ETSC

European Transport Safety Council

Road Safety Priorities for the EU 2024-2029

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Introduction

Europe's approach to tackling road safety is in trouble. The EU, and its Member States, have agreed on targets to cut road deaths by half in the decade to 2030. But, according to the current trend, deaths are set to fall by only a quarter. There were 20,400 road deaths in the EU last year – down just 1% on the previous year. While this is a 10% reduction since 2019 - the baseline for the 2030 target - the downward trend has flat-lined in several Member States and risen in others.

In March, the European Court of Auditors issued its first ever report on road safety saying that the EU and its Member States will need to "move their efforts up a gear" to reach the 2030 targets.[1]

In its 2021 report on road safety the European Parliament called for "strong EU leadership to ensure that road safety remains a priority in road transport to help close the road safety gap between Member States and ensure that the EU remains a global leader in this domain".[2]

The European Union is not solely responsible for this underwhelming performance, Member States have a leading role to play in most aspects of road safety and a review of their road safety strategies is underway.

Notwithstanding the role of Member States, the importance of European Union legislation and road safety initiatives should not be underestimated. Unfortunately, recent progress was not what it should have been.

During the current European Commission and Parliament mandate 2019-2024, the ambition of new EU vehicle safety regulation was undermined by weak technical requirements for some key technologies. That will lead to fewer lives saved.

The European Commission's road safety package (March 2023), the flagship road safety initiative of the last mandate, includes reforms of driving licenses and cross-border enforcement. Regretfully, some of the most significant planned changes to driving licenses, include allowing 16-year-olds to drive cars, and 17-year-olds to drive lorries, are likely to make road safety worse, not better. A separate proposal to change the regulations on weights and dimensions of lorries will likely lead to a huge increase in the number of 'megatrucks' on EU roads, with no additional training requirements for drivers. These longer and heavy vehicles will

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[1] European Court of Auditors (2024) Reaching EU road safety objectives, Time to move up a Gear https://tinyurl.com/4294wr74
And EC Response to ECA Recommendations https://tinyurl.com/29d9tew8
[2] European Parliament (2021) Own Initiative Report the EU Road Safety Policy Framework 2021-2030 – Recommendations on next steps towards 'Vision Zero' https://tinyurl.com/5n75885u

also be unleashed on road infrastructure that was not designed for them – with potentially devastating consequences.[3]

At European level, there is an urgent need for strong leadership and action on road safety to get things back on track. This briefing will set out ETSC's priorities ahead of the start of the new mandate. It is vital that the newly appointed decision makers in the European Parliament and Commission hit the ground running and identify areas for action quickly.[4]

Such action will pay off in lives saved, but also in economic terms. ETSC estimates that the total value of the human losses avoided by reductions in road deaths in the years 2013-2022 is around €104 billion.[5] While for the families of road victims, no price can be put on their loss, policymakers do have to weigh up the costs and benefits of competing policies that must be paid for from limited resources. ETSC argues for measures that are cost-effective as well as lifesaving.

Financing at national level is also essential for creating and maintaining safe transportation systems that protect lives, promote economic prosperity and enhance overall quality of life. Governments must allocate and invest sufficient resources to address the complex challenges of road safety effectively.

Around 100 young people (aged 15-30) die on Europe's roads every single week. The vast majority of these deaths could be avoided using measures already proven to be effective. ETSC urges policymakers to end this epidemic, starting with a new commitment to achieving the EU's existing target of halving road deaths by 2030. The goal is achievable but it will take urgency and leadership.

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[3] ETSC (2023) Position on Revision of Weights and Dimensions 96/53/EC https://tinyurl.com/2tukxtr5
[4] EC (2019) Road Safety Strategy https://tinyurl.com/49tdbjse
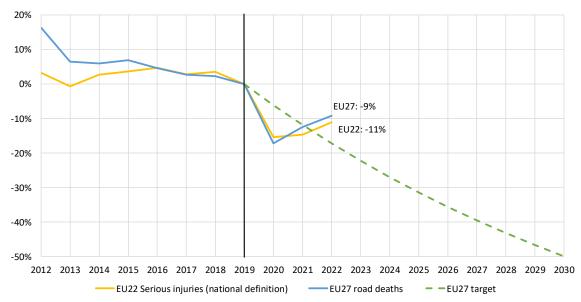[5] ETSC (2023) PIN Annual Report https://tinyurl.com/k4t69xf

