

NEWS RELEASE

Embargoed Until 9 May 2006

Finland Tops first EU Traffic Law Enforcement League Table

A new publication launched today by the European Transport Safety Council (ETSC) ⁽¹⁾ "Traffic Law Enforcement across the EU: An Overview" ⁽²⁾ evaluates the progress made by the 25 EU member states in the areas of enforcement of speeding, drink driving and seat belt law.

Based on available data, Finland tops the score with its exemplary speeding and drink driving enforcement records⁽³⁾. It is followed by Sweden, the UK, the Netherlands and Germany who are all champions in one of the three areas. Other countries show marked improvement in all three fields: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Luxembourg and Slovenia. But ETSC's Policy Paper also finds that many EU member states still should invest far more effort to guarantee enforcement of traffic law. Cyprus, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Spain are clearly lagging behind, to the detriment of real gains they could achieve in saving lives.

The publication is the first ever published that covers activities in every single one of the EU 25 member states on the three priority areas as identified in the EC Recommendation on traffic law enforcement (2004)⁽⁴⁾. "Traffic law enforcement measures in combination with awareness raising activities are the most important instruments to reach the EU target of halving annual road deaths by 2010", says Ellen Townsend, ETSC's Enforcement Programme Officer.

The publication presents an overview of countries' practice and data for the period of 2003-2004. It shows that EU countries increasingly apply best practice methods as outlined in the EC Recommendation in the areas of speed and alcohol enforcement. Countries are moving towards introducing automated speed enforcement, random screening tests and evidential breath tests for alcohol. Of the three areas, seat belt actions based on the recommended *blitz*⁽⁴⁾ approach are far less common.

"ETSC will continue to closely monitor Member States' efforts in implementing the EC Recommendation". ETSC's Executive Director, Jörg Beckmann continues: "The European Commission should initiate a further raising of standards by preparing a Directive on minimal requirements in the areas covered by the Enforcement Recommendation."

For more information please contact ETSC Programme Officer Ellen Townsend, programme@etsc.be, tel. +32 2 230 4106 or visit www.etsc.be.

Notes to the Editors:

⁽¹⁾ The European Transport Safety Council (ETSC) is a Brussels-based non-profit making organisation dedicated to the reduction of transport crashes and casualties in Europe. ETSC seeks to identify and promote effective measures on the basis of international scientific research and best practice. It brings together 30 international and national organisations concerned with transport safety from across Europe.

⁽²⁾ " Traffic Law Enforcement Across the EU: An Overview" www.etsc.be

⁽³⁾ See Figures 1-4 in Annex and the new publication: " Traffic Law Enforcement Across the EU: An Overview" www.etsc.be

⁽⁴⁾ EC Recommendation of 6 April 2004 on enforcement in the field of road safety
http://europa.eu.int/smartapi/cgi/sga_doc?smartapi!celexplus!prod!CELEXnumdoc&lg=en&numdoc=32004H0345

⁽⁵⁾ *Blitz* enforcement is where intensive and highly visible checks last one to four weeks and are repeated several times a year.

