

Mid Term Review of the European Commission's Road Safety Policy Orientations 2011-2020

Briefing - Stakeholder Consultation Workshop, 17 November 2014

Context

In July 2010, the European Commission published a set of 'Road Safety Policy Orientations' (RSPO), a framework with the objective of reducing road deaths by 50% by 2020¹.

While ETSC welcomed the adoption of the 2020 target, our response to the RSPO was that it was a significant step backwards compared to the three previous European Road Safety Action Programmes². ETSC described the document as containing 'a weak set of objectives and actions' which calls 'seriously into question the chances of reaching the target'. In particular ETSC criticised the assertion in the document that 'with over a dozen legislative instruments on road safety, the EU acquis are essentially in place' commenting that it revealed 'a disturbing complacency about the legislative foundation for action for the next decade'.

In 2010, the road safety community had hoped for, and expected, a new EU 10-year action programme providing a vision, priorities and a detailed road map against which performance could be measured and delivery made accountable. The RSPO fell short of those expectations.

Almost half way to 2020, the European Commission is now undertaking a review of the RSPO. This short briefing reflects ETSC's analysis of the measures that have been undertaken, but will also remind policymakers and other stakeholders of the need to redouble European efforts in the field of road safety and to strengthen and expand the scope of action needed to reach the 2020 target.

Progress 2010-2013

ETSC's Road Safety Performance Index (PIN) programme provides an annual assessment of the state of the art in road safety figures from across the EU.

The latest report reveals that in 2013, 26,025 people were killed in the EU28 as a consequence of road collisions. The annual progress since 2010 has been a 6.2%

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/pdf/com_20072010_en.pdf

² <http://etsc.eu/response-to-the-european-commissions-policy-orientations-on-road-safety-2011-2020/>

reduction on average in the EU28: 6.7% is needed to reach the 2020 target. The EU28 has collectively reduced the number of road deaths by 18% since 2010.

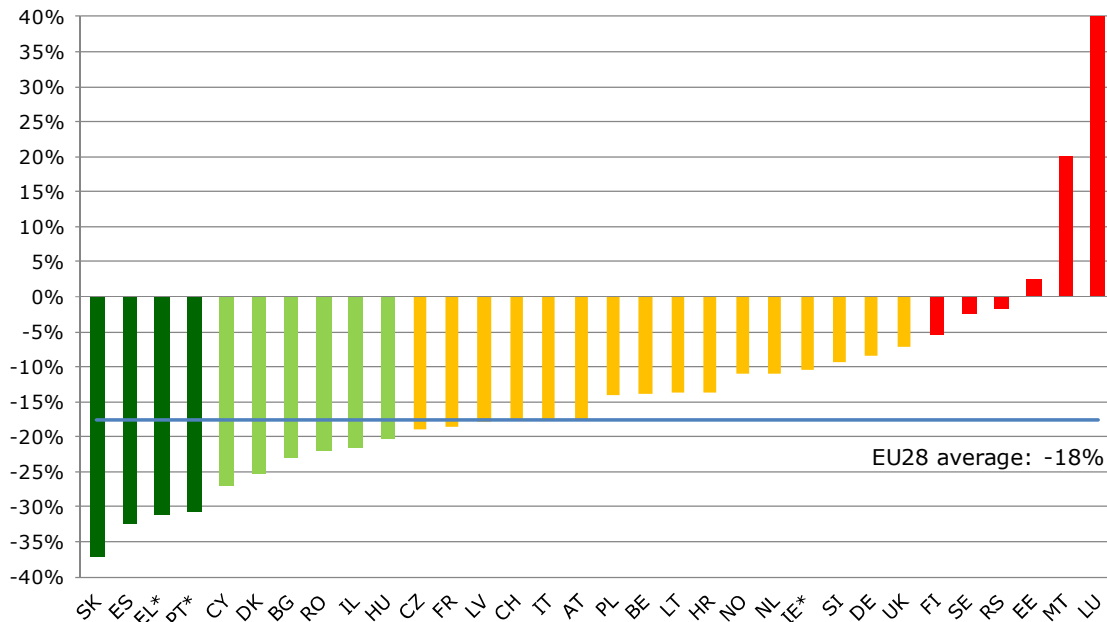


Fig. 1: Percentage change in road deaths between 2010 and 2013³

**National provisional estimates used for 2013, as the final figures for 2013 are not yet available at the time of going to print. Numbers of deaths in Luxembourg and Malta are small and are therefore subject to substantial annual fluctuation.*

