NEWS RELEASE

Ireland Enters Top 10 EU Road Safety Rating

***18 April 2008, Dublin* - According to provisional figures released by the European Commission[1], Ireland entered the top 10 best performing EU countries in terms of road safety in 2007. Ireland is now ranked 9th place out of 27 EU countries[2].**

The figures were presented at a European Road Safety conference (PIN Talk) organised jointly by the European Transport Safety Council (ETSC) and the Road Safety Authority (RSA) in Dublin, today, Friday 18th April. The event was sponsored by Toyota Ireland.

This represents a move of seven places up the safety rankings on Ireland's position in 2005, when the country was ranked sixteenth.

Commenting on the figures Mr. Noel Brett, Chief Executive, RSA said that: "*Ireland is now ranked the second most improved European country in terms of the reduction in road deaths between 2006 and 2007. Contributing to this improvement was a 15 per cent decrease in road deaths between 2005 and 2007. Contributing to this improvement was a 15 per cent decrease in road deaths between 2005 and 2007*."

He added that "*Ireland's efforts to reduce roads deaths over this period were in contrast to an overall disappointing performance at EU level when for the first time in a number of years there was no reduction in the number of road deaths across the EU*."

Speaking at the PIN Talk, Mr. Noel Dempsey, Minister for Transport, said that much had been achieved in terms of reducing deaths on our roads. "*In 2001, the fatality rate per million population in Ireland was 107. By 2007, the rate had fallen to 79 per million population. This is below the average EU fatality rate of 86 in 2007 and places Ireland in the top 10 best performing EU countries*."

"*We have made some good progress in reducing road deaths in recent years but we must never become complacent. Every death on our roads is tragic and avoidable. The core objective of the Government's Road Safety Strategy 2007-2012 is to save over 400 lives between now and 2012[3]. This target is achievable if the current rate of reduction in road casualties is maintained. We will continue to work hard on making our roads safer*." Minister Dempsey said.

The Road Safety PIN programme is run by the European Transport Safety Council (ETSC)[4]. By comparing Member States' performance, the Road Safety PIN aims to identify and promote best practice in Europe and to bring

about the kind of leadership that is needed to create what citizens deserve - a road transport system that offers a maximum of safety.

Graziella Jost, PIN Programme Manager at ETSC, said: "*Ireland's outstanding achievement is encouraging for road safety organisations all over Europe. The next steps are to lower the BAC limit and implement the Safety Camera Network as early as possible in an effort to sustain similar progress in 2008*."

The PIN Talk, which was sponsored by Toyota Ireland, included presentations from ETSC and the Road Safety Authority. It also included a debate on what Ireland should be doing to drive the fight against drink driving in Europe.

Mr Jim Cusack, Deputy Managing Director, Toyota Ireland, said that Toyota welcomed the opportunity to work with the national and European agencies in reducing deaths and injuries on European roads.

"*Toyota is committed to developing vehicles with new safety technology which makes driving safer thereby contributing to saving lives throughout the world. However, we believe that Toyota, along with other motor manufacturers have a role to play in engaging with stakeholders on road safety to reduce the number of fatalities on our roads. I believe that this conference helped all of us in attendance to focus on the challenges ahead. All of us in Toyota are proud to be associated with this PIN*," he said.

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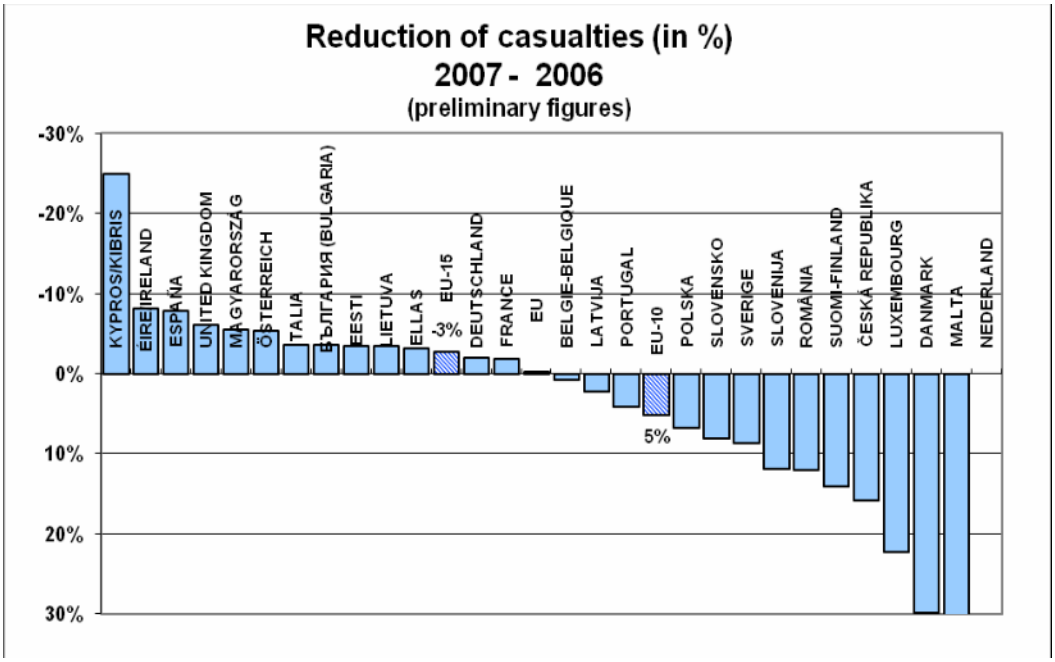
Notes to Editors:

