European Transport Safety Council

Road safety priorities for the EU in 2014

Memorandum to the Greek Presidency of the Council of the European Union

January 2014

The European Transport Safety Council is an independent, non-profit organisation dedicated to reducing the numbers of deaths and injuries in transport across Europe.

Summary

In 2012, some 28,000 people died on EU roads.[1] As well as the unbearable human cost, road casualties cost 2% of European GDP. And yet, improving safety on our roads is one of the most affordable ways of improving European competitiveness. Reduction of road deaths and injuries offers higher economic rates of return than any other field of public policy.

In this briefing, ETSC outlines its recommendations on the key EU road safety policy dossiers to be steered by the Greek presidency of the European Union in the first half of 2014. These include securing agreements on EU legislation on automated in-vehicle emergency calling (eCall) and safer lorry design. We also examine the main recent and forthcoming policy initiatives from the European Commission including progress on in-vehicle safety technologies such as Intelligent Speed Assistance (ISA) for professional vehicles and alcohol interlocks for certain vehicle and driver categories, with recommendations for maximising the results for road safety. ETSC is calling on the Greek presidency to promote the uptake of these technologies in the EU. The European Commission is also due to announce a new urban mobility package which ETSC has said must integrate specific provisions on road safety.

In the final part of this briefing, we examine Greece's own track record on road safety with recommendations for improvement.

Acknowledgements

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1 ETSC (2013) 7th PIN Report, Back on track to reach the EU 2020 Road Safety Target?

Context : saving lives saves money

The annual socio-economic cost of road traffic deaths and injuries is estimated to be equivalent to around 2% of GDP or EUR 250 billion in 2012[2]. Alongside legal and moral obligations there is also a strong economic case to include the prevention of road traffic deaths and serious injuries in EU health policy as well as transport policy.

ETSC estimates the monetary value to society of the human losses avoided by preventing one fatality to be EUR 1.88 million. On this basis the total value to society of the reductions in road deaths in the EU27 that took place between 2002 and 2010 are estimated at EUR 176 billion[3]. The value for society of the further reductions in road deaths that would be achieved by reaching the 2020 target is estimated to be at least EUR 182 billion. [4]

The Greek Presidency together with the European Commission and the European Parliament should acknowledge the strong return on investment in road safety improvements and prioritise life saving measures at EU and national level.

Road Safety EU Policy Orientations 2011-2020

In order for the EU to reach its 2020 target to cut road deaths by half, compared to the 2010 level, it must embark immediately on a systematic programme of actions and activities and it is now up to the Greek EU Presidency to work together with the Member States, the European Commission and the European Parliament to initiate such a programme by implementing the key aspects of the policy framework known as the EU's "Policy Orientations on Road Safety 2011-2020".

Key priorities for the Greek presidency

Automated in-vehicle emergency calling (eCall)

eCall technology would allow for an emergency call to be generated, either manually or automatically, from a crashed vehicle immediately after a road collision has occurred. Basic data, including the location, would then be transmitted to an eCall operator and simultaneously a voice communication would be established between an emergency centre and the vehicle occupants. Embedded eCall has the potential to save lives in Europe and significantly reduce the severity of injuries.

The European Commission has recently adopted two new proposals to implement eCall in the EU. On 13 June 2013, it adopted a decision that will require EU Member States to deploy the necessary eCall Public Service Answering Points (PSAP) infrastructure required for the proper receipt and handling of eCalls on their territory by 2015. At the same time, it proposed a regulation mandating that all new cars and vans in categories M1 and N1 entering the EU market after the 1st of October 2015 have an in-vehicle eCall system. The eCall technical specifications are now under preparation by the European Commission's Enterprise department and will be open for consultation.

2 WHO (2004), World report on road traffic injury prevention.
3 ETSC (2001) *5th PIN Report*, 2010 Road Safety Target Outcome: 100,000 fewer deaths since 2001.
4 Ibid.

ETSC supports eCall deployment and its extension to other vehicles including buses and lorries as a priority. ETSC has also argued for the necessity of having the technology embedded in the vehicle itself. This will help maximise the reduction in road deaths and reduce the severity of injuries.

Safer lorry design

In April, the European Commission proposed new rules to improve road safety by streamlining lorry cabs, allowing a reduction of the driver's blind spots . This has the potential to save the lives of vulnerable road users (VRUs). A new cab profile could also incorporate energy absorption structures in the event of a collision and could potentially save the lives of and injuries to car occupants as well as VRUs.