Figure 1. Change in the number of road deaths in the EU27 since 2012 compared with the EU target for 2030 and change in the number of serious road traffic injuries in the EU22 based on countries' national definitions. *EU22: EU27 excluding FI, NL and SE due to lack of updated data and LT and IE due to inconsistent trend data. EU22 level of serious road traffic injuries in 2022 are an ETSC estimate as serious injury data for 2022 were not available for some countries.*

Key Priorities for the 2024-2029 Term

The EU Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030

The EU Road Safety Framework (2019) set up a new governance framework and actions on infrastructure safety, vehicle safety, safe road use (including speed, alcohol and drugs, distraction and the use of protective equipment), emergency response as well as the two crosscutting issues of enforcement and training.[6]

Firstly, governance: the European Commission must continue to fulfil its crucial role in supporting and motivating EU Member States to act. This should include effective co-ordination across the different Commission directorates by the Road Safety Coordinator.[7] At EU and national level there should be a clear emphasis that road safety is a crosscutting issue, not the sole responsibility of officials working on transport. It should be a concern shared across different sectors including health, education, urban planning, law enforcement, and environmental protection. The EU Road Safety Framework structure and Road Safety Coordinator, should also support monitoring of the implementation of the framework including key deliverables from other directorates such as DG GROW. Consideration should be given to transforming the position of the Road Safety Coordinator to that of a Road Safety Envoy, reporting directly to the Commission President.

ETSC Recommendation:

- Create the position of a "Road Safety Envoy", as soon as the next Commission is appointed.

An implementation report of the EU road safety framework is due in 2025. In the following sections, we review some of the key components and recommend next steps.

Key Performance Indicators

The Road Safety Framework proposed eight new Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for road safety with the intention, in a second phase, to set outcome targets.[8] In this next phase, KPIs

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[6] EC (2019) Road Safety Strategy https://tinyurl.com/49tdbjse

[7] ETSC (2018) Briefing: 5th EU Road Safety Action Programme 2020-2030. https://bit.ly/2LuTDBW
ETSC (2019) ETSC Response to EU Strategic Road Safety Action Programme: https://tinyurl.com/3fn29me8

[8] Baseline Project VIAS Recommendations and Conclusions (2023) https://tinyurl.com/5n6fve6u
Trendline Project Publications (2024) https://tinyurl.com/ys24nrya

should be adapted to progress in the different EU Member States. An upcoming report under the EU Trendline project will propose ways to use KPIs in policy making.[9]

ETSC Recommendations:

- Consider expanding the current list of KPIs to include, for example; enforcement, safe infrastructure for pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists as well as making further efforts to improve the data-set for the current KPIs.
- Introduce EU wide targets based on KPIs and encourage EU Member States to adopt national-level targets.

An EU Road Safety Agency

While the other main transport modes in Europe (aviation, maritime and rail) have dedicated EU agencies responsible for safety, there is no such agency for road transport. New technologies and trends make the case for an EU Road Safety Agency ever more urgent.

ETSC Recommendation - create a European Road Safety Agency to:

- Collect and analyse data, helping speed up developments in road safety and providing a catalyst for road safety information and data collection. [10]
- Develop methods for monitoring and evaluating national road safety strategies.
- Regulate and oversee independent investigation of road collisions, similar to other transport modes. Develop new safety standards for vehicles as well as overseeing and coordinating EU input to the UNECE vehicle regulation process.
- Mandate independent investigation of crashes involving vehicles equipped with assisted and automated driving systems, ideally coordinated by the EU Agency, before more advanced systems are put on the market.
- Oversee the safe rollout of automated vehicles through market surveillance and real-world testing.

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[9] The Trendline project is due to produce a policy advisory report to propose ways to use KPIs by in the policymaking process on national, regional and EU level. Trendline Project Publications (2024) https://tinyurl.com/ys24nrya

[10] ETSC (2018) Briefing: 5th EU Road Safety Action Programme 2020-2030. https://bit.ly/2LuTDBW

Capacity Building and Exchange

The European Commission must continue to fulfil its crucial role of supporting road safety best practice in EU Member States as well as pressing for the adoption of national targets and road safety action plans.

