

# European Commission Road Safety Workshop

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European Cyclists' Federation

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The participants were asked to answer three questions proposed by the Commission. Please find some ECF responses;

### What further commitments/initiatives can your organisation make to contribute to the reduction of serious road traffic crashes?

- ECF and members strive to increase the number of cyclists on our roads which in turn can help decrease the safety risk for each individual cyclist as well as for other road users
  - Safety in Numbers<sup>1</sup>
  - reducing the number of tonnes moving about in cities at high speed
  - providing the case for public authorities to provide safer infrastructure for increased cycle use
- Our members reach out to local/national authorities to create good infrastructure to reduce the actual, and perceived, risk for cyclists<sup>2</sup>, for the consistent application of high standards of cycle-friendly planning and design in all highway and traffic schemes, new developments and planned highway maintenance
- ECF and members campaign for safer vehicles, better drivers and consistent, impactful enforcement of road rules.
- ECF has members that champion justice on the roads, calling on (i) police forces, (ii) prosecutors and (iii) the courts to deliver strengthened traffic law enforcement, prosecution and sentencing respectively
- We explain the need for segregated infrastructure for cycling where there are high speed and volumes of motorised traffic, with good cycling infrastructure rolled out as part of an integrated, well-signed network of cycling routes
- In those countries where dark and night cycling is the norm, campaigns where cyclists are given and installed a set of functioning lights

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<sup>1</sup> A full literature review with many references can be found here (in Swedish)

[http://www.trafikverket.se/contentassets/e2cb0e0ce34744369e293d6d35d1091d/safety\\_in\\_numbers\\_minskar\\_risken\\_for\\_cykleolyckor\\_med\\_fler\\_cyklister\\_litteraturstudie.pdf](http://www.trafikverket.se/contentassets/e2cb0e0ce34744369e293d6d35d1091d/safety_in_numbers_minskar_risken_for_cykleolyckor_med_fler_cyklister_litteraturstudie.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> For links to ECF member organisations <http://www.ecf.com/about-us/our-members/>

- Many of our members continue to run and always try to improve training and education on cycling road safety as well as advocating their national governments to insist that drivers and professional drivers qualifications testing include knowledge of cycling and cyclists behaviour<sup>3</sup>
- We have campaigned, and continue to do so, for lower speed limits at local, national and European level<sup>4</sup>

### *How could your organisation contribute to further raise awareness of local authorities about required action for urban road safety?*

ECF has many outlets, networks, communication channels, with which we make local, national and European authorities aware of cycling issues. Including<sup>5</sup>

- Cycling Industry Club
- Scientists for Cycling
- National Cycling Officers Network
- Cities for Cyclists
- Leadership Programme
- World Cycling Alliance
- As well as around 85 national member organisations<sup>6</sup> with similar structures of communications and networks to ECF
- We also have a road safety network consisting of our national members road safety staff

ECF also runs a yearly Velo-city conference<sup>7</sup> that is held globally and European wide on alternate years. This acts as a clearing house for all cycling topics and issues including road safety. We are also active in providing up to date research and evidence for all cycling issues including road safety measures.

### *How can the Commission support such efforts?*

The European Commission has been charged, by the European Parliament in September<sup>8</sup> and the European Council in October<sup>9</sup> with putting together a strategic document on cycling development in Europe. We hope that road safety will be a part of that process.

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<sup>3</sup> Examples here <http://www.fietsersbond.nl/aanbod-fietslessen> and <http://www.ctc.org.uk/courses-and-training> and <http://adfc-berlin.de/service/angebote-verkehrssicherheit.html>

<sup>4</sup> <http://en.30kmh.eu/the-initiative/who-is-behind-this-eci-2/>

<sup>5</sup> ECF networks are explained here <http://www.ecf.com/networks/>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.ecf.com/about-us/our-members/>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.ecf.com/projects/velo-city-2/>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.ecf.com/news/the-european-parliament-approves-the-eu-roadmap-for-cycling-in-its-plenary-session/>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.ecf.com/news/102119/>

### The health aspect of cycling needs to be taken into account

It is essential that the Commission recognises the importance of cycling and walking as healthy, socially beneficial modes of transport. Because cycling (and walking) are active modes of transport they have many health benefits not just health costs (passive motorised transport only has health costs), these health benefits must be taken into account when promoting/implementing road safety interventions. Any road safety intervention that decreases the number of cyclists will almost always bring about a public health *disbenefit* no matter how effective the road safety measure.

It is important that Commission departments talk to each other and cooperate with regards to cycling, urban mobility are trying to increase walking and cycling, health departments are looking to active transport as a major public health intervention, while cities are also looking to move motorised vehicles out of cities and promote active forms of transport, this should be taken into account when reviewing road safety measures.

The European Commission could help communicate to local authorities the huge positive benefits of cycling and walking and to stimulate and prioritise cycling and pedestrian road safety. This also means not prioritising helmets and mandatory helmet legislation which often has the effect of *reducing* the number of cyclists, there is also limited evidence of the effectiveness of bicycle helmets<sup>10</sup>.