ETSC[5,6] has shown that the largest share of the 4,254 people who lost their lives in collisions involving heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) in 2011 were not the occupants of those vehicles but those outside, particularly car drivers or vulnerable road users. Car occupants amount to half of the people killed in collisions involving an HGV, pedestrians 15%, cyclists 7% and riders of powered two-wheeled vehicles (PTW) 6%. The occupants of the HGVs make up just 12% of the overall figure.

Other elements of the EC proposal include provisions to enable national inspection authorities to better detect infringements and harmonise administrative penalties that apply to them. The European Commission will also publish guidelines on inspection procedures to ensure harmonisation of inspection methods between all Member States. It will also be able to adopt delegated acts covering procedures for the establishment of the test certificate.

The Greek Presidency should support the safety potential of this new proposal. ETSC would support a move to mandatory implementation of these changes, i.e. through the EU type-approval process for vehicles sold on the EU market.

Infrastructure safety

The European Commission has announced plans to review the Infrastructure Safety Directive adopted in 2008. This fits well within the context of the Informal Council meeting of transport ministers on Infrastructure Safety, Budget and Road Safety timetabled for 8-9 May.

ETSC recognises that the implementation of this Directive could save many lives. But also supports the European Commission's recognition that much more benefit could be achieved by extending the principles of this Directive to other parts of the road network. In the EC Policy Orientations 2011-2020, the EC recommended to EU Member States to extend these requirements to the secondary road network (i.e. beyond the main motorways). This has become even more of a priority given the new objective to reduce serious injuries.

Alongside the Directive, ETSC also proposed the drafting of guidelines for promoting best practice in traffic calming measures, based upon physical measures such as roundabouts, road narrowing, chicanes, delineation and road humps.[7] These measures should be introduced as part of area-wide urban safety management, making use of the latest advances in understanding of traffic and safety management as part of urban design. Again, this is even more relevant in

5 ETSC (2013) 7th PIN Report, Back on track to reach the EU Road Safety Target?
6 ETSC (2013) Position on Weights and Dimensions.
7 ETSC (2008) Blueprint for the EU's 4th Road Safety Action Programme.

the new context of preventing both deaths and serious injuries and with the upcoming urban mobility package.

Within the context of the EU Refit[8] programme to cut red tape, the tunnel safety Directive 2004/54 on minimum safety requirements for tunnels in the trans-European road network will be evaluated with a possible view to revise or repeal. ETSC strongly supports the upholding of this important piece of EU road safety legislation and is looking forward to input its expert knowledge to this review process.

The Greek Presidency should support and accelerate these important developments in infrastructure safety.

Revival of the Verona Process? Keeping road safety on the agenda of EU transport ministers

The Greek Presidency will host an Informal Council in May including one day dedicated to infrastructure safety and financing. This will be immediately followed by the European Road Safety Day. Both initiatives are warmly welcomed by ETSC.

In 2013, the European Commission announced that in 2014 they would re-launch the Verona Process, an annual transport ministers' summit on road safety originally launched in October 2003 by the Italian presidency along with the Verona charter[9] which was adopted at the subsequent Transport Council[10]. ETSC believes that the principal aim of the Verona Process should be to ensure political will and leadership in a policy area where effective measures are well-known and ready to be implemented, but may lack the commitment and responsibility from top-level political decision-makers across the EU.

Building political commitment and leadership at the highest level are prerequisites for preventing road traffic deaths and injuries. This was recognised in ETSC's Blueprint for the 4th EU Road Safety Action Programme[11]. It was also suggested that every EU Presidency holder both individually and in their trio formation should make an effort to focus attention on road safety and ensure a regular meeting of Transport Ministers to concentrate on this topic. ETSC welcomes the re-launch of this process and would welcome an annual meeting of Transport Ministers starting again with the Greek Presidency. Such meetings would be an opportunity to raise the political profile of road safety on the EU stage and reaffirm political commitment to reach the EU 2020 target to halve road deaths.

Ministers could use their Council conclusions on road safety from 2010 as a basis for their discussions and mark progress towards reaching the 2020 target.

8 http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/refit/index_en.htm
9 http://www.europolitics.info/road-transport-verona-charter-on-road-safety-adopted-artr183163-20.html
10 http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/trans/78234.pdf
11 ETSC (2008) Blueprint for the EU's 4th Road Safety Action Programme.
12 Council conclusions on road safety, 3052th Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council meeting, Brussels, 2–3 December 2010.

European Parliament Elections 22-25 May

Members of the European Parliament have an important voice when it comes to improving road safety in the EU. ETSC hopes the new MEPs –to be elected from the 22nd to the 25th of May next year – will show the leadership needed to sustainably curb the loss of life and limb on our roads.

