

**Summary of ETSC's Transport Safety Lunch**  
**Target Setting for Road Safety in the EU**  
**Brussels, January 14<sup>th</sup> 2010**

More than a hundred EU road safety experts and stakeholders met on January 14<sup>th</sup> 2010 at the ETSC's Transport Safety Lunch to discuss new 2020 targets. The European Commission is expected to publish its 4<sup>th</sup> Road Safety Action Programme (RSAP) this spring. There has been a 28% reduction in European road deaths between 2001 and 2008. If current trends continue road deaths are likely to have fallen by a third by 2010. ETSC stresses that the adoption in 2001 of the EU target for 2010 has been essential in reducing the number of deaths. The opportunity to further reduce this number by 2020 should not be missed.

Ms. Inés Ayala Sénder, Member of the European Parliament and its Transport Committee, welcomed the participants. Like some of them, she had just attended the hearing of Commissioner-Designate for Transport, Siim Kallas, who had stated he would put transport safety at the top of his future agenda. Ms. Ayala Sénder stressed that we should all join efforts to improve road safety. Murray Mackay, ETSC Board Member, introduced the speakers.

**Professor Richard Allsop, ETSC Board Member**

Professor Allsop presented the ETSC proposal for targets to reduce road deaths and, for the first time, serious injuries by at least 40% in the EU between 2010 and 2020. The challenging but achievable targets for reducing road deaths and serious injuries by 2020 are based on expert analyses of past trends in numbers of deaths and serious injuries as well as estimated capacity for further improvement. He stressed that ETSC was deeply concerned that the human consequences for those most seriously long term disabled by injury on the roads could be as great as or even greater than the consequences of death and bereavement. Professor Allsop also set out the reasons why target setting was a vital part of improving road safety. ETSC advocated that the Road Safety Action Programme 2011-2020 should set challenging but achievable quantified targets for reduction of road deaths and injuries across the EU as a whole in order to provide a challenging context for national target-setting which would keep the expectations of casualty reduction high where they are already high, and raise these expectations where they are lower. ETSC's Blueprint for a 4<sup>th</sup> Road Safety Action Programme proposed a number of new measures focussing on well known risk areas such as speed, drink and drug driving and non use of seat belt and child restraints. Other possible avenues included the application of new life saving technologies, such as intelligent speed assistance or the introduction of improved post accident care with eCall. These and many other measures included in the ETSC's Blueprint, if implemented extensively, should allow the EU to achieve the new 2020 targets that ETSC proposes.

**Isabelle Kardacz, Head of the Road Safety Unit, DG TREN**

Isabelle Kardacz said that 2010 would be a busy year. Apart from the 4<sup>th</sup> Road Safety Action Programme (ERSAP), the Commission would also present a new Proposal for a

Directive on Cross Border Enforcement and a Proposal for a Directive on roadworthiness tests for motor vehicles and their trailers. The new Action Plan would be adopted by the Commission in April or May 2010 and would include an Annex with the list of actions for the next decade. There would also be an impact assessment of the new action programme, an ex-post evaluation of the 3<sup>rd</sup> ERSAP and a Citizens' Summary. The 500 answers to the public consultation on the ERSAP were being analysed. Ms. Kardacz warned the audience that as the 4<sup>th</sup> Road Safety Action programme would only be published in April or May, no decision on the contents had been made yet. The ideas of the new Transport Commissioner would certainly be very important in shaping the new programme. Her speech would therefore be an update on what should be considered as "work in progress".

Setting a global target in 2001 to halve the number of road deaths by 2010 was useful as this target was also taken on board by many Member States. Although a significant reduction in road deaths in the EU had been reached in the last decade, the target would not be reached. She stressed therefore the need for caution with setting new targets for 2020.

The EU-15 (Member States of 2001) was close to reaching the 50% reduction target. But there had been two enlargements and the target did not change. The number of road deaths was increased according to the available statistics. She therefore said that it might be better to have a trend rather than a specific target for 2020 and to adopt different trends for advanced Member States and less advanced ones.

Ms. Kardacz also expressed some doubts on the proposed target of a 40% reduction in the number of deaths between 2010-2020. She said that, compared to the current 50% reduction target, this objective could be seen as less ambitious by the general public and thus shed some negative light on the European Commission.

Another possibility could be to set a vision and then ask Member States to set targets on the basis of that vision. This option would make Member States accountable for improving road safety at the national level while at the same time contributing to the overall EU vision.

Ms. Kardacz also commented on the proposal to ask Member States to set national reduction targets on serious injuries of at least 40%. She stressed that serious injuries were certainly to be kept high on the agenda. However, the problem of different national definitions should not be neglected and she suggested that the new Programme would work towards a common European definition of serious injury.

### **Åsa Ersson, Deputy Head of Road Safety, Swedish Road Administration**

Åsa Ersson presented the positive experience of target setting in Sweden, including the lessons learnt which, according to her, could also be useful for the EU. She set out the key elements of setting a common vision in Sweden (the "Vision Zero") and noted that a numerical target had acted as an engine.

Sweden had adopted a new ambitious target in May 2009 to halve road deaths by 2020. However, as only having a target may not be enough to motivate action amongst all stakeholders, the new Swedish strategy had also included 13 performance indicators

covering for example speed limits. These targets were being monitored in a transparent way and progress was being communicated<sup>1</sup>.

