



On the move

for safer roads in Europe

Keeping two wheelers firmly on the road

Motorcycles and mopeds have specific characteristics due to their lower levels of stability, visibility and protection as compared with other vehicles. This is why their rate of involvement in fatal and serious accidents is higher than those of other vehicles. Their riders are therefore to be considered a vulnerable category of road users. The European Commission is thus establishing a platform for motorcycle issues with a view to increasing safety, raising public awareness and taking appropriate actions. The European Motorcyclists' Forum is to be launched in Brussels on 28 June 2010, with the support of the Federation of European Motorcyclist Associations (FEMA).

The last decade has seen a significant decrease in deaths on EU roads. Unfortunately, deaths amongst users of powered two wheelers (PTW) – which include motorcycles, scooters and mopeds – have risen as a proportion of total traffic fatalities, from 10% in 2001 to 17% today.

Given the lower stability of two-wheeled as compared with four-wheeled vehicles and the relative lack of protection offered by PTWs, the risks of this form of transport are clear. Notwithstanding these risks, the number of people using PTWs is increasing. In fact PTWs are well placed to contribute to Europe's response to contemporary challenges such as climate change and congestion. Against the backdrop of the current economic crisis, they also constitute a cost-effective transport choice.

Sustained efforts

In light of the potential benefits offered by PTWs offset by the risks posed, the Commission is making sustained efforts to tackle the safety issue in the long term. It is doing this by developing an integrated approach to changing behaviour, implementing new technology and enforcing safety rules.

As regards behaviour, the necessary changes and greater shared responsibility of all road users can be achieved through open dialogue to increase public awareness of the issue and active participation of all involved parties in implementing tighter safety measures.



The European Motorcyclists' Forum will provide the platform for such a dialogue, allowing stakeholders to assess the problems that motorcyclists are facing and to consider and implement appropriate solutions. A key factor in this is awareness raising, particularly amongst the young. Under-25s account for around a third of EU motorcycle deaths and the vast majority of fatal accidents result from human error. Emphasising the need for caution when riding a PTW is vital for cutting fatalities. This should be accompanied by structural measures to make road infrastructure safer and more rider-friendly and by adequate deployment of advanced safety technologies on two-wheeled vehicles.

http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/events-archive/2010_06_28_eu_motorcyclist_forum_en.htm

Commission hosts Third European Youth Forum for road safety

The relevance that youngsters have in changing road users' behaviour and their position as future role models for the next generation demonstrates the importance of promoting road safety issues to Europe's youth. The European Youth Forum for road safety which takes place in the Commission's Charlemagne building in Brussels on 1-2 July 2010 aims to make a concrete contribution towards achieving this goal.

This is the third edition of the Forum following those held in 2008 and 2009. The roots of the event go back to January 2007 and a meeting in Paris organised by a group of NGOs active in road safety campaigns. During the meeting, a group of young Europeans expressed their desire to create a Europe-wide platform to enable them to discuss road safety issues affecting them on an annual basis.

Their official request to create a European Youth Forum for road safety was submitted to the Commission on the occasion of the first European Road Safety Day in April 2007. This request was welcomed and promptly accepted by the Commission, leading to the organisation of the first Forum in July 2008.

Defining scope and structure

Over time the scope and structure of the Forum has been defined more accurately and its overriding aim is to promote road safety among young adults. It should do this by facilitating exchange of good practice and experience between youth associations from across Europe, as well as through training and knowledge sharing on relevant issues.

More specifically, the objective of this edition of the Forum is to further strengthen the network and fix common actions to back up road safety messages in Europe. This can only be done with strong support from young people from all EU Member States and beyond. This year, the Forum will also host participants from the EU's neighbouring countries to the south and east.

The Youth Forum 2010 will focus on concrete projects and will provide participants with guidance for actions and tools to take back home, in order to reinforce road safety campaigns. The gear effect will be ensured by the continuous implementation of these activities throughout Europe over the next twelve months.

http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/events-archive/2010_07_01_european_youth_forum_en.htm

Safety first at level crossings

The International Level Crossing Awareness Day (ILCAD) is scheduled for 22 June 2010. It is jointly organised by stakeholders from road and rail transport in over 45 countries worldwide and backed by the European Commission DG for Transport and Mobility. During the day, communication actions take place in participating countries, all of which promote ILCAD's key message of: "Act safely at level crossings!"



ILCAD has been developed under a task force created by the European Level Crossing Forum (ELCF) which is chaired by the UK's Rail Safety and Standards Board and administered by the International Union of Railways. ELCF brings together road and rail professionals from around Europe and has a programme of education (amongst other aspects) which has seen it lead the development of ILCAD on the basis of the successful 2009 European Level Crossings Awareness Day (ELCAD). Activities to take place within the campaign include distribution of flyers, information campaigns in schools, radio and television broadcasts and press conferences.

Several hundred road and rail users and pedestrians die each year in the EU as a result of accidents that occur at level crossings. This is in spite of the numerous measures taken to indicate the presence of crossings and so warn users to take care, including mandatory stop lights and signals and setting out of basic traffic safety rules. Complacency may be an important factor in this, as many such accidents involve regular level crossing users.

Targeted action

The need for specific targeted action is underlined by the fact that level crossing accidents are not comparable to any other type of traffic accident. Aside from the human cost, they can cause economic disruption, hampering rail transport for some time due to infrastructure damage. Furthermore, the potential environmental impact of accidents of this type where road vehicles endanger the safe passage of rail freight, should not be underestimated.

Given the risks posed by level crossings, many countries have begun efforts to phase them out. However, this is likely to be a slow process due to the sheer number of crossings around the world and the funds and time needed for their removal and subsequent implementation of alternative solutions.

