

## Traffic Law Enforcement Centre Stage at the European Road Safety Days

*Embargoed*

**14<sup>th</sup> October 2010, Brussels.** Experts and EU decision makers meet today in Brussels to discuss traffic law enforcement to save lives on Europe's roads. The European Transport Safety Council (ETSC)<sup>(1)</sup> will be amongst the speakers who will be devoting today to discuss the need to improve and strengthen EU co-operation as part of the European Road Safety Days<sup>(2)</sup> organised by the European Commission, in close collaboration with the Belgian EU-Presidency. During this conference, a 'European Road Safety Village' will be set up with the objective of presenting initiatives taken at Member State level, in prevention and traffic law enforcement. Road Traffic Police from different EU Member States and part of the TISPOL<sup>(3)</sup> traffic police network will be explaining and demonstrating their important role in saving lives on Europe's roads.

Road traffic law enforcement is a means to prevent collisions from happening by way of persuading drivers to comply with the safety rules. It is based on giving drivers the feeling that they run too high a risk of being caught when breaking the rules. Effective enforcement leads to a rapid reduction in deaths and injuries. Moreover, sustained intensive enforcement that is well explained and publicised also has a long-lasting effect on driver behaviour. A total of 35,000 lives were tragically lost on European roads in 2009. According to the ETSC's Road Safety PIN Report 2010 more than 2,200 road deaths could be prevented each year if average speeds dropped by 'only' 1km/h on all roads across the EU<sup>(4)</sup>.

A new EU Directive<sup>(5)</sup> which aims to "facilitate cross-border enforcement in the field of road safety" is currently high on the political agenda of the EU. The Directive should set up a new system enabling the follow up across borders of four key road safety offences namely speeding, drink and drug driving, non use of seat belts and running a red light. Both the European Commission and the Belgian EU Presidency are keen to make headway in finding political agreement soon. This legislation is a dire necessity at the time of growing non-resident traffic, widening national automated safety camera networks and complex cross border problems posed by offenders, which current bi-lateral and multilateral cooperation agreements are often unable to deal with. It is hoped that agreement on this Directive will bring an end to impunity and discrimination and ensure equal treatment of citizens across the EU<sup>(6)</sup>.

Enforcement also receives strong support of EU public opinion. The results of the recent Eurobarometer<sup>(7)</sup> show that the majority of citizens polled would like to see more action on drink driving and speeding and enforcement including enforcement of non-residents as a matter of priority. The European Commission included enforcement as one of its seven priority objectives in its new "EU Road Safety Policy Orientations"<sup>(8)</sup> with the clear commitment to set up a common road safety enforcement strategy.

Speaking today at the Road Safety Days, ETSC's Executive Director Antonio Avenoso stressed: *"The future of police co-operation across the borders and the safety of Europe's citizens depend on the Cross Border Directive to close the current gap of road safety and equal treatment. The discussions today will be an excellent opportunity to take this work forward and look at how traffic law enforcement will contribute to the EU's new road safety target to reduce by 50% road traffic deaths in the EU by 2020."*

## Notes to the Editor

(1) The European Transport Safety Council (ETSC) is a Brussels-based independent nonprofit 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 43 national and international organisations concerned with transport safety from across Europe. [www.etsc.eu](http://www.etsc.eu)

(2) [http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road\\_safety/events-archive/2010\\_10\\_13-14\\_ersd\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/events-archive/2010_10_13-14_ersd_en.htm)

(3) <https://www.tispol.org/>

(4) ETSC (2010), 4<sup>th</sup> Road Safety PIN Report, Chapter 3: Tackling the three main killers on the roads, [www.etsc.eu/documents/ETSC PIN Report 2010.pdf](http://www.etsc.eu/documents/ETSC_PIN_Report_2010.pdf)

(5) European Commission Directive Proposal on Cross Border Enforcement  
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2008:0151:FIN:EN:PDF>

(6) ETSC's Position on the Cross Border Enforcement Directive  
[http://www.etsc.eu/documents/ETSC Position on the CBE Directive September 2010.pdf](http://www.etsc.eu/documents/ETSC_Position_on_the_CBE_Directive_September_2010.pdf)

(7) Eurobarometer Road Safety, July 2010  
[http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/flash/fl\\_301\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_301_en.pdf)

(8) EU Road Safety Policy Orientations 2011-2020  
[http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road\\_safety/pdf/com\\_20072010\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/pdf/com_20072010_en.pdf)