



## Pinning them down on their promise



EU Transport Ministers at the Informal Council on Road Safety, Bregenz/Austria 2006

With this first Road Safety PIN Flash, ETSC is launching a new series of publications linked to its new Road Safety Performance Index (PIN). This series will highlight the important differences between European countries in what level of road safety they afford their citizens. Each Flash will bring into the spotlight a specific field in road safety and compare countries' performances in this area. The best countries' experiences will be discussed in more detail.

Still, more than 41,000 people die every year from road crashes in the European Union. A large number of these crashes could be avoided and many lives saved had all countries effective policies in place to address this problem. This has not only been shown from research but is a reality today in the best performing European states.

The EU's decision makers have pledged to cut the number of yearly road deaths to no more than 25,000 in 2010. But a recent Commission review has shown that this target will not be reached unless efforts are stepped up. ETSC has set up a new policy instrument, the Road Safety Performance Index (PIN), to continue the monitoring and help Member States to speed up progress toward the target and beyond.

This first Flash presents in more detail the new Road Safety Performance Index (PIN). It also includes an interview with Fred Wegman, Managing Director of the Dutch Road Safety Institute and member of the PIN Steering Group, on monitoring road safety performance within and across countries.

## The "Road Safety PIN" in a nutshell

The European Transport Safety Council (ETSC) has launched a new policy instrument to help EU Member States in improving road safety. The Road Safety Performance Index (so-called "Road Safety PIN") will compare Member States' performance in promoting safe road user behaviour, infrastructure and vehicles, as well as sound and evidence-based policymaking. It receives financial support from Swedish Road Administration and Toyota Motor Europe.

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*"Every country involved in the delivery of the safe road transport system needs to compare itself on an international level - the national level will not be enough in the future."*

Claes Tingvall, Swedish Road Administration

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## Healthy competition

Ranking European countries' policies in relevant areas will help national policymakers to identify fields in which better progress is possible. It will help to identify best practice and create positive competition between countries to deliver a safer road transport system. This will be another element in building up the kind of political leadership that is needed to achieve lasting improvement in road safety.

### ... based on sound indicators

Comparisons will be made based on generally accepted road safety indicators including accident data and data related to road safety performance. Both types of data are causally related to road safety policies. Reductions in casualties are their final outcome, while improvements in road safety performance are an intermediate outcome of these policies (see Fig. 1 page 4).

### The expertise of 27 + 9

The Road Safety PIN is run by a Secretariat based at the ETSC. The Secretariat draws on the knowledge and experience of a Panel of 27 experts, including one from every EU Member State, Norway and Switzerland. The 27 Panelists support the Secretariat with collecting relevant data and disseminating the findings. They came together for the first time on 7 June 2006 following the official launch of the Road Safety PIN to discuss the proposed set of indicators to be covered in the first phase.

*"Road safety performance differs between Member States and between aspects of road safety within each Member State. Comparable performance indicators will help decision-makers by recognising achievement and identifying shortcomings."*

Richard Allsop, ETSC Board of Directors

Moreover, a Steering Group of nine persons ensures that any assessment carried out under the Road Safety Performance Index (PIN) is based on scientific evidence and effectively communicated to European road safety policymakers.

*"Through the Road Safety PIN we will be able to learn from each other faster than we could learn from our own experience."*

Urban Karlström, Swedish National Road and Transport Research Institute (VTI)

*"We need the Road Safety PIN to spur Member States on to making greater efforts. Cross-country comparison will make them better understand where their potentials are and help them find the right way to exploit them."*

