

Road Safety under the Swedish Chairmanship of the Presidency of the EU

This Memorandum briefly outlines ETSC's priorities for the Swedish Presidency of the EU and presents our recommendations on key EU policy dossiers

ETSC welcomes the news that road safety will be one of the priorities under land transport during the Swedish Presidency of the EU. Strong leadership is needed to bring about renewed efforts ahead of 2010 and to sustain progress made in the last year, two years ahead of 2010. It is very unlikely that the EU will meet its target of halving road deaths between 2001 and 2010. A 17% annual reduction would be necessary in the next two years, compared to an average 4.4% annual percentage change between 2001 and 2008.

In 2008 for the first time, the 10 countries of 2004 enlargement brought an important contribution to the EU objective, by reducing road deaths by 10% between 2007 and 2008 compared to a 10% reduction achieved in the 15 countries. The two countries of the 2007 enlargement may however need targeted support from the EU in order to reverse their negative development in road safety.

With the formation of the new European Parliament after June's elections, preparations for the change in the European Commission College and an expected referendum on the Lisbon Treaty in Ireland in the autumn, Sweden has a difficult tenure ahead. Sweden must steer hard to keep road safety up on the agenda despite these crucial EU institutional changes to our policy landscape. However, this is an excellent time for getting minds focused on post 2010 and discussing what shape European road safety policy should take in the next decade.

Besides an effort in advancing towards the 2010 target, the second half of 2009 will also be the time when the EU will consider a new reduction target and a new strategy for its 4th Road Safety Action Programme (RSAP) to tackle the challenges of saving lives on Europe's roads beyond 2010 to 2020. Another important development is also being prepared: the White Paper on Transport Policy to 2050. There must be a strong link between these two important Commission communications.

Road Safety Developments in Sweden

Sweden is continuing its positive development with fewer and fewer people killed in road traffic. The year 2008 showed the lowest number of killed since 1934. Moreover, Sweden has one of highest levels of road safety in Europe with one of the lowest death rates at 43 per million population. The country has also progressed relatively well over recent years with a 28% reduction in road deaths since 2001 (the baseline for the EU target). This development is due to effective road safety measures, such as education, continuous increase of safety camera surveillance, wire separated road lanes a revision of all speed limits across the country. However it is thought that the main reason for the exceptional 16% drop in road deaths between 2007 and 2008 is partly due to the reduction of traffic volume accompanying the economic recession.

New national political goals for the transport system

The Swedish Government has proposed new national goals for the transport system. One of these goals concerns road safety. The over-arching approach for road safety in Sweden is Vision 0. Vision Zero's long-term aim is to have no deaths or severe injuries as a result of traffic accidents. An 11 point programme on improving road traffic safety adopting the Vision 0 approach and target was published in 1999. Sweden will keep the Vision Zero but shift some of the responsibility for the road back from the system designer to the road user. The Government declared that the road users also must carry their part of the responsibility. Yet it still the system designer who has the final responsibility, the road user should follow the rules and if they don't, due to not unwillingness or lack of knowledge, the final responsibility still rests with the system designer. For the road transport system the goal will be to reduce the number killed by 50% and the seriously injured by 25% between the years 2010 and 2020 (based on the 2004-2007 average). The time period will thus correspond with the new EU-goals for road safety. The new Vision 0 Strategy will also include new performance indicators which should quantify and measure progress and results.

Sweden is a leading country not only in road safety performance but also in management practice and ETSC hopes that, under its EU Presidency, the country will set an example at EU level promoting road safety as a matter of priority.

Intelligent Transport Systems Directive

As one of the EU's leading countries in ITS technologies this should be one of Sweden's top priorities in the field of transport during the Presidency. Sweden will also be hosting the World Congress on ITS in Stockholm in September where it is hoped other Transport Ministers will join for a special dinner to discuss progress in the EU. The Swedish Presidency should build on the progress made under the Czech Presidency. ETSC strongly supports the clear road safety goals set in the Action Plan and in the accompanying framework Directive especially under Articles 3 and 4. The 30th of March Transport Council stressed that the ITS technologies and systems that bring about the greatest injury reduction and life saving potential should be fast-tracked for deployment.

ETSC fully supports this and stresses that the ITS Directive should also promote specific safety relevant technologies in the Member States. We would like to see a specific reference made to the three most important technologies: Intelligent Speed Assistance, Alcohol Interlocks and Seat Belt Reminders for all seats. A link should also be made to the provision of a digital database of speed limits¹ under the Action Plan and Directive. This would be one of the essential ingredients for propelling forward progress of implementing intelligent speed assistance across Europe. The EU should also encourage the wider use of in-vehicle "Event data recorders" (black box) devices, which record vehicle situation before and during any accident and allow for additional useful information to be collected. This additional information could include speeding as well as vehicle manoeuvres which cannot be reliably identified by the usual police investigations.