Contrary to 2007, when the main stakeholders had not been involved in setting the target, this time there had been a wide consultation process and an annual meeting to check on progress (and even consider adjusting targets) had been planned. For serious injuries, the new strategy included a numerical target of reducing them by 25% by 2020.

Ms. Ersson concluded by saying that Sweden is a front-runner country. In 2009 Sweden had recorded the lowest figures since it had started collecting road safety data in 1935 and a death rate of 37 fatalities per million inhabitants. In many areas Sweden had had extremely few killed, for example children. But Sweden knew they were not at all best in all areas. Sweden needed to be pushed and get inspiration and to compete and to learn best practice from other countries in those areas where they were not among the best.

According to her, the EU should follow the international mainstream and decide on a modern transparent management system for road safety. As a consequence: the EU needed to adopt ambitious EU-targets and follow up on indicators so Member States could be monitored, find inspiration, and together look for new solutions to push the technological front further in order to save more lives.

#### **Bernard Pottier, President Association Prévention Routière**

Bernard Pottier stressed that the very first added value of the European Union as regards road safety was to stimulate the ambition of Member States by setting targets and in order to reach these targets, by setting benchmarking and exchange of good practices. He also mentioned that up to 2002, French people used to consider that they were neither Swedish nor British and that, as a result, they just had to accept more than 8,000 deaths each year. Comparing France to the other EU countries had helped to motivate Jacques Chirac to make road safety a national priority.

Mr. Pottier supported the need to set up targets. Reducing the number of road deaths by 40% between 2010 and 2020, as proposed by ETSC, looked both ambitious and reasonable. It was a shared target at the Union level. He further highlighted that the integral part of the new communication strategy was to touch every citizen and make road safety a matter for everybody. One of the difficulties we all had to get people aware of progress in the area of road safety was that victims and their families were clearly identified but that those who escaped from an accident, from being killed or injured would never know it. In 1972, there were some 16,000 people who lost their lives on French roads. To illustrate this genuine drama, French authorities at that time identified a town in the South of France, Mazamet, which at that time had 16,000 inhabitants. A film showed Mazamet dead, with all its inhabitants lying on the streets. In 2009 Mazamet had 12,000 inhabitants and this was the number of deaths avoided in the previous 6 years. So an event was organised in 2009, with all the Mazamet population standing up, alive, to illustrate the achievement of road safety policy.

---

<sup>1</sup> See full list of performance indicators here [www.vv.se/Andra-sprak/English-engelska/Road-safety/Interim-target-work/](http://www.vv.se/Andra-sprak/English-engelska/Road-safety/Interim-target-work/)

He also mentioned one measure to illustrate how the EU could move forward towards reaching the new 2020 target: the Cross Border Enforcement Directive. A new version will be proposed by the European Commission in the context of the new Lisbon Treaty. Bernard Pottier urged all participants to lobby their governments to support this Directive.

### **Aldis Lama, Ministry of Transport Latvia**

Aldis Lama gave an overview of road safety in Latvia. He was pleased to announce that Latvia had already reached the target and even overachieved it with a reduction of 55% (provisional data) between 2001 and 2009. He stressed that the European target had helped Latvia to set its own national targets and strategic objectives. All the three Baltic States were close to reaching the EU target, something that no one would believe possible some years ago. Aldis said that he felt safer on Latvian roads, that one could notice the change. The adoption of several measures had made this possible, in particular the adoption of the penalty point system. The new Member States still needed to solve several problems: in particular to improve the safety of vulnerable road users and children. The key priorities for the future should focus on education, enforcement, infrastructure safety and eSafety systems. He also stressed the need for ambitious targets from the EU level together with regular monitoring. He finally supported the Swedish suggestion to adopt several performance indicators to be monitored at the EU level.

### **Paulo Marques, Portuguese Road Safety Authority**

The White Paper and the 3<sup>rd</sup> RSAP were a real encouragement to the Portuguese government. In the last ten years Portugal had halved road deaths and contributed to the EU target. In order to maintain this important decreasing trend, the Government had created a new leading agency for road safety, the National Authority for Road Safety. The National Authority for Road Safety had started immediately working on the development of the National Strategy for Road Safety, 2008-2015. Portugal wanted to be one of the first ten EU Member States in terms of road safety. To achieve that it needed a reduction of more than 33% of deaths.

Paulo called on the EU to adopt a long term vision which should have a very high level of ambition. The EU should also develop a European Road Safety Action Plan with crystal clear targets. He urged the European Commission to have a strong position on co-ordinating and planning road safety policies, not only for setting up targets but also for monitoring and following-up the implementation of the European Road Safety Action Plan, and also funding and resource allocation. He called for setting up a EU Agency to co-ordinate this. The General Assembly of the United Nations declared the next decade (2011-2020) as the "Decade of Action for Road Safety". In this context, the European Union had a very important role worldwide, being a lighthouse driver for all countries on road safety.

### **Discussion**

The discussion with questions from the large number of road safety stakeholders present, included the importance of setting a numerical target, evaluation of the past

Action Programme and the 2010 target, harmonisation of the serious injury definition, performance indicators, communicating targets with different groups and the timetable for the elaboration of the Action Programme.

### **Main Outcomes**

- **Overwhelming support for setting up a shared EU target for road deaths.**
- **Partial support of a target for serious injuries and idea of national targets linked to the EU one.**
- **Expectations from MSs on the EU going beyond setting up the legislative framework on vehicle and infrastructure related issues. The EU should take the lead on road safety.**