Stefan Tostmann, European Commission

### PIN Panel

**Austria:** Klaus Machata, Road Safety Board (KfV)

**Belgium:** Patric Derweduwen, Belgium Road Safety Institute (BIVV/IBSR)

**Czech Republic:** Josef Mikulik, Transport Research Centre (CDV)

**Cyprus:** George Morfakis, Ministry of Communications

**Denmark:** René La Cour Sell, Danish Road Safety Council

**Estonia:** Dago Antov, Stratum Consultancy

**Finland:** Mika Hatakka, Central Organization for Traffic Safety

**France:** Jean Chapelon, Observatoire national interministériel de sécurité routière

**Germany:** Sabine Degener, German Insurance Institute for Traffic Engineering

**Greece:** George Yannis, Technical University of Athens

**Hungary:** Peter Holló, Institute for Transport Sciences (KTI)

**Ireland:** Alan Richardson, National Road Safety Council

**Italy:** Antonio Erario, Ministry of Transport

**Latvia:** Aldis Lama, Ministry of Transport

**Lithuania:** Vidmantas Pumputis, Ministry of Transport

**Luxembourg:** Guy Heintz, Ministry of Transport

**Malta:** Maria Attard, Malta Transport Authority

**Netherlands:** Pieter Van Vliet, Transport Research Centre (AVV)

**Norway:** Rune Elvik, Institute of Transport Economics (TOI)

**Poland:** Iona Buttler, Motor Transport Institute (ITS)

**Portugal:** Joao Cardoso, National Laboratory of Civil Engineering (LNEC)

**Slovakia:** Tatiana Mahrova, Ministry of Transport

**Slovenia:** Tomaz Pavcic, Ministry of Transport

**Spain:** Pilar Zori Bertolin, Ministry of Transport

**Sweden:** Fridtjof Thomas, National Road and Transport Research Institute (VTI)

**Switzerland:** Stefan Siegrist, (Swiss Council for Accident Prevention (bfu))

**U.K.:** Lucy Rackliff, University of Loughborough

## Flashes, reports, pins and talks

Cross-country comparisons will be published four times a year in the series of Road Safety PIN Flashes. In addition, the PIN Secretariat will publish an annual report that will be launched at an international conference. In conjunction with that event, ETSC will also award a Road Safety PIN award to a high level policymaker responsible for the best performing country's road safety policy.

Last but not least, ETSC and Toyota Motor Europe will organise national debates to discuss rel-

### Cooperation with other EU-funded initiatives

The Road Safety Performance Index (PIN) seeks to draw on data available from the individual countries as well as other European initiatives including

- CARE, the Community database comprising data on injury accidents from 15 EU countries.
- SARTRE, the subsequent surveys carried out with car drivers in up to 23 European countries on Social Attitudes to Road Traffic Risk in Europe,
- SUNflower and SUNflower +6, the comparative studies of road safety policies, programmes and performances in meanwhile 9 European countries,
- SafetyNet, the ongoing research project that aims to set up the structure for a European Road Safety Observatory.

Under SafetyNet, a specific Working Party has been set up to develop a set of safety performance indicators in seven areas: alcohol and drugs, speeds, protective systems, daytime running lights, vehicles (passive safety), roads and trauma management.

### PIN Steering Group

Richard Allsop, ETSC Board of Directors (Chair)  
 Urban Karlström, National Road and Transport Research Institute (VTI)  
 Stephen Stacey, Toyota Motor Europe  
 Pete Thomas, Loughborough University  
 Claes Tingvall, Swedish Road Administration (SRA)  
 Stefan Tostmann, European Commission  
 Fred Wegman, Dutch Road Safety Research Institute (SWOV)  
 Jörg Beckmann, ETSC  
 Franziska Achterberg, ETSC

evant findings face-to-face with key road safety policymakers in the countries.

### Official launch

The Road Safety Performance Index (PIN) was launched officially on 7 June 2006 in Brussels. This public event gathered around 100 road safety experts, who were eager to know more about this new instrument. Participants were very supportive. It was however stressed that the success would rely on sound data and their appropriate presentation. All documents related to the launch can be found on ETSC's website.

*"The PIN debates organised with the close cooperation of our national marketing and sales companies should bring road safety awareness and consciousness even more into the national debate."*

Stephen Stacey, Toyota Motor Europe

## The Dutch experience

### The quest of the pyramid...

The Netherlands are the best-performing EU country in road safety after Malta. Over the last two years, further reductions of 19% (2004) and 7% (2005) in road traffic deaths could be achieved. Fred Wegman, Managing Director of the Dutch Road Safety Institute and member of the PIN Steering Group, gives his view on the Road Safety PIN, the role of performance indicators and the experience made in the Netherlands in monitoring drivers' alcohol levels.

*ETSC: Mr Wegman, what do you expect from the Road Safety PIN? How do you see your role in the Steering Group?*

The Road Safety PIN will raise awareness and trigger discussion on European and national levels. Of course it is important that the rankings are based on credible information and that they are supported by the community. There are positive signs for this happening. Key to success will be how this information is communicated. It is important in this regard to also take the differences between countries into account. Our success will also rely on opportunities opening up and I am sure this will happen.

» The Road Safety PIN will raise awareness and trigger discussion on European and national levels.

*ETSC: You have said for a long time that it is important to monitor countries' performance not only on the basis of crash data but also on the basis of some characteristics of the normal traffic situation. Countries should monitor road user behaviour related to safety, such as seat belt use, drivers' alcohol levels, the level of speeding etc. Moreover, they should have an eye on the safety quality of their vehicle fleets and of their roads. This type of data has been termed 'safety performance indicators'. Why would countries collect such data? Can it be shown that monitoring on the basis of 'performance indicators' has an impact?*

Performance indicators are an important part of the road safety target hierarchy that we developed under the two SUNflower projects. They provide the link between the casualties from road crashes and the measures taken to reduce them. For example, the performance indicator