New EC actions 2010-2014

- Implementation of the Road Safety Policy Orientations so far

Analysis of the progress made over the period 2010-2013 must recognise that the actions taken by the European Commission since 2010 will not yet be fully reflected in the data because many policy initiatives have not yet been fully implemented.

For that reason we also look at the measures taken over the period 2001-2010 in a subsequent section.

What follows is a list of the main measures taken since 2010.

Legislation

- eCall: the legislation on the introduction of this technology via type approval should be concluded at the end of this year. The legislation on the infrastructure needed for it to function was already adopted earlier this year.
- The Cross Border Enforcement Directive: originally adopted in 2011, a new proposal has been put forward with May 2015 as a deadline for an agreement, following a ruling from the European Court of Justice.

³ ETSC (2014) 8th Road Safety Performance Index Report.

- Roadworthiness: a new package covering technical checks of 4-wheel vehicles, adopted in 2014.
- Powered Two-Wheelers (PTW) Type Approval was adopted in 2013: introduction of Automatic Headlights On and Advanced Braking Systems.
- Weights and Dimensions: proposed in 2013 and soon ready for adoption should enable the introduction of safer cab fronts thus improving safety of Heavy Goods Vehicles and pave the way for future mandatory introduction via type approval.

Consultations

- The Directive on the Certificate of Professional Competence covering professional driver training is up for revision. A consultation was held in 2013.
- The Infrastructure Safety Directive is up for revision with a stakeholder consultation held in 2014.
- The Tunnel Safety Directive is also up for revision with a stakeholder consultation held in 2014.
- The General Safety Regulation is up for revision and a stakeholder consultation is ongoing.
- The Pedestrian Protection Regulation is up for revision and a stakeholder consultation is ongoing.

Studies

- A study on evaluating the benefit of speed limiters and looking at the introduction of Intelligent Speed Assistance to professional vehicles was published in 2013. Its recommendations are feeding into the revision of the General Safety Regulation consultation.
- A study on Alcohol Interlocks was published in 2014. Its recommendations are feeding in to the revision of the General Safety Regulation consultation.
- A study on Event Data Recorders has been published in 2014. Its recommendations are feeding in to the revision of the General Safety Regulation consultation.
- Distraction: a study is due to be published end of 2015.

Non-legislative

- The adoption of a target to reduce road deaths by 50% by 2020, compared to 2010 levels.
- The organisation of an annual progress press conference with the Transport Commissioner has helped to keep up the political will and attract media attention on progress on reducing road deaths.
- First Milestone towards a Serious Injury Strategy was adopted in 2013, including a common EU definition of a Serious Injury.
- EC Paper on Best Practice National Road Safety Planning

The measures implemented in 2011-2014 are not enough to match up to the ambitious target set for 2020. The European Commission needs to fast track measures which will have a high life saving potential.

EC Actions 2001-2010 period

The adoption and implementation of legislations during the 3rd Road Safety Action Programme (2001-2010) has surely contributed to the reduction in road deaths seen during the past four years. Yet, it should also be noted that less than 30% of the 62 measures in the 3rd RSAP were completed by 2010.