In the meantime, it is necessary to reduce accidents at level crossings by other means. A key element in this is educating road users and pedestrians and particularly regular crossing users, to put safety first when on and around level crossings – it is this group of people that are responsible for in excess of 90% of all accidents at level crossings.

Empowerment for responsible behaviour

The European Commission supports this goal and is empowering road users to take responsibility for their safety at level crossings by participating actively in the campaign. Commission ILCAD-related action has included organising a workshop on level crossing safety in April 2010 and financing production of a video clip for road users and pedestrians, complementing national undertakings.

Given ILCAD's message to "Act safely at level crossings!" it has a vital role to play in encouraging safe and sensible behaviour in such situations. The message highlights the responsibility of all road users and pedestrians to adhere to safety rules at level crossings and in so doing, to help to avoid many preventable fatalities.

As well as national, European and international rail, road and transport safety organisations, ILCAD involves governmental agencies, police forces and education and enforcement organisations. Looking beyond Europe, the Latin American and Australasian Railway Associations have signed up to the Campaign as have the partners in the Operation Life-saver programme.

Concerted action for cutting road deaths

The European Road Safety Charter is a European Commission initiative, launched in 2004 and aimed at developing a pan-European platform for improving road safety and cutting the number of fatalities on European roads. At the time of writing, around 1,700 entities have signed up to the Charter, including businesses, research bodies, professional associations, NGOs and local authorities.

All signatories make concrete commitments to take action in their respective fields of activity which should contribute to achieving the goals set out by the Charter. Signing up also gives participants the chance to exchange experience, ideas and good practices in order to pinpoint the best ways to improve road safety across the continent. In addition, working within the framework of the Charter ensures that all road safety-related measures carried out by signatories benefit from enhanced EU-wide visibility.

Events across Europe

A series of events is organised in cities across Europe at which the Charter is presented to local actors with a view to encouraging them to sign up and increase their involvement in road safety matters. During these "National Charter Tour" presentations, existing signatories also get the opportunity to describe the commitment they have made and their contribution to safer roads.

The first National Charter Tour event was held way back in June 2005 in Barcelona and the Tour continues to criss-cross Europe today. As part of its busy schedule, presentations during April and May 2010 have

been made in Rotterdam, Madrid, Riga and Dublin. These have proved very fruitful with over 100 signatories either signing new commitments or renewing existing ones in the four cities visited.

Upcoming presentations are scheduled to take place in Lithuania, Belgium and Austria during which it is hoped that many further signatories will be added and a range of new contributions towards lowering the number of EU road deaths will be set in motion.

<http://www.ers charter.eu/>

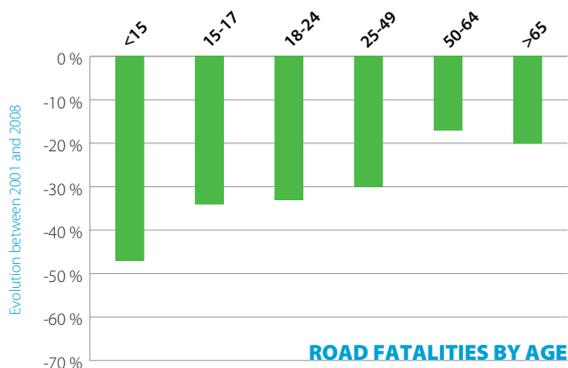
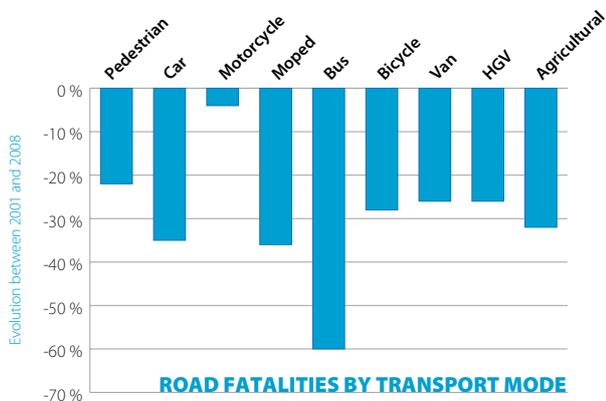
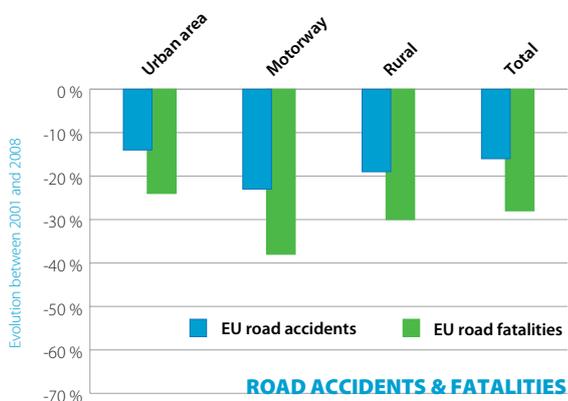




Statistics

Fewer fatalities across the board

Drops in the numbers of accidents and fatalities on the EU's roads were seen almost right across the board during the period 2001-2008, including on urban and rural roads and motorways and for all categories of transport. Reductions in fatalities were also observed for all age groups, with the considerable decrease in road deaths among the young (-47% for the under-15s) representing a particularly encouraging trend. Moreover, further decreases have taken place since 2008, with the number of road deaths dropping by a further 10% in 2009.



Event diary

● International Level Crossing Awareness Day

22 June 2010

● Launch of the European Motorcyclists Forum

28 June 2010

● Third edition of the European Youth Forum for Road Safety

1-2 July 2010 – <http://ryd.be>

● European Road Safety Day, Brussels, Belgium

13-14 October 2010

● European Road Safety Charter Excellence in Road Safety Awards

December 2010

<http://www.erscharter.eu>

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