As mentioned, a review of the 27 national road safety strategies is in preparation. This is being carried out by the European Road Safety Observatory. The review will look firstly at data on deaths and serious injuries and key safety KPIs. A second phase will look at implementation under key policy areas. The final phase will evaluate how far policies are leading to improvements in road safety.

Road Safety Exchange

The EU Road Safety Exchange project aims to help tackle the disparities that exist between EU Member States on road safety.[11] The project is a three-year Preparatory Action of the EU (2023-2025) that consolidates and expands the network of road safety professionals built up under an earlier pilot project. Road safety professionals from the participating countries work together to share best practices on reducing speed, building safe infrastructure and improving enforcement and data collection, as well as the safety of pedestrians and cyclists in urban areas. At the core of the project is a series of exchange activities whereby leading EU road safety professionals share effective road safety measures and policies with their counterparts from the supported Member States. EU Road Safety Exchange is funded by the European Parliament and led by the European Commission. The project is managed by ETSC on behalf of the European Commission.

ETSC Recommendation:

- Set up a permanent funding mechanism for capacity building and exchange of best practice for EU Member States.

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[11] Road Safety Exchange Website for more information https://tinyurl.com/2nmb9vff

Road Users

Improving the Safety of Cyclists and Pedestrians

Cyclists and pedestrians represent a larger share of road deaths today as past vehicle safety improvements have mainly benefited car occupants. According to ETSC's latest PIN Report around half of cyclist deaths occur on rural roads with cyclists mixing with much heavier and faster moving traffic.[12] As active travel is being encouraged to help reach environmental and health goals, the safety of walking and cycling in particular must be addressed urgently. The EC should build on the 2024 EU Cycling Declaration[13] which recognises the need to work on cycling safety.

New EU legislation will require cities to develop Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs) by 2027. This is another opportunity to act on improving safe active transport.[14]

ETSC Recommendations:

- Deliver a new EU safe active mobility strategy with road safety measures and specific targets.
- Ensure the new Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs) integrate measures to improve walking and cycling and targets to reduce deaths and serious injuries.
- Earmark dedicated EU funds for safe infrastructure for cycling and walking and direct their investment based on risk analysis.
- Create an EU fund to support priority measures such as the introduction of urban 30 km/h zones.

Motorcycle Safety

While riding a motorcycle will carry more risk for the foreseeable future than driving a car, studies show that the implementation of dedicated safety measures can substantially improve motorcycle safety.[15]

ETSC Recommendations:

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[12] ETSC (2024) PIN Flash 46 Rural Roads https://tinyurl.com/29mwwpmw
[13] EU Cycling Declaration (2024) https://tinyurl.com/57xhmw3m
[14] Trans-European transport network (TEN-T): Council and Parliament strike a deal to ensure sustainable connectivity in Europe (2023) https://tinyurl.com/st27tw8x
[15] ETSC (2023) PIN Flash 44 Reducing Road Deaths of Powered Two Wheelers https://tinyurl.com/yz44rhaa

- Make theoretical and practical training mandatory for all categories (A1, A2, A and AM) and establish minimum standards for the training.
- Do not lower the minimum age for obtaining a driving licence for any category.
- Develop a standard for motorcycle-friendly guardrails.
- Mandate compulsory Anti-lock Braking Systems (ABS) for all motorcycles and study the feasibility of mandating ABS for mopeds.
- Consider the practical application of mandating the fitment of AEB and speed assistance systems on motorcycles.
- Evaluate the opportunity of introducing eCall for motorcycles.
- Ensure that ADAS systems installed in other vehicles, such as Automated Emergency Braking, can detect motorcycles.

E-Scooters

E-scooters have become an increasingly common sight on European roads. Comprehensive data on casualties and vehicle usage is not available, but injuries and deaths are increasing as the sector has grown.[16]

ETSC calls for common EU technical standards for e-scooters which should include, as a minimum[17]:

- A factory-set speed limit of 20 km/h as well as a 250W power limit.
- Anti-tampering measures to prevent use at unsafe speeds.
- Independent front and rear brakes, a minimum wheel size of 30.5 cm, lights, indicators and an audible warning device.

