programme on the 22 February 2006. Progress made under the Recommendation on Enforcement was mentioned in the review under the section analysing community action since 2001. The need to tackle the lack of systematic cooperation between the administrative and police authorities in the Member States in order to follow up offences committed by non-resident drivers was also raised by the Commission's review. The European Commission presented the report in Bregenz, Austria, at the informal Transport Ministers meeting on 2-3 March 2006. There was no legislation accompanying the report. However, sources have indicated that legislation on infrastructure, cross-border enforcement, the use of headlamps during daylight hours and the fitting of "blind spots" rear view mirrors in all lorries is expected to come with the Mid-term Review of the 2001 White Paper on transport (to be published by the end of April 2006). A further important outcome included the agreement by Ministers and the European Commission to launch a far-reaching European road safety campaign. The theme is likely to be on driving under the influence of alcohol or when excessively tired. Experts are now due to draw up proposals.

During the meeting EU Transport Ministers also visited the Austrian Automobile Association Road Safety Centre in Röhth. Their visit was dedicated to the theme of **"Crossing Borders in eSafety"**. Transport Ministers participated in a safe driving session with vehicles installed with ESP, a demonstration of seat belt sledges at 30 km/h, passenger vehicle rollover simulators as well as a live demonstration of eCall. The Ministers were informed about the

latest trends in the esafety sector. ETSC was invited Transport Ministers to fill out their "Are you fit for Road Safety?" quiz including levels of enforcement in their countries. The quiz was based on a checklist in ETSC's new Review "A methodological approach to national road safety policies". ETSC was also able to make personal recommendations on enforcement to the different Transport Ministers and on the national priorities to achieve substantial progress in reducing road deaths before 2010.

The EC Recommendation on Enforcement was adopted for simplification in the framework of the Spring Summit's consideration of the so-called "better regulation" initiative of the European Commission. This aims to improve the regulatory environment through simplification, screening and withdrawal of pending Commission proposals, better impact assessment and measuring administrative costs of legal acts. The Summit agreed the simplification of the reporting requirements of the enforcement recommendation, as agreed by the Expert Working Group composed of national representatives.

Transport Ministers met in Brussels on the 27th of March and reached political agreement on recasting the Directive 91/439/EEC. The new Directive on Driving licence aims to reinforce safety on European roads, reduce possibilities of fraud and enhance cross-border enforcement. A single model in credit card format will replace the more than 110 different models currently in circulation. After the entry into force of the Directive, Member States will have 26 years at their disposal to replace the existing driving licences. This will make it a lot easier for the police to determine whether someone is entitled to drive a specific type of vehicle or not. It will also put an end to "driving licence tourism", whereby a disqualified licence holder applies for a new licence in a neighbouring country, by ensuring a coherent and pan-European application in case of driving licence withdrawal. Greater harmonisation of the document would be a step forward towards allowing drivers to be prosecuted by their own states for offences committed abroad or prosecuted anywhere in the EU; They will therefore be deterred by the knowledge that they will not escape prosecution whilst away from home.

Research

A new EU funded research project: Police Enforcement Policy and Programmes on European Roads (PEPPER) kicked off in March. The objective of the project is to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the police enforcement of road traffic. Five different work packages cover enforcement chains, the use of innovative technology in enforcement, the development of enforcement data collection systems and the evaluation of the impact of enforcement on road user behavior and accidents. The project will run for 30 months, is being coordinated by the Technical Research Centre of Finland (VTT) and has 18 international partners which include ETSC.

A new EU funded project (SUPREME) kicked off in March in Vienna. The objective of SUPREME is to collect, analyse and publish science-based examples of best practices in road safety in the 25 EU Member States as well as in Switzerland and Norway. The project is being coordinated by the Austrian Road Safety Board (KfV) and has 30 international partners which include ETSC. Enforcement has been identified as one of the nine categories with education and campaigns, driver training and licencing, driver rehabilitation, vehicles, infrastructure, statistics, institutional organisation, post accident care. The Technical Research Centre of Finland (VTT) is leading this task consisting mainly in collecting, selecting and ranking enforcement measures. The results will be published in June 2007.

ETSC published a new Review entitled "A methodological approach to national road safety policies". The main goal of this Review is to set out a methodological approach to the effective development and implementation of national road safety policies in EU Member States. It has done so by paying particular attention to the SEC Belt countries – the 16 Southern, Eastern and Central European countries where the level of risk is higher than the average for the former EU-15. In addition the Review includes an analysis of best practice, namely France's speed enforcement, the drink driving campaign Bob in Belgium, speed enforcement with section control in Austria and the introduction of 50 km/h urban speed limits in Hungary and the Czech Republic. The Review has also developed a checklist to help decision makers and practitioners at national level to assess what they already have achieved and what they should still do to further reduce death and injury on their roads. This checklist also includes investing and

prioritizing enforcement activities in the field of speeding, drink driving and seat belt use.

ETSC published a new Review entitled "Road accident data in the Enlarged European Union-Learning from each other". The Review examines the current situation in the 25 countries of the European Union in relation to data on road safety and draws up a concrete set of recommendations for improving these data. The Review covers all enforcement-relevant aspects from data collection, gathering and entry into databases, to their processing, analysis and dissemination of results.

ETSC published two Fact Sheets on safety restraints. One updates the existing Fact Sheets focusing on seat belts with the latest seat belt wearing rates. The other focuses on the aim of the new Directive 2003/20/EC mandating of appropriate (UN-ECE standard) child restraint systems for all children traveling in passenger cars and light vans.



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