



## PRESS NOTICE

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**The EU target of 50% road traffic fatality reduction will not be achieved unless the EU takes additional actions.**

This is the main message of a report written by 11 of ETSC's independent experts and published today.

Matthijs Koornstra, Chairman of ETSC's Transport Accident Statistics Working Party said: "The almost 39,000 road deaths annually comprise over 97 per cent of all transport deaths and road crashes are the leading cause of death for EU citizens under 50 years. Currently, 93 per cent of all transport crash costs are from road transport and exceed the costs of congestion, pollution, cancer or coronary heart disease in the EU. The EU target of 50% road traffic fatality reduction between 2000 and 2010 to about 20,000 fatalities in 2010 will not be achieved unless the EU takes additional actions that reduce the fatality risk more rapidly than in the past".

The new ETSC review on "Transport safety performance in the EU" compiled by road safety experts from across the EU presents new information and estimates concerning the risk of death and injury in travel in the European Union. The key findings are:

- Road transport has, by far, the highest overall risk level when measured by distance traveled. Rail and air travel are the safest modes per kilometre traveled, followed closely by bus and coach transport. The risks associated with ferry travel fluctuate but the expected fatality risk is 4 to 8 times that of train travel.
- The fatality risk in EU road transport is 40 times higher than for all employment activity and 12 times higher than for home activity.
- Within the road mode car travel is 10 times less safe than bus travel. Motorcycle or moped travel death risk is almost 20 times higher than for car travel. Cycling and walking have on average a 7 to 9 times higher fatality risk than car travel.
- The southern EU countries, France, and Belgium have road fatality risks above the average for the EU, and risks in the other EU countries are below-average.
- The average fatality risk of the 10 accession countries is about 3 times higher than the EU average.

Dr. Jörg Beckmann, ETSC Executive Director said: "There are large differences in the risks associated with different travel modes. Reducing the risks associated with road travel in the EU needs to be at the top of the health and transport agenda at national and at international level."

A summary of recommendations from the ETSC report *Transport safety performance in the EU* is given overleaf. The Executive Summary and the report are available on ETSC's website [www.etsc.be](http://www.etsc.be).

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## **SUMMARY OF ETSC RECOMMENDATIONS ON TRANSPORT SAFETY PERFORMANCE IN THE EU.**

1. Road safety needs more priority in the transport policies of EU Member States and the EU, because 97% of all transport fatalities in the EU are caused by road transport. Road transport accounts for 88% of all passenger transport in the EU, but accounts for over 100-times more deaths than all other modes together.
2. It is recommended that national and EU health policies recognise the relatively high mortality and injury incidence rates for road traffic.
3. The EU target of 50% road traffic fatality reduction between 2000 and 2010 to about 20,000 fatalities in 2010 will not be achieved unless the EU takes additional actions that reduce the fatality risk more rapidly than in the past. Therefore, it is recommended that further actions within the competence of the EU itself (mainly vehicle safety regulations) are taken and that a EU road safety subsidy fund is created for financial incentives that support and trigger national road safety actions and measures with a proven effectiveness.
4. Priority setting for transport safety must recognise the very high fatality risk of motorised two-wheelers (15 times the average road risk per kilometre travelled).
5. It is recommended that the safety of pedestrians and cyclists be improved, because their fatality risks per kilometre are 7 to 9 times higher than for car travel.
6. Passenger transport policies of the EU and its countries should promote the use of (high speed) trains in long distance trips, because the fatality risk of air travel for ground distances of less than 600 kilometres is higher than for trains.
7. Intermodal passenger transport policies have to recognise that large differences exist between the risks of travel modes. The safety of walking and cycling needs also to be improved in order to optimise the safety of public transport, due to the high risk of the necessary walking and/or cycling in the 'before and after' phases of these trips.
8. Initiatives to improve the recording of road travel volumes and fatalities are being undertaken by the EU, but progress is lacking for rail travel in the EU, travel on EU waters and inland waterways of the EU, and air travel by unscheduled flights and private planes within the EU. Moreover, serious injury risks for different travel modes are hard to assess because the necessary incident and exposure data are defined differently and not consistently gathered. It is recommended that research and development as well as reporting harmonisation on these matters be initiated by the EU.

Similar recommendations (except the third) were formulated in 1999 in the ETSC Report on "Exposure data for travel risk assessment", but it is disappointing that they have had so little effect. In view of the EU road traffic fatality reduction target that has been set and the urgency of taking action to achieve the target, the recommendations need to be implemented soon.