



NEWS RELEASE

Final EU Approval for New Road Safety Legislation

29 September 2011, Brussels – Today, ministers of the 27 Member States of the European Union gave their formal approval for the Cross-Border Enforcement Directive. ETSC¹ strongly welcomes the Council of Ministers' final approval, which comes as the last step in the process. The text approved by the EU ministers is a compromise that was hammered out after negotiations with the European Parliament before the summer break.²

"Member states will need to implement the provisions of the Directive within two years," said Antonio Avenoso, ETSC Executive Director, after the Council of Ministers adopted the text of the Directive. "This Directive plugs an important gap in the enforcement of traffic laws across the EU and we believe it will make a good contribution towards halving road deaths during the 2011-2020 decade," added Mr. Avenoso.³

Over the years, ETSC has strongly backed this Directive that would result in higher levels of safety through enforcement. Traffic law enforcement is a means to improve road safety by preventing collisions as drivers are persuaded to comply with the safety rules. The Directive would cover the main offences causing death and serious injury in the EU: speeding, drink driving, non use of seat belts, drug driving and mobile phone use whilst driving. The issues dealt with by the Directive are an important concern for European citizens: a Eurobarometer survey⁴ showed that the majority of those polled favour action on drink driving, speeding and increased enforcement, including for non-residents.

"We hope that preparations at national level to implement the new Directive will run smoothly and that the new system will soon be in place" said Mr. Avenoso. Alongside the new enforcement structure, EU member states, together with the European Commission, must provide citizens with information on the relevant traffic legislation throughout the bloc. This is envisaged as a measure to encourage drivers to comply with the relevant legislation when abroad. "We continue to hope that the final adoption and publication of the Directive will provide new impetus for the opt-in procedure in Ireland, and that the UK government will review its initial position to delay their opt-in," Mr. Avenoso concluded.⁵

For more information please contact ETSC Communications Officer Mircea Steriu at mircea.steriu@etsc.eu, or Policy Director Ellen Townsend at ellen.townsend@etsc.eu, tel. +32 (0)2 230.41.06

Notes to editors:

¹ ETSC is a Brussels-based independent non-profit making organisation dedicated to reducing the numbers of deaths and injuries in transport in Europe. The ETSC seeks to identify and promote research-based measures with a high safety potential. It brings together 45 national and international organisations concerned with transport safety from across Europe. www.etsc.eu

² The Council of Ministers' declaration can be found here:

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/trans/124809.pdf

The European Parliament approved the text in its plenary session of the 6th of July. Additional information can be found here: http://www.etsc.eu/documents/ETSC_CBE_Positive.pdf

³ See also

ETSC 2011 Position on the Cross-Border Enforcement Directive:

<http://www.etsc.eu/documents/Cross%20Border%20Enforcement%20Directive%20ETSC%20Position%20June%202011.pdf>

ETSC 2011 5th PIN Report "2010 Road Safety Target Outcome:100,000 fewer deaths since 2001"

ETSC 2010 4th PIN Report "Road Safety Target in Sight: Making up for lost time"

<http://www.etsc.eu/PIN-publications.php>

ETSC, 2007. Traffic Law Enforcement across the EU: Time for a Directive

<http://www.etsc.eu/enforcement-etscprogramme.php>

ETSC, 2007. Raising Compliance with Road Safety Law, 1st PIN Road Safety Report

<http://www.etsc.eu/PIN-publications.php>

TISPOL European Traffic Police Network - <https://www.tispol.org/>

⁴ Flash Eurobarometer no. 301 http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_301_en.pdf

⁵ Given that the legal basis of the Directive is the police cooperation chapter of the Lisbon Treaty, the new legislation would not be automatically applicable to Ireland and the United Kingdom. See also http://www.etsc.eu/documents/PR_UK%20Opt-In_Delayed_Final.pdf