ETSC also calls for EU guidelines for e-scooter users as a template for national regulations:

- A minimum rider age of 16, or an age limit aligned with the minimum age for riding a moped.
- Mandatory helmet.
- A ban on riding with passengers, on pavements, while using a handheld mobile phone and under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Professional Transport

Up to 40% of all road deaths in the EU are work-related.[18] Duty of care, Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) and road safety compliance are legal necessities for employers in all EU Member States. The EU Directive 89/391/EEC on health and safety of workers requires every employer in

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[16] ETSC (2023) 'Recommendations on Safety of E-scooters' includes available data. http://etsc.eu/FRr9A
[17] ETSC (2023) Recommendations on Safety of E-scooters http://etsc.eu/FRr9A
[18] ETSC (2017), PIN Flash 33, Tapping the Potential for reducing work-related road deaths and serious injuries, Includes the full definition it includes professional drivers, travellers, commuters and people involved in collisions with professional road users and commuters (third party). https://goo.gl/A2KMQ7

Europe to undertake a risk assessment according to the principle of prevention. In addition, the global sustainable development goals (SDG) have led to the global road safety index initiative as a standard way to benchmark employers' efforts.[19]

Recent proposed changes to the EU Driving Licence Directive on minimum ages for truck, bus and van drivers are likely to negatively affect safety and are covered in section 'safe road use' .

With regard to Regulation (EU) 2020/1054 on minimum requirements on maximum daily and weekly driving times, ETSC recommends to:

- Work towards consistent levels of enforcement of working time across the EU.
- Support efforts to tackle fraudulent use of tachographs including equipping enforcement officers with knowledge and equipment and improving use of data sharing arrangements between agencies within Member States.

Vans

A total of 2,630 people were killed in collisions involving Light Goods Vehicles (LGVs) in the EU in 2018 alone, representing 11% of all road deaths.[20] This group deserves a special focus. Van use in Europe has continued to rise due to increased demand for home deliveries. Requirements for EU safety related legislation for larger professional vehicle classes should be extended to vans[21],[22].

ETSC Recommendations:

- Extend the current legislative framework for professional driver training to van drivers.
- Include vans in annual periodic technical inspections and roadside inspections under the roadworthiness package revision.
- Fit all new light goods vehicles (N1) with top speed limiters set at 130km/h.

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[19] Road Safety Index https://tinyurl.com/2cwn7hze
[20] ETSC (2020) How to improve the safety of goods vehicles in the EU? PIN Flash Report 39 https://bit.ly/3pFCEj6
[21] ETSC (2014), PRAISE Report, Managing the Road Risk of Van Fleets, https://goo.gl/bGdAXd
ETSC (2020) How to improve the safety of goods vehicles in the EU? PIN Flash Report 39 https://bit.ly/3pFCEj6
[22] ETSC (2020), Position Paper on Vehicle Roadworthiness Package, https://bit.ly/3kfZdI

Vehicle Safety

The EU has the exclusive competence to set minimum safety standards for all new vehicles sold on the EU market. These standards, set out in the General Safety Regulation (GSR), were last updated in 2019 and are due for revision in 2027.[23]

The life-saving potential of these updated safety measures was estimated to be 25,000 deaths prevented and 140,000 serious injuries over 15 years.[24] However, some of the technical standards for these measures fell short of expectations due to industry pressure, proclaimed technological immaturity and/or ineffective data privacy rules and could therefore fail to bring the hoped-for safety benefits.[25] Moreover, technological progress since 2019 has evolved rapidly and new promising safety measures are already available on the market. This underlines the urgency for a swift revision of the GSR in 2027 with a view of fixing past missed opportunities and incorporating the most promising new technologies.