In the view of ETSC the most important completed actions (in terms of life saving impact) were:

- Adopting the framework Directive 2008/96/EC on Infrastructure Safety
- Amending the Driving Licence Directive
- Adopting an existing UNECE regulation to include seat belt reminders for the driver's seat (not yet for front and rear passengers).
- Adopting the Pedestrian Protection Regulation 2009/78.
- Making the first efforts in the form of an EC Recommendation on enforcement and proposing a Directive on the cross border enforcement of traffic law.
- Adopting the General Vehicle Safety Regulation 2009/661/EC.
- Introducing Daytime Running Lights under Commission Directive 2008/89 on new motor vehicles.
- Adopting Directive 2007/38 on retrofitting Blind Spot Mirrors to Heavy Goods Vehicles.
- Adopting the Tunnel Safety Directive 2004/54/EC.
- Adopting Directive 2003/59/EC on the training of commercial drivers.
- Adopting tighter legislation on enforcement of driving and rest periods for commercial road haulage (Regulation EC 561/2006).
- Extending the mandatory use of seat belt wearing to coaches and heavy goods vehicles (Directive 2003/20/EC).

One of the most important lessons learnt from the 3rd RSAP was that, if more legislation and proposals had actually been translated into action, then possibly even more lives would have been saved. Prioritising measures and actions and focussing on those with the most potential for saving lives is crucial and was not fully achieved in the past decade⁴.

⁴ <http://etsc.eu/response-to-the-european-commissions-policy-orientations-on-road-safety-2011-2020/>

Priorities for the future (2015-2020)

Seek to reach the EU 2020 Target of reducing road deaths by 50% compared to 2010 levels

The EU target remains crucial as is action to achieve it. The annual progress since 2010 has been 6.2% on average in the EU28. A year-to-year reduction of at least 6.7% is needed over the 2010-2020 period to reach the target through constant progress in annual percentage terms. The EU target for 2020 is therefore reachable if combined efforts at both national and EU level are stepped up (Fig. 2).

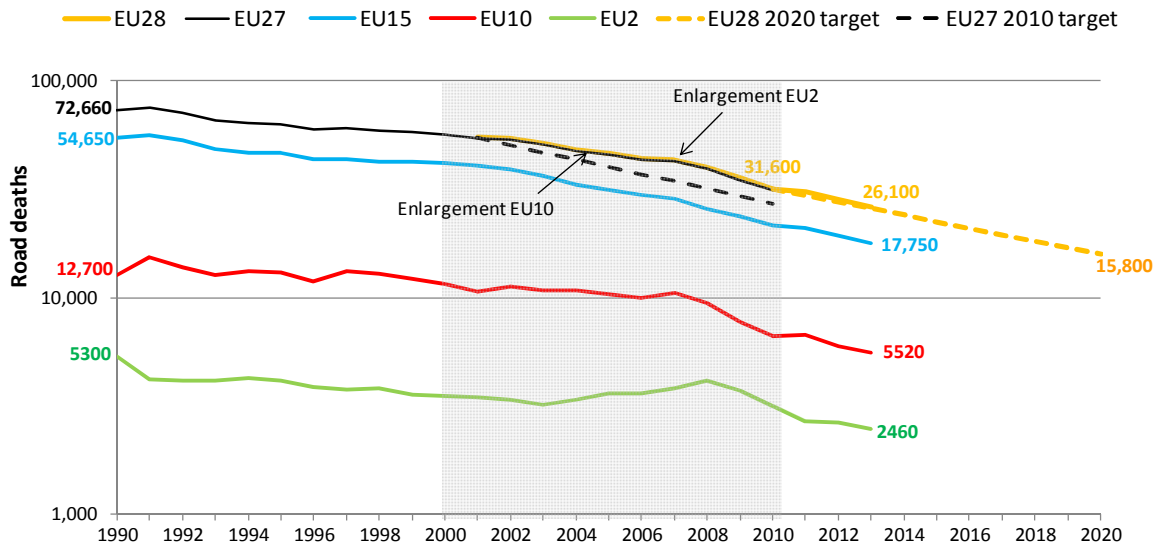


Fig. 2: Reduction in road deaths since 1990 in the EU28 (yellow line), EU27 (black line), the EU15 (blue line), the EU10 (red line) and the EU2 (Bulgaria and Romania, green line)⁵. The logarithmic scale is used to enable the slopes of the various trend lines to be compared. Source: CARE database 1990-2000 and PIN Panellists (2001-2012).