ETSC has prepared a Manifesto[13] addressed to candidates for the next Parliamentary mandate. Successive EU Parliaments, including the outgoing one, have been strong road safety advocates. Current MEP candidates must also make road safety a priority for the 2014-2019 mandate. Reaching the EU 2020 road safety target will depend in part also on the activities of newly elected MEPs, who must support and fuel the stepping up of efforts to improve road safety, both at the national and EU level.

New or updated road safety initiatives from the European Commission in 2014

In-vehicle safety technologies

The European Commission is currently looking at the application of in-vehicle safety technologies: Intelligent Speed Assistance (ISA[14]) and Alcohol Interlocks. These are both high priorities for ETSC as they are mature technologies that are ready for deployment. They are also linked to preventing two high-risk behaviours that cause many deaths: speeding and drink driving.

Intelligent Speed Assistance (ISA)

In November 2013, the European Commission published a study[15] focusing on the safety benefits of speed limiters and ISA. It also included the results of a survey aimed at assessing opinions at the European level. In 2012 a European Commission consultation had asked stakeholders on the option of introducing ISA to commercial vehicles. Five out of the 35 governmental respondents and 82% of the stakeholders answered that the ISA system should be introduced to all commercial vehicles.

The general purpose of the study was to provide the European Commission with an evaluation of the road safety potential of the application of the Speed Limitation Devices Directive (2002/85/EC) to commercial vehicles. The main policy recommendations included requiring all commercial vehicles to be equipped with a 'voluntary' type of ISA (i.e. that provides tactile feedback to the driver).

ETSC stresses that the promotion and large-scale roll out of life-saving technologies – such as Intelligent Speed Assistance – should be a priority for HGVs, vans and buses. [16]

13 ETSC (2013) Road Safety Manifesto for the European Parliamentary Elections 2014 http://etsc.eu/documents/EP_Manifesto_for_Road_Safety.pdf

14 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. Navigation devices in the vehicle give a precise location and heading whilst an on-board map database compares the vehicle speed with the location's known speed limit. Drivers are then informed of the speed limit (advisory ISA), warned when they exceed the limit (supportive ISA), or actively aided to abide by the limit (intervening ISA).

15 The study is available at: http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/pdf/vehicles/speed_limitation_evaluation_en.pdf

16 ETSC (2013) – 7th PIN report, chapter 2.

Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) Directive 2010/40/EU and Digital Maps

The ITS Directive and Action Plan include a definition of procedures for accurate public data for digital maps. The provision of such a digital database of all speed limits on the network is an important prerequisite for the implementation of ISA. ETSC advocates that this should be taken up as part of the specifications to be adopted by the Commission for priority action (b) currently under discussion in the ITS Committee and amongst stakeholders[17].

As of January 2013 ISA is included in the new EuroNCAP safety rating with both advisory and voluntary active systems being awarded points. Progress has been significant, showing the market penetration – and acceptance – of the technologies. In 2009, only 12.5% of the car models tested had Manual-set Speed Assist system (MSA) as standard equipment on all the variants and 14.5% had it as an option on more than 85% of the variants. By 2013 73% of the models tested have MSA as standard.[18] This means that the demand for speed limit data will increase substantially from both consumers of safe vehicles and the vehicle manufacturers hoping to offer the service.

But, at the same time, there is a deficit in terms of the supply of accurate and up to date speed limit information. Camera-based technologies can assist, but EuroNCAP considers that, to be reliable, such technologies need to work hand-in-hand with map-based information. There is therefore a crucial need to promote and increase the supply of map-based information on speed limits.

It is hoped that the Greek Presidency, alongside other EU Member States and the European Commission and European Parliament, will support the prioritisation of digital maps under the specification b) of the ITS Directive.

Alcohol Interlocks

The second study commissioned by DG MOVE, and expected in early 2014, is a European impact assessment on the possibility to make alcohol interlocks compulsory for certain types of vehicles or certain types of drivers. The study covers data and analysis of costs, the issue of retrofitting, and the different alcohol interlock rehabilitation programmes currently underway, looking at what efforts countries have made to date to introduce alcohol interlocks. The results of the study will help the European Commission to decide on the appropriateness and scope of potential measures concerning these devices.

ETSC recommends the EU to introduce alcohol interlocks, in a first phase, to repeat drink driving offenders as well as professional drivers and then, once non-intrusive technologies are developed, to all vehicles.

