



NEWS RELEASE

***En route* to a European strategy for serious injuries on the roads**

19 March 2013, Brussels – “ETSC commends the European Commission for announcing a common definition of serious injuries in road traffic collisions. We are hopeful the Commission will build on this important step with a strategy including a target and concrete actions for follow-up and monitoring of Member States’ progress,” said Antonio Avenoso, ETSC¹ Executive Director, upon the announcement made today by Siim Kallas, Commissioner for Transport.

Commissioner Kallas² also released the provisional number of road deaths recorded in the EU in 2012. “2012 was a landmark year with the lowest number of road deaths since we started counting,” he said as he announced a 9% reduction in the number of road deaths compared with the corresponding figure for 2011. He noted that for every road death there is an estimated number of ten serious injuries, which carry “huge economic costs.”

“A common EU-wide definition for road traffic serious injuries will greatly enhance the comparability of national developments in this area, which will come to complement actions taken to reduce the number of road deaths. We hope that Member States will be able to adapt their data collection and reporting procedures in order to provide high-quality data in accordance with the common [serious injury] definition as soon as possible,” said Mr. Avenoso.

“The common definition is the first step in tackling the unacceptably high number of serious injuries on EU roads. We know that speed, alcohol and drugs and failure to wear a seatbelt are the three main killers on the roads. But these risk factors do not only kill, they also injure, impair and maim,” Mr. Avenoso said. “Furthermore, progress in reducing serious injuries on the roads – as reported according to the current definition in each Member State – has been slower than the corresponding figure for road deaths,” he added.³

“The EU target for reducing the number of road deaths served as a strong catalyst for progress. Moreover, in their responses to the 2010 Road Safety Policy Orientations, both the Council of Ministers⁴ and the European Parliament⁵ called for a target on serious injuries. We strongly believe the European Commission must come forward with an EU reduction target for serious injuries. A 35% reduction in the number of road traffic serious injuries over the period 2014-2020⁶ would be both challenging and achievable for the Member States,” concluded Mr. Avenoso.

A high-level conference addressing serious injuries will be held on the 28th of March in Dublin, under the auspices of the Irish Presidency of the European Union.⁷

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Notes to editors:

¹ ETSC is a Brussels-based 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 independent non-profit making national and international organisations concerned with transport safety from across Europe. www.etsc.eu

² For more information please check http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/kallas/headlines/news/2013/03/road-safety_en.htm

³ 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, the Republic of Serbia and Switzerland. The Road Safety Performance Index (PIN) receives financial support from the Volvo Group, Volvo Trucks, the Swedish Transport Administration, the Norwegian Public Roads Administration and Toyota Motor Europe. www.etsc.eu/PIN. For the latest comparison of progress in reducing road deaths and serious injuries, please see the 6th Road Safety PIN Report http://www.etsc.eu/documents/PIN_Report_6_web.pdf

⁴ Council conclusions on road safety, 3052th Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council meeting, Brussels, 2–3 December 2010.

⁵ European Parliament resolution of 27 September 2011: European road safety 2011-2020, 2010/2235(INI).

⁶ 2014 is the projected year for which Member States would report using the common definition of serious injuries as MAIS 3+.

⁷ More information is available at <http://eu2013.ie/events/>