Adopt a target and a strategy to reduce the number of people seriously injured

Although a common EU definition of seriously injured casualties was adopted in 2013, the EU missed the chance to already adopt a target and measures to achieve it. This is now on the agenda and the European Commission has committed to setting in 2015 a common EU target for the reduction in the number of seriously injured people by 2020. As indicated in Fig. 3, a 35% reduction in the number of seriously injured over the period 2014-2020 would be similarly challenging and achievable for the Member States to the target to halve road deaths between 2010 and 2020.

- Adopt a target of 35% reduction between 2014 and 2020 in the number of people seriously injured per year based on MAIS3+.
- Adopt a fully fledged strategy to tackle serious injuries including measures against which delivery can be made accountable.

⁵ ETSC (2014), 8th Road Safety Performance Index Report.

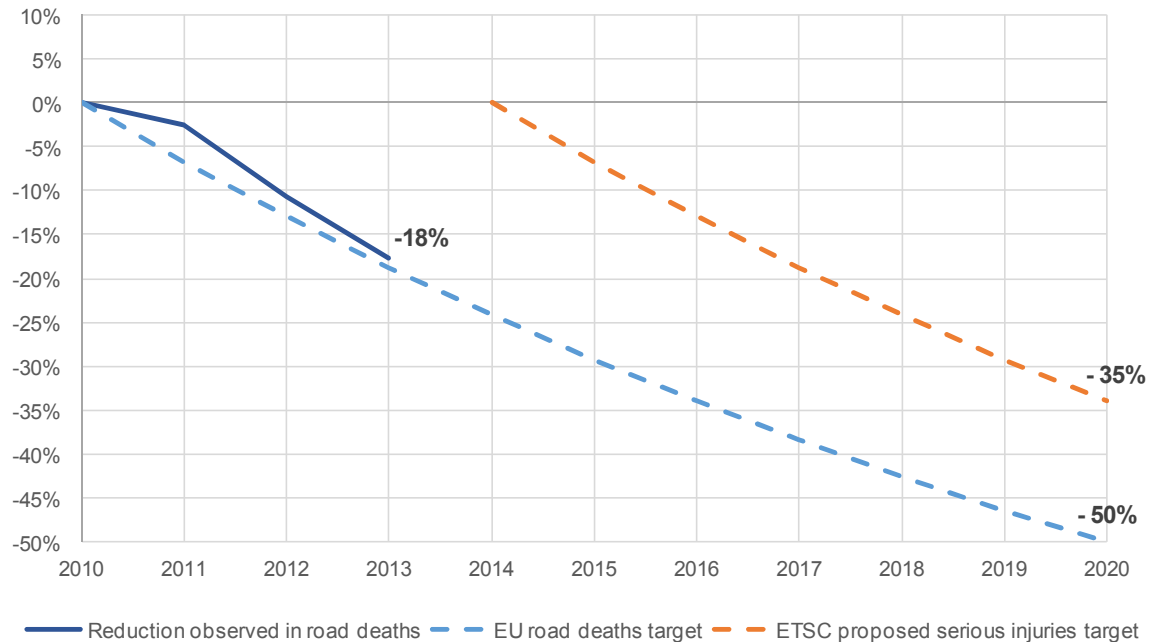


Fig. 3: Reduction in the number of road deaths (dark blue line) plotted against the EU target for 2020 (light blue dotted line), with ETSC’s recommended target for reduction in the number seriously injured (orange dotted line).

Seven strategic objectives of the Road Safety Policy Orientations

The seven strategic objectives of the RSPO⁶ remain relevant.

Road safety policy should be priority led and evidence based. ETSC has always stressed that the EU should focus its activities on the key causes of road traffic deaths: speed, drink and drug driving, and lack of protective systems (seat belts, child restraints and helmets), poorly constructed roads and inadequately equipped vehicles. This also includes realising a new list of measures to tackle serious injury.

ETSC believes there are four main priority areas to be addressed in the next five years (2014-2019), only some of which are included specifically in the RSPO’s seven objectives. The measures identified relate to the main causes of death and serious injury in the EU⁷.