One worrying trend is that, while most new vehicles fall under the requirements of the GSR, certain vehicles can instead be approved under the so-called Individual Vehicle Approval (IVA) procedure, which includes fewer safety requirements. ETSC and others have raised concerns over this loophole allowing large American pickup trucks – which are particularly dangerous for vulnerable road users – to bypass safety and environmental regulations.[26] Vehicles are also becoming heavier and larger with dire consequences for safety.[27]

In addition, in March 2024, the European Parliament voted to support the expansion in the number of extra-long and extra-heavy lorries on EU roads, with serious potential consequences for road safety.[28]

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[23] Regulation (EU) 2019/2144 on type-approval requirements for motor vehicles and their trailers, and systems, components and separate technical units intended for such vehicles, as regards their general safety and the protection of vehicle occupants and vulnerable road users. https://eurlex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2019/2144/oj

[24] TRL (2018), Cost-effectiveness analysis of policy options for the mandatory implementation of different sets of vehicle safety measures, https://bit.ly/3x4beNf

[25] ETSC (2023), Mandatory distraction warning systems won't detect most important types of distraction. https://bit.ly/3YMgr4E ; ETSC (2022). Opinion: will Intelligent Speed Assistance (ISA) live up to its promise? https://bit.ly/3Vpvxic ; ETSC (2022). Car black boxes will be virtually useless to safety researchers. https://bit.ly/3VtrSjA

[26] ETSC (2023), Concerns over loopholes allowing American pickup trucks to bypass safety and environmental regulations. https://bit.ly/3IK2A9l

[27] VIAS (2023) in ETSC SUVs and Pick Ups Make Roads Less Safe https://tinyurl.com/bdcvkssw

[28] ETSC (2024), European Parliament backs megatrucks – big lorries, big mistake. https://bit.ly/4cnb9Et

ETSC Recommendations:

- Ensure that all vehicles entering the EU comply with all relevant safety and environmental legislation, through updates to the requirements for Individual Vehicle Approval and the relevant type approval legislation.
- Review maximum limits to the size and weights of cars and vans.
- In the context of the revision of the Weights and Dimensions Directive, maintain the current Directive's framework on megatrucks.[29]
- Update the General Safety Regulation by 7 July 2027 to account for the latest advancements in safety technology.
- Update the minimum safety requirements for motorcycles (see section on vehicle safety).
- Ensuring fair access to vehicle systems and data, particularly for governmental activities (such as road safety analysis and policy making as well as vehicle approval, periodic and roadside inspection).

Automated and Connected Mobility

In order for the potential safety benefits of vehicle automation to materialise, it is important that the technology be deployed safely through a robust regulatory framework, which governs pre-authorisation testing, as well as through market surveillance. Having a central authority responsible for the safe rollout and use of automated mobility across Europe is vital and this should be a task of a dedicated EU road safety agency.

ETSC Recommendations:

- Set up an EU road safety agency that, among other things (see section on vehicle safety), prepares draft regulatory requirements for assisted and automated driving systems, plays a role in the type approval process of these vehicles, and coordinates market surveillance. The latter should include mandatory in-depth crash investigations of vehicles with assisted or automated driving systems which the agency should coordinate and/or conduct.
- Ensure a clear division between assisted driving on the one hand and automated driving on the other. Ensure that technologies that blur the line between assisted and

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[29] ETSC (2023) ETSC Position on Revision on Weights and Dimensions https://tinyurl.com/2tukxtr5

automated driving, such as hands-free driving and system-initiated manoeuvres on Level 2 systems, are not approved for use on European roads.

- Continually revise type approval standards to cover all the new functions of automated vehicles, to the extent that an automated vehicle will pass a comprehensive equivalent to a 'driving test' and be shown to be equivalent to a level at least as high as the best human drivers on the road.
- Mandate safety-enhancing Cooperative Intelligent Transport Systems (C-ITS) services on all new vehicles in order to accelerate the deployment and safety benefits of C-ITS as well as to ensure that all citizens in Europe benefit from connectivity.

Roadworthiness

The EU roadworthiness package is due for revision and consists of Directive 2014/45/EC on periodic roadworthiness tests, Directive 2014/47/EC on technical roadside inspections of commercial vehicles and Directive 2014/46/EC on the requirements for issuing registration certificates.

ETSC Recommendations[30]:

- Test cars, vans, all motorcycles (including mopeds), four years after their first registration date or earlier, then after at most two years, and subsequently every year.
- Assure a rigorous, impartial testing regime for all new in-vehicle technologies mandated and regulated under the GSR for their entire lifecycle. Automated vehicle systems and functionality should also be regularly tested.
- Include vans and all motorcycles in roadside inspections.