The Greek Presidency should also take the initiative to promote the safety benefits of these in-vehicle technologies and promote their uptake in the EU.

CARS 2020

ETSC has raised the priority of two life-saving, in-vehicle technologies (including alcohol interlocks and ISA) within the discussions on CARS 2020[19], led by DG Enterprise[20]. CARS 2020

17 ETSC (2013) ETSC's Contribution to CARS 2020 on Road Safety.
18 ETSC (2013) Intelligent Speed Assistance – Frequently Asked Questions
19 ETSC (2013) ETSC's Contribution to CARS 2020 on Road Safety.
20 European Commission (2012) CARS 2020 Action Plan for a competitive and sustainable automotive industry in Europe.

should drive the discussion on how vehicle safety and vehicle to infrastructure communication can help contribute to reduce road deaths by 50% by 2020. Following the new EU serious injury initiative, CARS 2020 should also look at how vehicle safety can be improved to reduce serious injuries.

Integrating Safety into Urban Mobility

As this briefing was being prepared, the European Commission was set to launch a new urban mobility package. The 2011 White Paper on Transport included the following within its list of initiatives: to establish procedures and financial support mechanisms at European level for preparing Urban Mobility Audits, as well as Urban Mobility Plans, and set up a European Urban Mobility Scoreboard based on common targets. It also committed to examining the possibility of a mandatory approach for cities of a certain size, according to national standards based on EU guidelines.

Transport safety should be considered as an essential component of sustainable mobility and mobility planning with concrete provisions, tackling effectively joint objectives of mobility and safety. In attempting to secure change in urban mobility patterns, road safety can be regarded as a critical challenge, largely because of the social and economic cost of road collisions. As such, safety should be addressed at all levels of mobility planning. Real and perceived safety can have a profound effect on modal choice especially in terms of the most sustainable transport modes. Transport safety should be integrated not only into the development of Urban Mobility Plans but also into proposed Urban Mobility Audits and Guidelines and be reflected in common targets.

Plans should adopt a clear hierarchy of transport users, with pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users at its top, meaning placing them at the heart of the planning process. A higher share of travel by collective transport, combined with minimum service obligations, will allow for increasing the density and frequency of services, thereby generating a virtuous circle for public transport modes. The Commission should also add another benefit: the core public transport modes (bus and rail) are the safest modes of transport. This is another reason why the EU should promote the extension, quality and use of public transport.

The Greek Presidency should also highlight the importance of road safety in the package on urban mobility.

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Work to do - Greece's record on improving road safety

Greece faces an enormous challenge to improve its track record on road safety. In 2012 1,027 people died on Greek roads, 18,150 since 2001. The number of road deaths decreased by 45% between 2001 and 2012, whereas deaths were cut by 68% in Latvia, 57% in Lithuania and 56% in Portugal.

As a result, Greece ranked as the 4th worst country in the EU-28 and worst of the EU-15 in terms of road deaths per million of inhabitants in 2012[21] (Fig. 1). In 2012, it recorded 91 deaths per million population, while the average figure for the EU28 is 56.

