

NEWS RELEASE

Road Safety in Hungary: State of Play and Looking Forward

29 June 2011, Budapest – “We congratulate the Hungarian Presidency of the EU for its hard work on the Cross-Border Enforcement Directive dossier, an important piece of road safety legislation,” said Antonio Avenoso, ETSC¹ Executive Director during the PIN² Talk held in Hungary. Discussions during the latest in the series of PIN Talks focused on the road safety record of the Hungarian Presidency of the EU, as well as placing Hungary in the EU road safety context³. International road safety experts also participated to present good practice examples that could be adapted to the Hungarian context⁴.

The PIN Talk was opened by Zoltán Schváb, Deputy State Secretary for Transport, Ministry of National Development, who gave a final account of the Hungarian EU Presidency achievements in road safety. “The Hungarian Presidency brokered agreements on priority dossiers such as the Cross Border Enforcement and the Eurovignette Directives. During our last Transport Council meeting we also endorsed the EC White Paper’s ultimate goal of zero deaths on the roads.” Mr. Schváb also welcomed the progress in reducing deaths on Hungarian roads. “With a 40% reduction in road deaths between 2001 and 2010, we achieved our national target of 30%, which was less ambitious than the EU target of 50%. Hungary certainly benefited from ETSC PIN Programme and we are closely monitoring performance indicators, in particular on the three main killers. Our progress was achieved through the implementation of a number of important legislative changes. Safety cameras were installed and their numbers are increasing, owner liability was introduced and the demerit point system was strengthened for most offences. as well as a zero tolerance for drink driving: driving licences are withdrawn on the spot by the police if you are caught. Advertisement and billboards were removed from roadsides.”

The progress of Hungary in reducing the number of road deaths since 2001 was put in the EU perspective by Graziella Jost, ETSC Programme Director: “Hungary has made good progress in reducing the number of road deaths, but it is very important to adopt and adapt practices that have been proven successful elsewhere to continue the positive trend. Young and novice drivers represent a target group with particular needs, and which face particular challenges. They must also be targeted with specific policies.”

The PIN Talk also served as a forum for good practice exchange, as Klaus Machata, of the Austrian Road Safety Board (KFV), presented the Austrian specific policies geared towards young and novice road users. These included graduated licensing for learners of car, motorcycle and moped driving, coupled with tighter alcohol limits and sanctions and accompanied driver schemes. Deaths among young male drivers dropped by 30% after the introduction in 2003 of driver improvement courses as part of the second phase of the driver training, consisting of a group discussion on the perception of road risks led by a trained psychologist. “The EU Driving licence Directive will enter into force in 2012 allowing 16 year-old to ride a motorcycle up to 125cc. We are anticipating this legislative change by providing extra training to driving instructors. We invite the Hungarian government to implement targeted measures dedicated to moped riding learners to avoid an increase in deaths among this vulnerable age group,” said Klaus Machata.

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

² The Road Safety Performance Index (PIN) Programme was launched in June 2006 to compare country road safety performances. It currently includes the 27 countries of the EU, as well as Israel, Norway and Switzerland. www.etsc.eu/PIN

³ Deaths in Hungary decreased by 40% between 2001 and 2010, compared with 43% for the EU27. See ETSC 5th PIN Report (2011): *Road Safety 2010 Target Outcome: 100,000 fewer deaths since 2001*. www.etsc.eu/PIN-publications.php

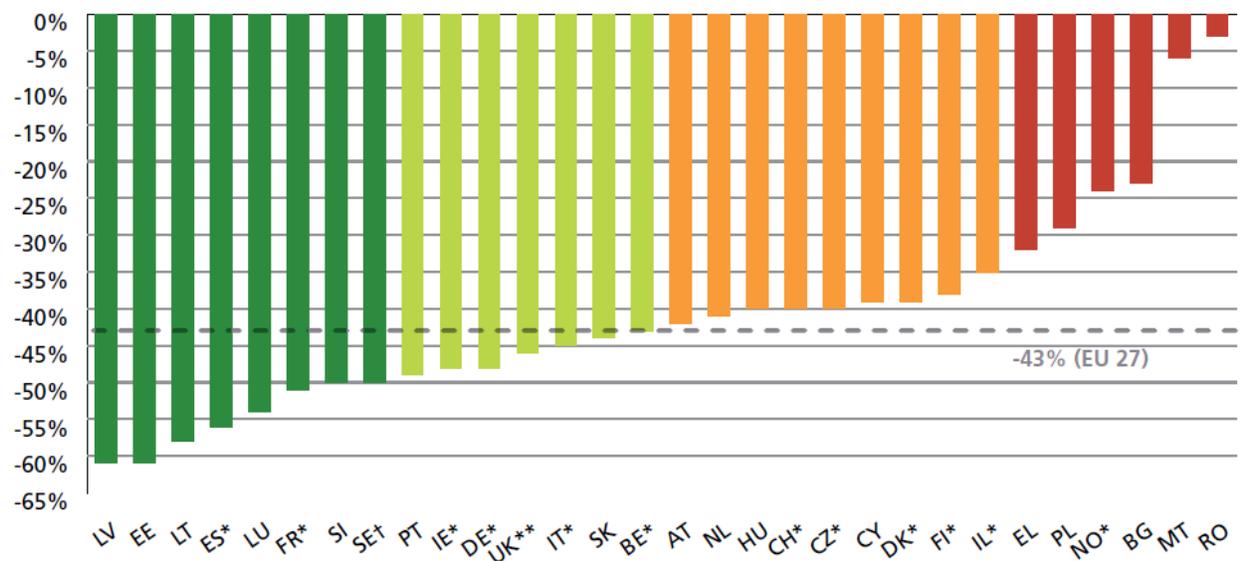


Fig. 1: Percentage change in road deaths between 2001 and 2010

* Provisional estimates were used for 2010 as final figures for 2010 were not yet available at the time of going to print. **UK 2010: ETSC estimate for the UK based on EC CARE Quick Indicator. †Sweden 2010: the definition of road deaths has changed and suicides are now excluded. The time series was adjusted so that figures for previous years exclude suicides as well.

⁴ Power point presentations held at the PIN Talk are available at www.etsc.eu/PIN-events.php.