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[30] ETSC (2020) Position Paper – Vehicle Roadworthiness Package Implementation Reports
https://tinyurl.com/yskt2626

Safe Road Use

Speeding

Inappropriate speed increases the likelihood and severity of a crash.[31] Member States and the EU institutions should prioritise a range of integrated measures that keep road users at safe speeds. These measures include safe and credible speed limits supported by self-explaining and self-enforcing roads (see section on infrastructure), vehicles that help drivers to comply with speed limits, stricter laws, effective traffic law enforcement activities and road user education.[32]

ETSC Recommendation:

- Encourage Member States, through a European Commission Recommendation, to apply safe speed limits in line with the Safe System approach for different road types: 30 km/h on urban roads in residential areas and areas where there are high levels of cyclists and pedestrian, 70 km/h on undivided rural roads and a top speed of 120km/h or less on motorways.[33]

Driving License Directive

Around 40% of road deaths in the EU occur in collisions involving one or more young drivers or motorcycle riders.[34] Improvements to driver licensing could help prevent many of these deaths and injuries.[35]

The Council and the European Parliament have adopted their positions on the European Commission's proposal to revise the EU Driving Licence Directive. It will be up to the new MEPs, the next EU Presidency of the Council and the European Commission to finalise this important piece of legislation.

ETSC Recommendations:

- Support the new probationary period for novice drivers with a zero tolerance for drink and drug-driving.

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[31] ETSC (2019) PIN Flash 36 Reducing Speeding in Europe https://tinyurl.com/4p5hsbwn
[32] ETSC (2019), PIN Flash 36, Reducing Speeding in Europe https://bit.ly/38ueB1q
[33] ETSC (2019), PIN Flash 36, Reducing Speeding in Europe https://bit.ly/38ueB1q
[34] ETSC (2023) PIN Flash 41 Reducing Road Deaths Among Young People https://tinyurl.com/547shncj
[35] ETSC (2022) ETSC Position Revision of the Driving Licence Directive for full set of Recommendations: https://tinyurl.com/mszwsnb2

- Do not allow EU Member States to introduce an accompanied driving scheme for 17-year-old lorry drivers.
- Do not oblige EU Member States to further reduce the minimum recommended age for solo driving for bus and lorry drivers to 18 and 19 and delete the possibility given to Member States to further reduce the minimum age in the context of pilot projects.
- Remove the possibility for 16-year-olds to drive a car up to 2.5 tonnes, speed limited to 45 km/h under the B1 licence.
- Develop minimum standards for driver training and traffic safety education with gradual alignment in the form, content and outcomes of driving courses across the EU.
- Encourage EU Member States to set up and implement a demerit point system and to introduce stricter systems during a probationary period.
- Examine the expansion of continuous training for non-professional drivers post-license.

EU-Wide Effect of Traffic Offences

Increased, effective and well-publicised traffic law enforcement targeting the main risks of speeding, drink and drug driving, distraction and non-use of seat belts on the road are fundamental to achieving the EU's 2030 road death and serious injury targets.

According to the European Commission, non-resident drivers account for approximately 5% of road traffic in the EU, and a foreign-registered car is around three times more likely to commit a traffic offence than a domestically registered one.[36]

The Council and European Parliament reached an agreement on the proposal to revise the Cross-Border Enforcement Directive in early March. The Directive introduced the enforcement of financial penalties against drivers who commit an offence in a different EU Member State to the one where the vehicle is registered. The final agreement now has to be formally adopted by Council and Parliament.

No agreement has been reached on the accompanying directive on union-wide effect of driving disqualifications for major road-safety-related traffic offences committed in a Member State other than the one that issued the driving licence. ETSC fully supports this proposal.

ETSC Recommendations:

- Adopt the revised Cross Border Enforcement Directive.

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[36] EC, cited in ETSC (2022) Position on Revision of the Cross Border Enforcement Directive
https://tinyurl.com/2dmrfrbx

- Adopt the Directive on Union-wide effect of Driving Disqualifications for major road-safety-related traffic offences.