Annex

Figure 1 Speeding offences per population (in %) 2003 and 2004

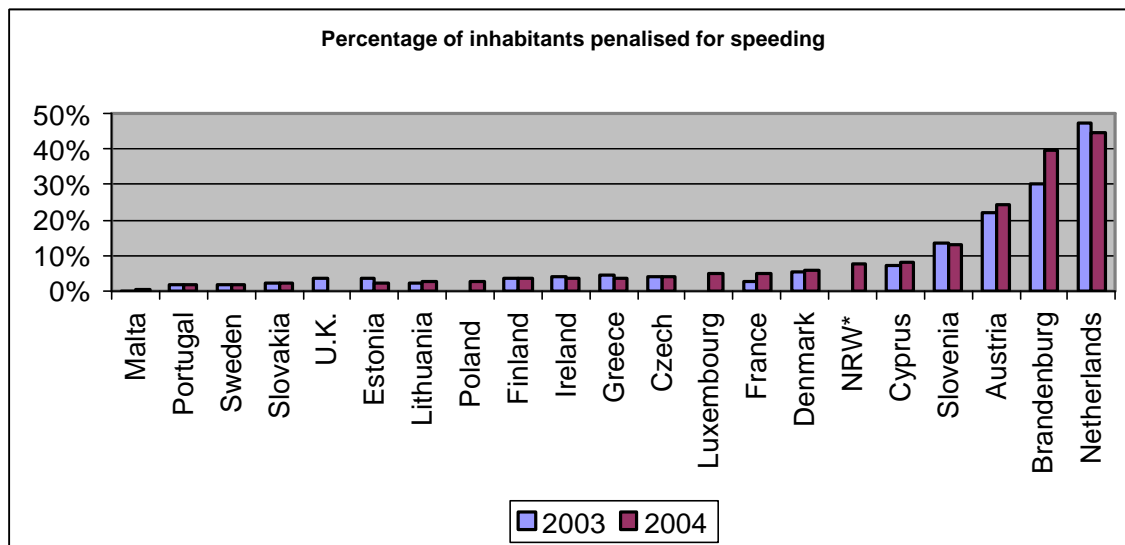


Figure 2 Drink driving checks per population (in %) 2003 and 2004

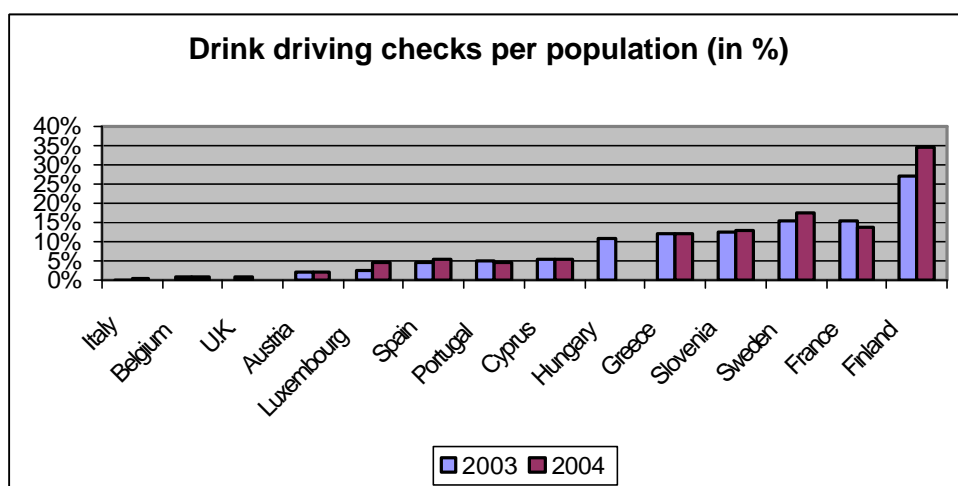


Figure 3 Seat belt offences per population (in %), 2004

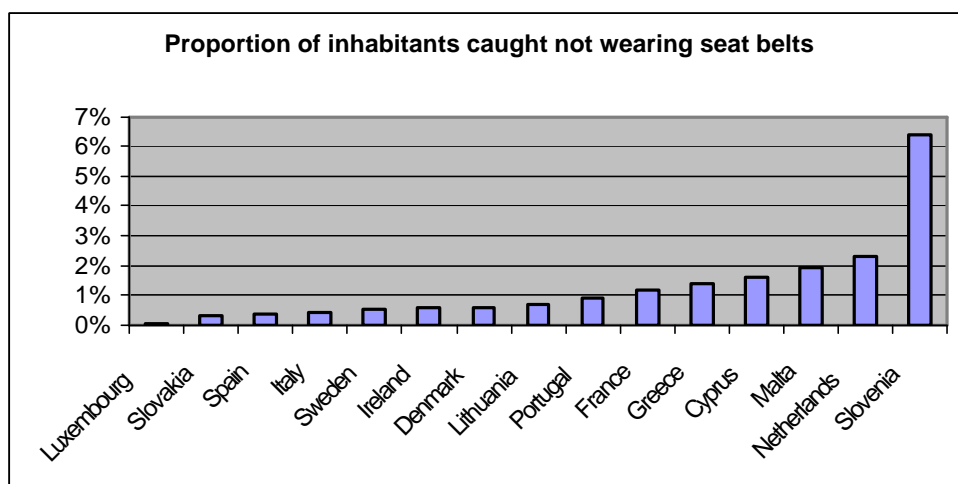


Figure 4 EU countries' performance in the areas of speeding, drink driving and seat belt use: 2003-2004.

	Speeding	Drink driving	Seat belt use
Finland	+++++	+++++	+++
Germany	+++	+++	+++++
Netherlands	+++++	+++	+++
Sweden	+++	+++	+++++
U.K.	+++	+++	+++++
Austria	+++	+++	+++
Belgium	+++	+++	+++
Denmark	+++	+++	+++
France	+++	+++	+++
Luxembourg	+++	+++	+++
Slovenia	+++	+++	+++
Czech Republic	-	+++	+++
Ireland	+++	-	+++
Malta	+++	-	+++
Portugal	+++	-	+++
Estonia	-	+++	-
Greece	-	+++	-
Hungary	-	+++	-
Italy	-	+++	-
Latvia	-	+++	-
Lithuania	-	+++	-
Slovakia	-	+++	-
Spain	-	-	+++
Cyprus	-	+++	-
Poland	-	-	+++

-	needs to do more
+++	is improving
+++++	is a champion