- 1) **Speeding** - Excessive speed is the single biggest contributory factor in road collisions resulting in death⁸. On average, a 1% reduction in the mean speed of traffic leads to a 2% reduction in injury accidents, a 3% in severe injury accidents and a 4% in fatal accidents⁹.

⁶ http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/pdf/com_20072010_en.pdf

⁷ For a full list of ETSC’s recommendations see ETSC’s Blueprint for a new Road Safety Action Programme and ETSC’s Response to the EC’s “Road Safety Policy Orientations”.

⁸ ETSC (2008) Managing Speed Towards Safe and Sustainable Road Transport.

⁹ Nilsson 1982

The European Commission should:

- Within the revision of the General Safety Regulation, adopt legislation for fitting all new commercial vehicles with assisting Intelligent Speed Assistance systems, in line with the recommendations of the evaluation study conducted on behalf of the European Commission¹⁰. The system should be overridable up to 100km/h for buses and 90km/h for lorries, in line with existing EU legislation on speed limiters.
 - Adopt legislation for fitting all new passenger cars with an overridable assisting Intelligent Speed Assistance system¹¹.
 - Adopt an EU wide maximum speed limit of 120km/h or less for the EU TEN-T and encourage Member States to adopt a maximum 50km/h in urban areas and a maximum 30km/h in residential areas and areas with high levels of pedestrians and cyclists.
 - Draft guidelines for promoting best practice in traffic calming measures.
- 2) **Drink and Drug driving** - Approximately 6,500 lives would have been saved in 2010 if all drivers had obeyed the prevailing drink driving laws¹².

Efforts to tackle drink driving are paying off, through reducing the legally permitted blood alcohol concentration, enforcement efforts and the use of alcohol interlock devices. However, drink driving remains the second biggest killer on EU roads. At the EU level the range of psychoactive substances available for illicit use is widening and this is further proven by the increased prevalence of illicit drugs in drivers killed in traffic collisions.¹³

The European Commission should

- Propose a Directive setting a zero tolerance for all drivers.
 - Mandate alcohol interlocks for repeat offenders and professional drivers.
 - Adopt common standards for roadside drug driving enforcement.
- 3) **Infrastructure Safety** - 56% of the road deaths recorded annually in the EU occur on rural roads, 7% on the motorways and 37% in urban areas¹⁴.

On the TEN-T, motorways, rural roads and urban road networks, EU Member States should be working towards the same high levels of infrastructure safety. The newly adopted TEN-T Guidelines and accompanying funding mechanisms assure that European funds will only be granted to infrastructure compliant with the infrastructure safety and tunnel safety Directives.

- Promote the extension by all EU Member States of the four measures of the Infrastructure Safety Directive 2008/96/EC to other parts of the road network including all parts of the motorways, rural roads and urban road networks.

¹⁰ http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/pdf/vehicles/speed_limitation_evaluation_en.pdf

¹¹ 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.

¹² ETSC (2012) Drink Driving: Towards Zero Tolerance.

¹³ ETSC (2012) PRAISE Preventing Accidents and Injuries for the Safety of Employees.

¹⁴ ETSC (2011), 2010 Road Safety Target Outcome: 100,000 fewer deaths since 2001, *5th PIN Report*.

4) Vulnerable Road Users

Cyclists and pedestrians - Road deaths among cyclists and pedestrians have not been cut at the same pace as those for other types of road users, most of the progress has been seen among vehicle occupants.

The risk of being killed in traffic per kilometre travelled is more than 9 times higher for pedestrians than for car occupants and more than 7 times higher for cyclists than for car occupants.¹⁵ Yet the advantages of walking and cycling for public health and the environment outweigh their disadvantages.

- Encourage that within urban transport planning a clear hierarchy of transport users is adopted, with pedestrians and cyclists at the top of the hierarchy.

Powered two wheelers - In the EU27 PTWs represent 17% of the total number of road deaths while accounting for only 2% of the total kilometers driven.¹⁶

Motorcyclists face a much higher risk of being killed than other road users. For the same distance travelled, the risk for riders of being killed in road collisions is on average 18 times the risk of car drivers¹⁷.