In 2007 17,000 vulnerable road users (pedestrians, cyclists and users of motorised two wheelers) were killed in EU countries as a consequence of road crashes, contributing 40% of all road deaths. Thus, ETSC supports the commitment of the Council to prioritise actions improving VRUs safety in this Action Plan and Directive and asks the Council to take these into special consideration when considering the legislative text.

The European Parliament adopted its favourable report on the proposal on 31st March including many important amendments which would strengthen the Directive and enhance its safety aspects. The Swedish Presidency should

work with MEPs to reach an agreement on a Directive that would unleash the potential of technology and save lives on Europe's roads.

Future of Transport

In 2001, the Commission issued a White Paper setting the agenda for transport policy throughout 2010. Approaching the end of the ten-year period, the European Commission is looking further ahead and defining a vision for the future of transport and mobility, preparing the ground for future policy developments with a forty year perspective up to 2050.

The Commission recently launched a debate on the main challenges and opportunities for the transport sector in the long term (20 to 40 years). In response to the Communication on the Future on Transport, adopted by the Commission in June 2009 the Transport Council is expected to adopt Conclusions.

The Swedish Presidency should guarantee that health and safety related issues will not be overlooked by economic and environmental aspects. Sweden is indeed the best placed country in the EU to promote Vision Zero in road transport and maintain a high level of ambition in this area.

Road safety should always be viewed as an integral part of all transport policy considerations and not as a stand-alone issue. Road traffic volume alone is indeed the major single contributing factor to the occurrence of road crashes and related injuries, thus transport policy in respect to modal split is the starting point for any strategic decision making. Strategic tools such as target setting, planning and programming should provide a general framework for relevant policy making in the long term. Building upon the successful shared responsibility approach, the shift towards attributed responsibility and professionalism amongst the policy makers should be sought within the future strategy.

There is now a potential to move from compliance as a 'preventer' to compliance as an 'enabler' of the aims of road safety and environmental sustainability. This potential should be realised to its full potential.

4th RSAP and beyond 2010

The Swedish Presidency should consider another high priority looking to the closer future and supporting the European Commission in preparations for the 4th Road Safety Action Programme. As Sweden prepares its future

¹ The Swedish National Road Data Base could be an example <http://www22.vv.se/nvdb>

strategy and target setting the EU could benefit from the latest thinking from Sweden. In this vein it should also fully support the European Commission's planned wide ranging stakeholder consultation. ETSC launched its: **"Blueprint for the EU's 4th Road Safety Action Programme 2010-2020"** and hopes it will make a valuable contribution to the debate. ETSC proposes a shared target of 40% reduction of deaths with a further target to reduce injuries with lasting effects in each Member State by 20%. ETSC recommends the EU to adopt a target of 60% reduction between 2010 and 2020 of child deaths. Alongside these targets a vision is also needed to inspire and motivate all players to work together. ETSC also proposes a vision: *"Road Safety as a right and responsibility for all"* whereby simultaneous mobility and safety should be a fundamental right of EU citizens. This vision takes inspiration from the Tylösand Declaration adopted in Sweden by experts representing an international part of the road safety community in 2008 .²

The 4th Road Safety Action Programme should focus its top activities upon the main behavioural causes of death and injuries with lasting effect (speeding, drink driving and lack of seat belt and child safety restraint use) as well as badly designed infrastructure and vehicles. Alongside this the Programme should tackle new emerging trends such as the increasing numbers of motorcyclists among those killed or injured on the roads . It should work to reap the rewards of reducing speeds and the resulting reductions in road deaths and injuries with lasting effects, as well as in emissions of carbon dioxide. The Action Programme needs also to present policy solutions to take on the demographic challenge of an ageing society. The Programme should also ensure that companies and public administrations include road safety into their management parameters when managing their fleets and transport operations.

A new institutional setup with the aim of linking responsibility for implementing the Action Programme and for reaching the 2020 targets is also needed. This includes ETSC's proposal that every EU Presidency holder, both individually and in their troika formation, should make an effort to focus attention on road safety and ensure a regular meeting of Transport Ministers to concentrate on this topic.

The "Future of Transport" strategy should also reflect some of the key ideas proposed by ETSC for the 4th Road Safety Action Programme and these two future strategy documents should definitely be mutually supporting.