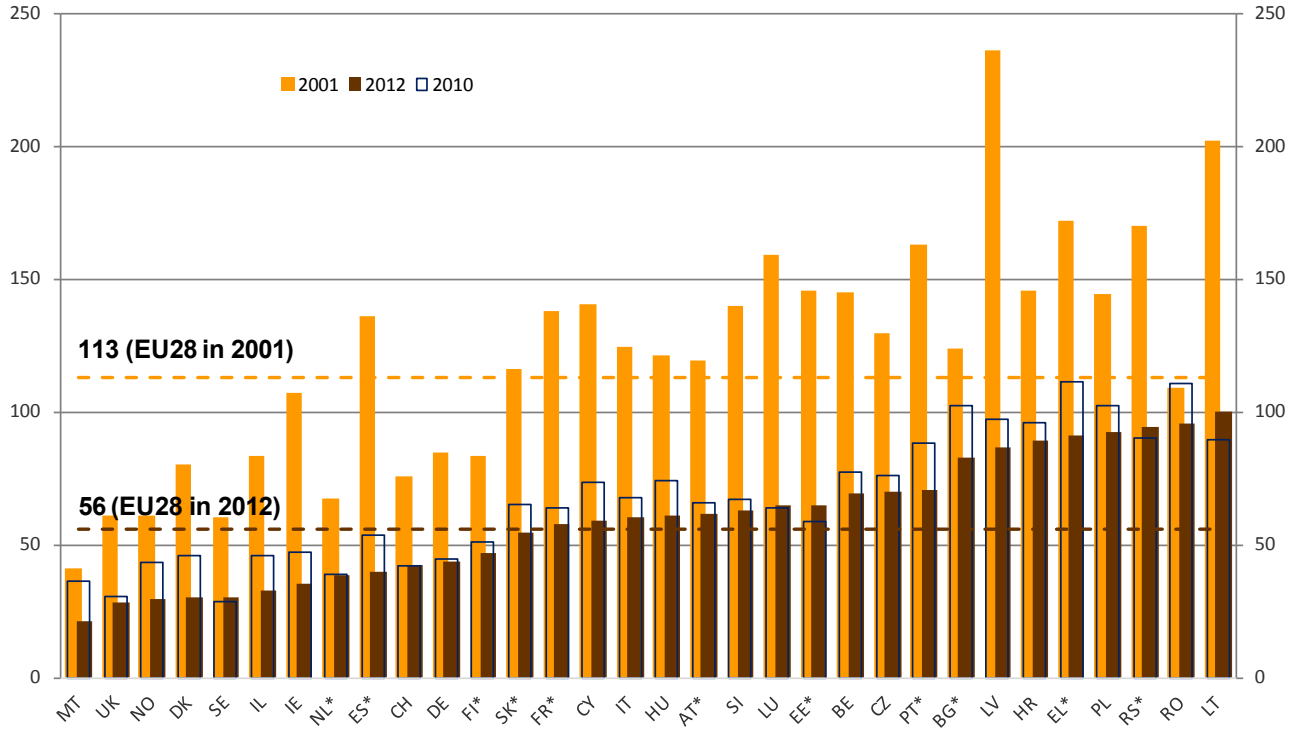

*Fig. 1 Road deaths per million inhabitants in 2012 (with road deaths per million inhabitants in 2001 and 2010 for comparison) *provisional estimates used for 2012, as the final figures for 2012 are not yet available.*

Greece ranked as the 4th worst country in the EU-28 and worst of the EU 15 in terms of road deaths per million of inhabitants in 2012.

Provisional data for 2013 show a small decrease from 1,027 road deaths in 2012 to 927 road deaths in 2013, mostly explained by the deep economic crisis in Greece. However the situation still requires urgent action to improve on Greece's relatively poor record compared to other EU member states.

Following discussions with road safety experts and stakeholders in Greece, ETSC recommends the national authorities to prioritise action in the following areas:

General road safety policy:

- Officially adopt, as a matter of priority the National Road Safety Plan for 2020 providing a vision, priorities and a detailed road map against which performance can be measured and delivery made accountable;

21 Ibid.

- Improve the coordination of work among the different road safety actors;
- Collect and analyse speed compliance data, number of police checks and infringements for speeding, drink driving and seat belt and helmet use, as well as alcohol consumption in injury collisions to better plan safety-targeted measures and enforcement actions;
- Conduct regular evaluations of road safety measures;
- Conduct in-depth accident investigations and use the evidence gathered to devise relevant policies;

Improve driver behaviour:

- Improve driver compliance with speed and drink driving laws through better enforcement, education, awareness campaigns and infrastructure safety measures;
- Organise frequent nationwide campaigns on speed, drink driving, seat belt and helmet use linked to highly visible police enforcement;
- Implement measures providing better protection of vulnerable road users, in particular as data is showing an increase in motorcycle and moped use;
- Introduce traffic education courses at primary and secondary education level;

Improve road infrastructure:

- Gradually implement all four elements of the Infrastructure Safety Directive to all parts of the interurban and urban road network;

Early childhood road safety education

In Greece, and across Europe, it is important to further integrate road safety in the education curriculum within the school (or preschool) setting as early as possible as a powerful tool for the creation of strong life-long safety attitudes. At the same time road-safety education outside the school can work in a complementary way.

'Safety halls' for driver training

There is increasing evidence that the road safety agenda can be promoted by the development and establishment of road safety referral centres known as 'safety halls'. Courses at such centres are made part of driver training. While most of them have been developed through private incentives, governmental support is necessary so that their use becomes widespread and their results maximised. The prospect of such centres being made compulsory or at least recommended for trainee and novice drivers, high risk drivers and drivers that have lost their driving license because of traffic law violations should be examined.

Greek road safety policy has been characterised so far by fragmented, isolated initiatives. The role of the Inter-Ministerial Committee on road safety chaired by the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport could be catalytic if ministers were to meet regularly and the newly established coordination secretariat becomes fully operational and makes specific recommendations based on well documented reports and analyses.

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