



European Transport Safety Council

NEWS RELEASE

Ambitious target, weak programme EU Road Safety Programme 2011-2020

20 July 2010, Brussels - ETSC⁽¹⁾ welcomes the adoption of a new EU target to reduce road deaths by 50% by 2020. The goal is ambitious but the measures announced by the European Commission call seriously into question the chances of reaching it⁽²⁾.

ETSC congratulates the European Commission for the new emphasis on serious injuries while stressing the urgency to come forward with a common definition and, in the meantime, measure progress in terms of existing definitions.⁽³⁾ ETSC welcomes the renewed effort on enforcement and the proposal to set national implementation plans for enforcement⁽⁴⁾. Other Member States will benefit in this way from the experience of fast progressing countries that have proved that effective enforcement leads to a rapid reduction in deaths and injuries⁽⁵⁾. Moreover ETSC is pleased to see the Commission's renewed engagement on the Cross Border Enforcement Directive placed back on the Council agenda by the Belgian EU Presidency. Some of ETSC's other longstanding recommendations have also been included such as conditionality of EU transport infrastructure funding meeting safety standards.

The road safety community, however, had hoped for a new EU 10-year strategy providing a detailed road map against which performance could be measured and delivery made accountable. Like the European Commission, ETSC recognises the important responsibilities of road users but believes that it is just as important for the traffic system to be adapted to their needs, errors and vulnerability. Many of the legislative actions listed in the EC memo are dossiers that are already in the pipeline. Emerging concerns - such as drugs, mobile phone use, fatigue and distraction, to name but a few - warrant a strong EU response. Work-related road safety, another emerging field of action, is not mentioned at all.

While the Commission recognises that speeding, drink driving and the non-use of seat belts are still the three main killers on the roads, it fails to prioritise the most effective measures to tackle them. The Commission misses some easy wins such as extending existing legislation on mandating Seat Belt Reminders to every seat. Developing harmonised standards for Intelligent Speed Assistance systems towards eventual fitment in all vehicles, supported by EU-wide digital mapping of speed limits, would also help both to curb speeds and to reduce harmful CO2 emissions⁽⁶⁾. Whilst alcolocks are included as an action for professional drivers and recidivists, the EC should also have proposed to adopt a 0.2g/l BAC limit for novice and commercial drivers. Finally, although there is a package of measures to improve the safety of motorcyclists, little is proposed⁽⁷⁾ to protect pedestrians and cyclists⁽⁷⁾.

"To achieve the 50% reduction target in 2020 the EU will inevitably have to go above and beyond current reduction trends. If the EU wants to reach its 2020 target and to maintain and build on its reputation as a world leader for road safety, this Programme needs to be reinforced and translated urgently into determined action". Antonio Avenoso, ETSC Executive Director

For more information please contact ETSC Policy Director Ellen Townsend, ellen.townsend@etsc.eu or ETSC Executive Director Antonio Avenoso, antonio.avenoso@etsc.eu, +32 (0)2 230.41.06.

Notes to Editors:

- (1) The European Transport Safety Council (ETSC) is a Brussels-based independent non-profit 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
- (2) This is ETSC's response to the Memo 10/10/343 published by the European Commission on 20 July 2010
<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/10/343&format=HTML&aged=0&language=en&guiLanguage=en>
ETSC will prepare a longer response to the EC Communication by the end of the summer.
- (3) ETSC (2008), Road Safety as a Right and Responsibility for All, A Blueprint for the EU's 4th Road Safety Action Programme and Addendum, www.etsc.eu/blueprint-4th-road-safety-action-programme.php
ETSC's Blueprint included a recommendation that Member States should aim for a reduction of 20% of serious injuries between 2010 and 2020. However, new evidence published in the PIN Flash 15 in November 2009 showed that serious injuries decreased at almost the same pace as road deaths between 2001 and 2008. ETSC has revised its recommendation as it recognises that a 20% reduction target would not be challenging enough. The reduction target for serious injuries should be at least the same than the reduction target for road deaths if we want to sustain progress in reducing serious injuries. Because of current differences among Member States in definitions and recording of those seriously injured, ETSC advocates that:
 - Each Member State should aim to reduce serious injuries according to its own definition by at least 40% between 2010 and 2020, while
 - Concurrently a workable common definition of and procedure for recording serious injury is developed and brought to implementation across the EU as one of the central objectives for the Road Safety Action Programme 2011-2020.
- (4) This builds on the EC Recommendation on Enforcement in the field of Road Safety
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2004:111:0075:0082:EN:PDF>
- (5) ETSC 4th PIN Report (2010), *Road Safety Target in Sight: Making up for lost time.*
www.etsc.eu/PIN-publications.php
- (6) Intelligent Speed Adaptation (ISA) is the general term for advanced systems in which the vehicle "knows" the speed limit for any given location and is capable of using that information to give feedback to the driver or directly limit the vehicle speed. See Presentation by Oliver Carsten www.shlow.eu/documents/ShLOW_conference_Oliver_Carsten.pdf showing the estimated risk reduction by type of ISA.
- (7) CARE (EU road accidents database).
http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/pdf/statistics/2008_transport_mode.pdf