

NEWS RELEASE

Brussels and Athens, 15 November 2006

First Road Safety PIN⁽¹⁾ Talk held in Athens today

Greece faces an enormous challenge to improve road safety over the next years. In 2005, **1614** people died on the Greek roads. Although the number of road deaths decreased slightly between 2001 and 2005 (-14.5%), Greece ranks the **3rd worst country** of the EU-25 and the worst of the EU-15 in terms of road deaths per million of inhabitants in 2005⁽²⁾. There is thus no time to lose to adopt concrete measures if the national target of a 50% reduction in road deaths by 2010 is to be met.

Following the discussions held at the first Road Safety PIN Talk with Greek distinguished experts and road safety actors, the European Transport Safety Council⁽³⁾ and Road Safety Institute Panos Mylonas⁽⁴⁾ recommend the national authorities to take action in the domains of:

General road safety policy

- Improve the coordination of work among the different road safety actors
- Collect and analyse safety restraint wearing rates, speed compliance data and alcohol consumption in injury accidents to better plan safety-targeted measures and enforcement actions
- Conduct regular evaluations of road safety measures

Behaviour:

- Improve driver compliance with speed and drink driving safety laws through better enforcement, education, awareness campaigns and infrastructure safety measures
- Improve seat belt wearing / conduct "blitz" campaigns of 1-4 weeks several times a year
- Better protect vulnerable road users / enforce helmet usage by motorcyclists and moped drivers
- Organise frequent nationwide campaigns on speed, drink driving and seat belt wearing linked to enforcement

Infrastructure:

- Implement international best practice for the maintenance of the existing road network
- Implement the recommendations to be identified to treat high risk sites.

"Greek road safety policy has been characterised so far by fragmented isolated initiatives. The remarkable success of the 'Olympic Games Interministerial Committee' should inspire the government to set up a 'Road Safety Interministerial Committee' under the responsibility of the Prime Minister." stated Prof. George Kanellaidis from the National Technical University of Athens.

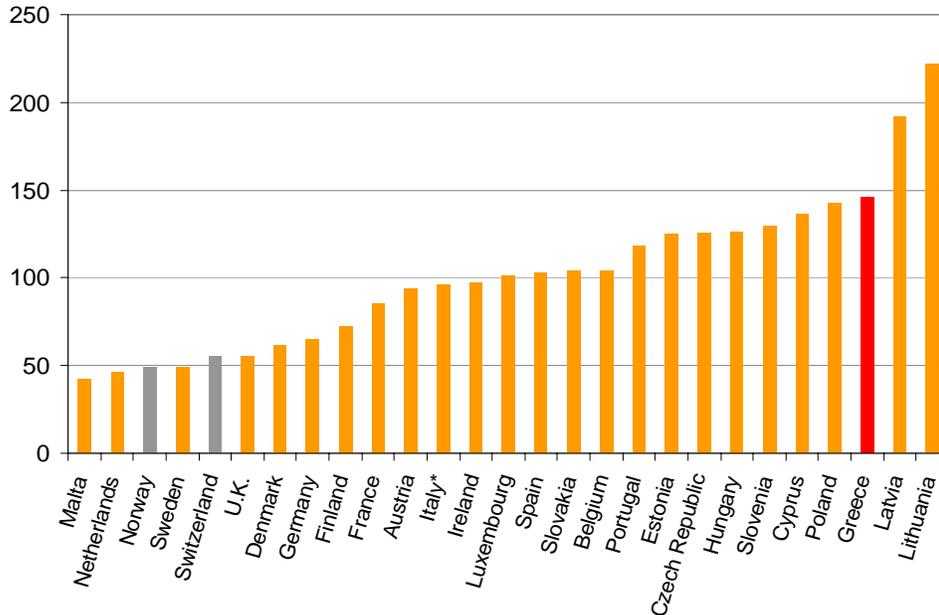
"Greek politicians should stop pretending and start as soon as possible to offer a safer road environment to their citizens. It is a question of national pride." Joerg Beckmann, ETSC Executive Director said.

For more information contact PIN Programme Officer Graziella Jost at graziella.jost@etsc.be or RSIPM President Danelli Vassiliki Mylonas vasdan@ote.gr

Notes to Editors:

(1) The Road Safety Performance Index (PIN) was set up in June 2006 to compare Member States' performance in all areas of road safety. It receives financial support from Swedish Road Administration and Toyota Motor Europe. The PIN Talk in Greece was kindly supported by Toyota Hellas. See www.etsc.be/PIN.

(2) Road deaths 2005 (per million population). Source: Eurostat, national data



(3) The European Transport Safety Council (ETSC) is a Brussels-based non-profit making organisation dedicated to the reduction of transport crashes and casualties in Europe. ETSC seeks to identify and promote effective measures on the basis of international scientific research and best practice. It brings together 35 organisations concerned with transport safety from across Europe.

(4) The Road Safety Institute Panos Mylonas (RSI Panos Mylonas) is a non-profit organisation dedicated to the prevention and reduction of traffic accidents in Greece. The RSI Panos Mylonas brings together academic institutions, public organizations and private companies concerned with transport safety in Greece in collaboration with national and international organisations.