- Evaluate the opportunity of introducing eCall and Intelligent Speed Assistance as a standard for new PTWs.

5) Traffic Law Enforcement

Increased and well publicised enforcement targeting the main risks of speeding, drink/drug driving and non use of seat belts on the road forms a fundamental part of achieving the EU 2020 target. Enforcement is a means to prevent collisions from happening by way of persuading drivers to comply with the safety rules. Deterrence is based on giving drivers the feeling that they run too high a risk of being caught when breaking the rules.

- Support Member States in preparing national enforcement plans with yearly targets for compliance in the areas of speeding, drink and drug driving and seat belt use.
- Strengthen the Cross Border Enforcement Directive within the context of the revision which is foreseen in 2016.

New Developments for 2015-2020

ETSC would also prioritise a number of other issues not yet in the scope of the RSPO.

¹⁵ ETSC (2003) Transport Safety Performance in the EU: a Statistical Overview.

¹⁶ ETSC (2011) 5th Road Safety PIN report, Chapter 2, Unprotected road users left behind in efforts to reduce road deaths.

¹⁷ ibid

Funding for Road Safety

EU funds should concentrate on the improvement of road safety through application of known, effective, science based countermeasures targeting the most life saving actions. DG MOVE has over the last decade supported many projects carried out by NGOs, including ETSC, to improve road safety. Over the past years the budget line has been substantially reduced. The budget line should be increased again to at least its former level.

Distraction

Driving whilst using a mobile phone and other electronic devices significantly impairs driving ability. ETSC proposes that the EU consider adopting legislation banning mobile phone (hand held and hands free) use during driving.

Work Related Road Safety

Road traffic accidents accounted for 39% of fatal accidents at work in 2005. ETSC recommends in its Policy Briefing "Reducing road risk: Driving for work" a number of areas that should be taken up by the EU. The most important one is that employers draft a road safety plan in compliance with EU legislation and based on a solid business case to improve the health and safety of workers.

Ageing Population

While elderly people account for one sixth of European population, every fifth person killed in road traffic is 65 years old or over. Moreover, due to population ageing, elderly people will represent an increasing share of the total population¹⁸. This could have a negative impact on road safety developments in the future.

The European Commission should

- Support and fund projects enabling life-long mobility. It should also involve elderly people in developing policy.
- Stimulate the design of the road environment to fit the abilities of the elderly.
- Encourage Member States to stress the role of doctors in influencing how long and under what circumstances an older person continues driving. This influence can range from direct advice to the patient to discussions with family members about an older person's problem with driving; if required.
- Within the context of the General Safety Regulation Review, encourage elderly-friendly design of new vehicles as well as evaluate the impact of new technologies on older drivers.

EU Road Safety Agency

ETSC fully supports the creation of a special Road Safety Agency. A safety agency exists for each other transport mode apart from roads. At present every one of the special EU agencies for safety fulfils a different role.

¹⁸ ETSC (2008), 2nd PIN Report, Chapter 4 Reducing Older People's Deaths on the Roads.

The role of a new European Road Safety Agency should be to

- Collect and analyse accident data and exposure data.
- Help speed up developments in road safety and provide a good catalyst for road safety information and data collection, and encourage best practice across the EU.
- Label unsafe roads and vehicles, identify unsafe behaviours, and communicate the results to EU road users.
- Propose new areas of legislation for improving road safety.

Further Reading

ETSC (2014) 8th Road Safety Performance Index Report

ETSC (2014) ETSC's Response to the European Commission's Urban Mobility Package

ETSC (2013) ETSC's Manifesto for the 2014 European Parliamentary Elections

ETSC (2013) ETSC Response to the European Commission's First Milestone Towards a Serious Injury Strategy

ETSC (2012) Funding for Road Safety in the EU's 2014-2020 Budget

ETSC (2010) ETSC Response to the Road Safety Policy Orientations 2011-2020

ETSC (2008) ETSC's Blueprint for a 4th Road Safety Action Programme

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