(1) Table 1. Percentage change in the number of killed and injured person based on the provisional figures for 2007 compared to 2006.
Source: Quick indicator, CARE (EU Road Accident Database)
http://ec.europa.eu/transport/roadsafety/road_safety_observatory/trends_en.htm

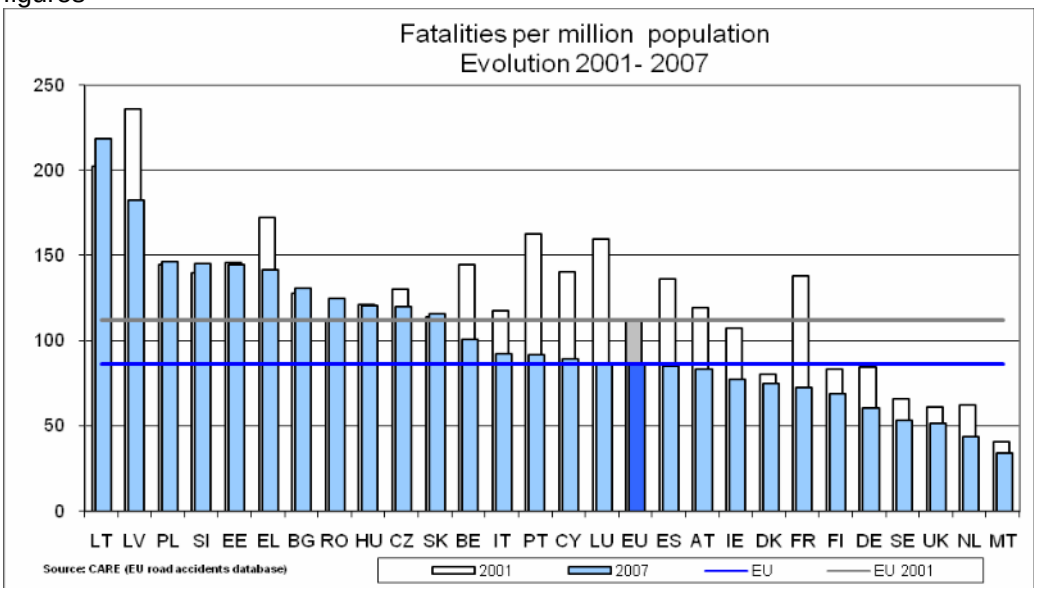
		% reduction between 2007/2006
Countries	months of data available	Killed people
Belgium	12	1%
Bulgaria	12	-4%
Czech Republic	12	16%
Denmark	12	30%
Germany	12	-2%
Estonia	12	-3%

Ireland	12	-8%
Greece	12	-3%
Spain	12	-8%
France	12	-2%
Italy	12	-4%
Cyprus	3	-25%
Latvia	12	2%
Lithuania	12	-3%
Luxembourg	7	22%
Hungary	12	-6%
Malta	12	40%
The Netherlands	0	-
Austria	12	-5%
Poland	12	7%
Portugal	12	4%
Romania	9	12%
Slovenia	12	11%
Slovakia	12	8%
Finland	12	14%
Sweden	12	9%
United Kingdom	9	-6%
Estimation EU 27		**-0.2%**

Fig. 1: Trends in % change between 2007 and 2006 (based on 2007 preliminary figures)



(2) Deaths per million population. Evolution 2001-2007 based on 2007 preliminary figures



(3) Road Safety Strategy 2007 – 2012
http://www.rsa.ie/NEWS/upload/File/822_RSA_Strategy_ENG.pdf

(4) The Road Safety Performance Index (PIN) Programme was launched in June 2006 to compare road safety performances of 27 European countries. It currently includes 30 countries. www.etsc.be/PIN

(5) 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 39 national and international organisations concerned with transport safety from across Europe. www.etsc.be.