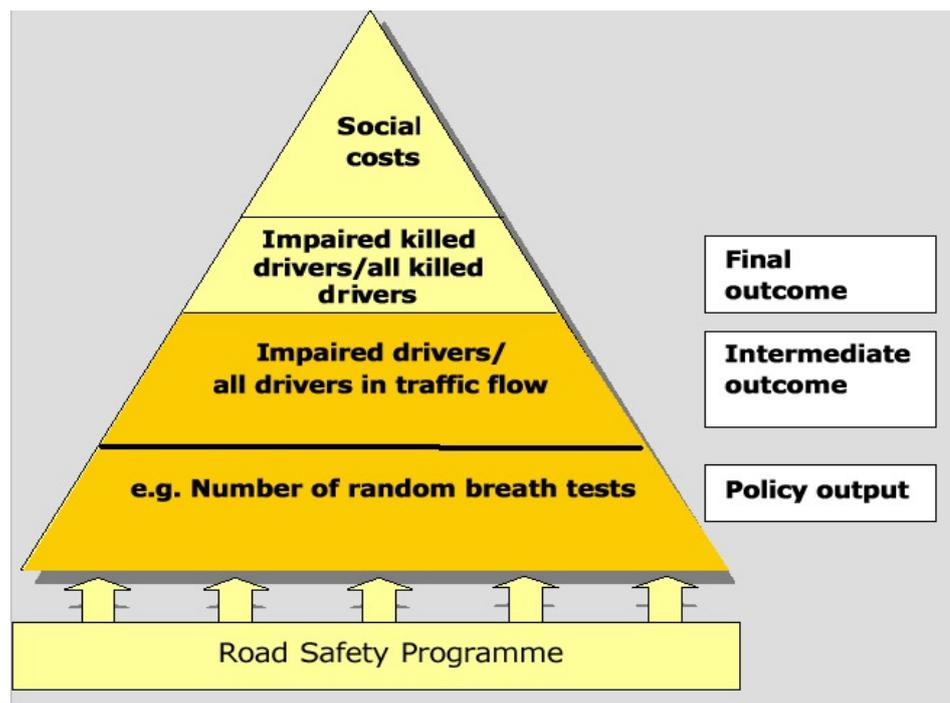


Fig. 1 Road safety target hierarchy for the area of drinkdriving, SUNflower +6

'proportion of drivers who are under the influence of alcohol' is clearly related to the number of drivers that are killed in alcohol-related crashes. It is also the outcome of countermeasures such as enforcement. The causal relationship between these three indicators is clearly shown in our pyramid, which helps to gain a better understanding of progress in road safety.

Performance indicators provide the link between the casualties and the measures to reduce them.

The pyramid works in two ways. Looking into the future you can think about ways to further reduce casualties. You can set policy targets based on expected outcome. The Netherlands, for example used to have a target of 3.5% of drivers over the legal BAC limit during weekend nights and this target has been reached. You can also set policy targets based on measures. One such target was to redesign 10,000 km of streets as 30km/h roads over a period of four years. This target has also been reached and the results are visible.

Looking back into the past you can analyse the reasons why progress has been made and whether it has been the result of policy interventions. This is what SWOV is now undertaking in relation to the very positive results of the last two years.

A road safety 'footprint' of a country or region, which is based on this hierarchy, gives us the full picture of its road safety performance. One figure or a ranking in a particular area is useful to trigger a debate but you need the whole spectrum as a basis for a structured discussion.

*ETSC: Are safety performance indicators then part of the dialogue between experts and policymakers, or should the public be involved in this?*

The debate normally takes place between the experts and policymakers. If this leads to new measures being proposed, the debate about the measures will then be carried out in public. In the Netherlands, we now have a national political debate on the introduction of an alcohollock programme for repeat offenders. The debate started after we presented to Parliament the results of our latest study on drink driving. This report shows that the overall number of drivers over the 0.5‰ BAC limit has decreased to no more than 2.8% but the number of heavily impaired drivers has not really gone down. Collecting and pub-

lishing performance data has an effect on formulating new strategies which must be supported by the public.

*ETSC: Can the SUNflower methodology also be useful for the European level? In what way can it be used to inform the EU road safety policy?*

I believe that all EU countries should follow the SUNflower methodology. It should become a standard in Europe. What we see now is that all EU countries have subscribed to the 50% target but their programmes are not necessarily designed to hit this target and progress is not monitored properly. Our methodology can assist both in planning and in monitoring progress. It should also be applied to the EU as a whole. The Dutch Government has estimated that international developments including EU action could reduce the number of fatalities by an additional 200 between 1998 and 2020. I would invite the EU to give the countries an indication of what exactly the contribution of EU action will be in the individual Member States. By the way, this would also encourage the countries to support EU action and make it happen.

Collecting and publishing performance data has an effect on formulating new strategies.

The SUNflower methodology is however not yet fully operational. We want to make it a standard in Europe but this still needs some further research and discussion with researchers and policymakers.

*ETSC: It has also been evident in the SUNflower+6 that not all countries dispose of good quality data to enable a full 'footprint' to be established. How do you deal with this? Can you still establish a 'footprint'?*

As a first step, we have to use what is available. The second step is to trigger better data collection. This is where I also see a role for the Road Safety PIN.



Mr Wegman is the Managing Director of the SWOV, the Dutch Road Safety Institute, since April 1999. Before taking this post, he used to be SWOV's Research Director.



European Transport Safety Council

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ETSC is grateful for the financial support provided for the Road Safety Performance Index (PIN) provided by Toyota Motor Europe and the Swedish Road Administration. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of ETSC and do not necessarily reflect the views of sponsors or the organisations to which the PIN Panel members belong.