



## NEWS RELEASE

### Lithuanian Presidency makes road safety a priority

***1<sup>st</sup> of July 2013, Brussels*** – “We are in the unique situation where the two countries succeeding each other in holding the EU Presidency have been recognised for their respective efforts to improve road safety,” said Antonio Avenoso, ETSC<sup>1</sup> Executive Director.<sup>2</sup> ETSC can only hope the commitment and leadership which led to winning the 2011 Road Safety PIN Award<sup>3</sup> will also be present in the Lithuanian Presidency team’s handling of the important road safety dossiers coming up in the second half of 2013,” he added.

During the Lithuanian Presidency, the European Commission’s Directorate General for Mobility and Transport is due to publish the results of two studies examining the benefits of life-saving technologies. Due to be published during the autumn of 2013, the first of these investigates the possibility of making alcohol interlocks mandatory for certain road user groups or vehicle types across the EU. “Alcohol interlocks are becoming more widespread on our roads. We hope the EU Institutions will take into account the positive results in reducing the number of collisions from the countries routinely using interlocks and prioritise their use for repeat drink driving offenders and professional drivers,” said Mr. Avenoso.<sup>4</sup> Another study due for publication focuses on the safety benefits of speed limiters and ISA. Also undertaken by DG MOVE the study will include an evaluation of road safety effects of the application of the Speed Limitation Devices Directive (2002/85/EC). “ETSC has been tirelessly advocating for the roll-out of ISA due to its life-saving potential. We hope the DG MOVE study will recognise this potential and ISA will become a reality on EU roads in the immediate future,” said Mr. Avenoso.

The Lithuanian Presidency will finalise the negotiations for the approval of the roadworthiness package. ETSC considers the inclusion of powered two-wheel (PTW) vehicles a priority in these negotiations, particularly given the relatively higher risks faced by riders on EU roads: in 2009 PTWs accounted for 2% of the distance travelled but 17% of the number of road deaths. As technical failures for PTWs may have more severe consequences in the event of collisions than for cars, ETSC considers very important the harmonisation of the currently diverse patchwork of national systems related to roadworthiness requirements for PTWs.<sup>5</sup>

Today Croatia joins the EU. With 393 road deaths recorded in 2012, amounting to 90 deaths per million inhabitants, ETSC hopes joining the EU will catalyse the efforts of national policy-makers to improve safety on Croatian roads. Particularly given the significant reductions in road deaths which followed its own accession in 2004, the Lithuanian Presidency could provide a good opportunity for the newest Member State to take advantage of mechanisms to exchange good practices with the other countries in the EU.

## Background

The number of road deaths on Lithuanian roads has decreased by 57% since 2001, with the improvements picking up pace considerably since the country joined the EU in 2004. However, in the first two years of the 2011-2020 EU Road Safety target period, progress has stalled. In 2012, Lithuania had the highest rate of road mortality in the EU with 100 deaths per million inhabitants, compared with the average for the EU27 of 55 deaths per million inhabitants.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> ETSC is a Brussels-based independent non-profit making 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 national and international organisations concerned with transport safety from across Europe. [www.etsc.eu](http://www.etsc.eu)

<sup>2</sup> The full ETSC Memo to the Lithuanian Presidency of the EU is available here: [http://etsc.eu/documents/ETSC\\_Lithuanian\\_Presidency\\_Memo.pdf](http://etsc.eu/documents/ETSC_Lithuanian_Presidency_Memo.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> Lithuania was presented with ETSC's Road Safety PIN Award in 2011. More details are available here: [http://www.etsc.eu/documents/PIN\\_Lithuania\\_PR.pdf](http://www.etsc.eu/documents/PIN_Lithuania_PR.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Since 2007 ETSC has been running the "Safe and Sober Campaign" advocating the use of alcohol interlock devices. More details are available here: [http://www.etsc.eu/Young\\_and\\_novice\\_drivers\\_and\\_recidivist\\_drunk\\_drivers.php](http://www.etsc.eu/Young_and_novice_drivers_and_recidivist_drunk_drivers.php)

<sup>5</sup> The ETSC position on the roadworthiness package proposed by the European Commission is available here: [http://www.etsc.eu/documents/Roadworthiness%20Package\\_ETSC.pdf](http://www.etsc.eu/documents/Roadworthiness%20Package_ETSC.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> ETSC (2013) Back on track to reach the EU 2020 Road Safety Target? *7<sup>th</sup> Road Safety PIN Report* [http://etsc.eu/documents/PIN\\_Annual\\_report\\_2013\\_web.pdf](http://etsc.eu/documents/PIN_Annual_report_2013_web.pdf)