Fitness to Drive: Drink Driving and Drugs

Drink driving is highly dangerous. It is estimated that up to 2% of kilometers travelled in the EU are driven with an illegal Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) but around 25% of all road deaths in the EU are alcohol related.[37] Drink-driving remains the second biggest contributory factor to road deaths.[38]

The range of psychoactive substances available for illicit use is widening in the EU and this is further proven by the increased prevalence of illicit drugs in drivers killed in traffic collisions.

ETSC Recommendations:

- Propose a directive on drink driving, setting a zero-tolerance level for all drivers.
- Mandate alcohol interlocks for repeat offenders and professional drivers.
- Introduce an EU zero-tolerance system for illicit psychoactive drugs using the lowest limit of quantification that takes account of passive or accidental exposure.
- Adopt common standards and encourage greater uptake of roadside drug driving enforcement.
- Ensure the classification and labelling of medicines that affect driving ability and support awareness campaigns.

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[37] ETSC (2022) Progress in reducing drink-driving and other alcohol-related road deaths in Europe. https://tinyurl.com/yvvcpnkf
[38] Ibid.

Infrastructure Safety and Funding

ETSC welcomed the agreement in 2019 on the revision of the Road Infrastructure Safety Management Directive (RISM) 2008/96. The main changes under the revised legislation include: extending the scope beyond the trans-European transport network roads (TEN-T) to primary roads, more transparency, network-wide risk assessment and strengthening the requirements to protect vulnerable road users. Around half of EU deaths occurred on rural, non-motorway roads in the EU in 2022, some of these roads will now be in scope for the requirements of the new RISM Directive.[39] The EU Member States are currently working to implement these new changes and will have to report to the EC. The EC in turn needs to report to the EP and Council on RISM implementation in 2027 and start preparing for the next revision of the Directive stemming from that. The TEN-T Regulation has also been updated to include new safety requirements for that network.[40]

ETSC Recommendations:

- Extend the application of the instruments of the RISM Directive to cover all EU co-financed roads, all primary roads including all main rural and main urban roads.
- Support common EU curricula for auditors and inspectors, including specific training on the needs of VRUs: pedestrians, cyclists, PTWs, the elderly and road users with reduced mobility.
- Fast-track planned EC guidance due within the scope of the RISM Directive on applying the concepts of "self-explaining and self-enforcing roads" and "forgiving roadsides" and apply them beyond the scope of the RISM Directive.
- Eliminate removable obstacles from the roadside; if they cannot be removed, they should be protected by well-designed barriers.
- Apply the standard of separate carriageways for two directions of traffic, by a median barrier and install side barriers, on the TEN-T network.
- Set up the planned EC expert group to prepare a road classification network that better matches speed limit to road design and layout.[41]

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[39] ETSC (2024) PIN Report Rural Roads https://tinyurl.com/29mwwpmw
[40] Member States want to cut the number of EU roads that require safety upgrades https://tinyurl.com/bd3kex56
[41] Action under European Commission (2019) EU Road Safety Policy Framework 2021-2030- Next Steps towards "Vision Zero". https://bit.ly/2XXX8Xh

Stronger Financial Support for Road Safety

The EC's Strategic Action Plan proposed a package of funding measures to Member States which will be further supported by the 2021-2027 EU budget. There are new requirements the Member States must fulfil on achievement and assessment if they want to receive funds.[42] So, EU Member States must include, for example, an assessment of road safety risks in their multimodal transport plans in line with their existing road safety strategies. They also have to include a mapping of affected roads and sections, together with a prioritisation of the corresponding investments.

ETSC Recommendations:

- EU funds should support the implementation of those measures included in the EU Road Safety Programme 2021-2030 which have the highest lifesaving potential.
- Projects should be selected for funding that prioritise road safety objectives submitted under the Connecting Europe Facility, which have provided quantitative data on their expected results in terms of avoiding deaths and serious injuries.[43]

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[42] As noted in European Court of Auditors (2024) Reaching EU road safety objectives: Time to move up a gear Enabling condition 3.1.8 Annex IV of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 https://tinyurl.com/j5a6rdp7
[43] Key Recommendation from European Court of Auditors (2024) Reaching EU road safety objectives: Time to move up a gear https://tinyurl.com/4294wr74

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The European Transport Safety Council (ETSC) is a Brussels-based independent non-profit making organisation dedicated to reducing the numbers of deaths and injuries in transport in Europe.