Cross border enforcement of traffic law in

the field of road safety

As the Czech Presidency has not made any progress on this important dossier it seems timely to prepare for the referendum in Ireland on the Lisbon Treaty. The possible ratification will make some key changes to both the procedure for adoption of such a text and the likely legal basis for a future Directive on Cross Border Enforcement. ETSC asks Sweden to work with the following Troika: (Spain, Belgium and Hungary) so as to pave the way for a renewed discussion on this dossier at the start of 2010. Sweden should also support the European Commission's efforts of re-drafting the text in light of a possible positive vote on Lisbon in the autumn.

ETSC welcomed the legislative proposal of March 2008 that would allow EU drivers to be identified and thus prosecuted for offences committed in a Member State other than the one where their vehicle is registered. Such a Directive is needed in an increasingly mobile, integrated and enlarged EU, where non-resident drivers make up an ever increasing part of the traffic flow. If road traffic violations are committed EU citizens are entitled to fair and equal treatment in whichever country they are travelling. Moreover as automated speed camera systems are growing, it will be particularly important to ensure a system which enables countries to follow up speeding offences across borders. Current co-operation agreements exist in the form of bi-lateral and multi-lateral agreements. However, they are often not able to deal with the increasingly complex cross-border problems posed by traffic offenders. One such problem is identifying the owner of the car: ETSC would like to see full owner liability being adopted throughout the EU. Moreover, 350 separate agreements would be needed if every Member State were to set up an agreement with every other. The European Parliament gave their overwhelming support to the proposed Directive with the adoption of their Report in the Plenary on the 17th of December 2008.

As the proposal will be re-drafted, given the difficulties in Council and upcoming Lisbon Treaty, ETSC would like to see that the proposal is extended to include an EU wide reference framework for convergence of enforcement best practices in the areas of speeding, drink driving and seat belt use. The Directive should thus encourage all EU Member States to consider improving their quality of enforcement. Moreover, also under a new Lisbon Treaty, this legislative instrument belongs to the EU's transport policy as it will clearly contribute to the EU's road safety policy and reaching

² Tylösand Declaration 2008.

³ The EU could also benefit from Working Group results from Sweden likely to be published in the coming months on tackling rising motorcycle deaths and the continued relevance of applying Vision Zero to this "user group".

the EU's target of halving deaths on the EU's roads by 2010 and the new target for 2020.

UN Ministerial Meeting on Road Safety

On 19th-20th November 2009 the Government of the Russian Federation will host the **First Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety**. The Ministerial Conference, requested by the UN General Assembly, represents a historic opportunity to make progress on addressing an important public health problem. The objectives of the Ministerial Conference are to:

- Draw attention to the need for action to address the large and growing global impact of road traffic crashes, in particular in low and middle income countries
- Review progress on implementation of the *World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention* and the UN General Assembly resolutions
- Provide a high-level global multisectoral policy platform to share information and good practices on road safety
- Propose a number of actions for the future, including a discussion of the resources needed to fulfill these actions.

At the helm of the EU, the Swedish government should feed in its own exemplary knowledge to the meeting but also that of other EU Member States. Crucial to its success would be ensuring that there is a high turnout of EU Ministers (from both Transport and Health) who would give their political support to furthering action on this important issue at a global level.

Speed and Climate Change

Another big priority for the Swedish Presidency is to achieve a new global deal on climate change at the next UNFCCC in Copenhagen in December. At a national level the government is keen to make progress on reaching its own national targets for a carbon free economy: 40% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and a vehicle stock that is independent of fossil fuels by 2030. Its vision is to have a sustainable and resource-efficient energy supply by 2050 with no net emissions of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. The Swedish Presidency should also raise the issue that speed reduction on Europe's roads would also directly lower the level of CO2 emissions.

In the EU, road transport generates about one fifth of the EU's CO2 emissions, with passenger cars responsible for around 12%. These emissions have risen between 1990 and 2004 by 26%. Efforts to promote 'Eco-driving' and speed limit enforcement can also contribute to reducing CO2 emissions. Furthermore, the Presidency should look to promote intelligent speed assistance as a tool to save lives and reduce greenhouse gases in the EU. Legislation which will contribute to reducing speed on Europe's roads including the Directive on Cross Border Enforcement, must be fast-tracked within the context of tackling not only safety but also the EU's climate change agenda. The European Union is committed under the Kyoto Protocol to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and in March 2007 EU leaders committed to a 20-30% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions overall by 2020. The Swedish government could use their Presidency as an opportunity to also stress the synergies in linking road safety and the sustainability agenda.

Literature on www.etsc.eu:

ETSC Position on ITS

ETSC Position on Cross Border Enforcement Directive

ETSC Blueprint for a 4th Road Safety Action Programme

ETSC PIN Annual Report 2009

ETSC Managing Speed Towards Safe and Sustainable Road Transport

Notes to editors:

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. The Council brings together 42 international and national organisations concerned with transport safety from across Europe.

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