### Cycling promotion and road safety are interlinked

An increase in cycling actually leads to a reduced risk for each individual cyclist<sup>11</sup>. It can also lead to less motorised traffic and so less crashes for all<sup>12</sup>. In other words *increased cycling is not a threat to road safety*. Rather it is one of the healthiest activities that we can bring into our daily lives, as well as having a positive impact on road safety. A perceived increase in safety of 10%, brings an increase in cycling of over 10%<sup>13</sup>, an increase in the number of cyclists decreases the risk for each individual cyclist<sup>14</sup>. Though cycling has many problems with regards to road safety and far too many cyclists are killed or seriously injured compared to car occupants, cycling is as dangerous as walking per distance travelled<sup>15</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> [http://www.ecf.com/wp-content/uploads/Helmet-factsheet-17042015\\_Final.pdf](http://www.ecf.com/wp-content/uploads/Helmet-factsheet-17042015_Final.pdf) this is new and important research <http://www.ecf.com/news/helmet-effectiveness-research-forced-to-go-back-to-the-drawing-board/>

<sup>11</sup> Safety in Numbers. A full literature review on this can be found here (in Swedish)

[http://www.trafikverket.se/contentassets/e2cb0e0ce34744369e293d6d35d1091d/safety\\_in\\_numbers\\_minskar\\_risken\\_for\\_cykleolyckor\\_med\\_fler\\_cyklister\\_litteraturstudie.pdf](http://www.trafikverket.se/contentassets/e2cb0e0ce34744369e293d6d35d1091d/safety_in_numbers_minskar_risken_for_cykleolyckor_med_fler_cyklister_litteraturstudie.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0001457510003416> here

<http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayAbstract?fromPage=online&aid=8249504&fileId=S1466046610000566>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/0967070X9593248W> and

<http://repositorio.uchile.cl/bitstream/handle/2250/126683/Understanding-cyclists.pdf?sequence=1>

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1731007/>

<sup>15</sup> <http://jrs.sagepub.com/content/100/1/8.1.full> and <http://road.cc/content/news/68212-dft-casualty-statistics-rank-driving-cycling-walking-and-motorcycling-risk>

We should not isolate cycling road safety, rather it should be seen as part of a bigger picture of; public health<sup>16</sup>; environment<sup>17</sup>; road transport financing<sup>18</sup>; efficiency and congestion<sup>19</sup>; sustainable development<sup>20</sup>; economic development and growth<sup>21</sup>. Cycling is seen by public authorities as an excellent tool in helping alleviate problems in these areas, therefore increasing cycling (and walking) numbers is a major part of many public authorities' strategies. A huge barrier to cycling is the perception of safety risks. So it is important that cycling *looks* safe and is comfortable in order to promote healthier and safer modes of transport like cycling and walking, this will improve public health, in other words the perception of risk and safety is also an important element of cycling road safety.

#### Possible Specific measures

- Good data is essential; cycling data is lacking across Europe, we need good KSI numbers as well as km/time travelled to find good exposure figures to help track down and focus on areas of high risk. With this in mind the commission should look at KSI per distance travelled and not view the Netherlands and Denmark as the worst places for cycling road safety<sup>22</sup>. It is misleading to continually show absolute figures of Dutch KSI, the Netherlands is the safest country in the world to cycle and should be continuously promoted as providing many answers to cycling road safety problems. Currently the impression is often given that it is the Netherlands, Denmark, Germany etc. as the main cycling road safety liabilities, while Malta and Bulgaria are the best, this is perfectly incorrect and needs to be clear in road safety strategies and documents
- The Commission can showcase those countries that have high cycling numbers, excellent cycling facilities and safe infrastructure (they will be the same countries since more cyclists equals safer cyclists and vice versa)
- The Commission can support cycling road safety by financing research and even more important critical appraisal of the state of knowledge and dissemination of road safety as well as recommendations/examples of good practice, examples could include;
  - To really understand the Safety in Numbers phenomenon
  - The impact on road safety of electric bicycles, pedelecs and speed pedelecs
  - Elderly cycling and road safety as well as single bicycle accidents
  - ITS, smart cities and safer cycling, both the positives and the negatives
- Provide international comparative statistics for cycle safety, showing how the risk per km cycled (or per cycling trip) is changing over time in different EU countries.
- The Commission could help to define a standard in data collection and in developing a general use tool for VRU data collection (our Italian member is helping design such tools)

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.ecf.com/advocary/health-and-environment/>

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.ecf.com/advocary/health-and-environment/>

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.ecf.com/wp-content/uploads/Irish-National-Cycle-Policy-Framework.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.ecf.com/wp-content/uploads/Irish-National-Cycle-Policy-Framework.pdf>

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.ecf.com/human-rights/>

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.ecf.com/cycling-economy/>

<sup>22</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road\\_safety/pdf/vademecum\\_2014.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/pdf/vademecum_2014.pdf)

- An EU strategic target to reduce serious road injuries for member states can have a major impact on serious injury figures, just as it has for fatalities. The Commission should re-instate a serious injury target<sup>23</sup>
- There should be an urban road safety element within the Professional Drivers Qualification regulations, which includes how to interact with cyclists, pedestrians, P2W other than on in a motorway context
- We would like to see the possibility of extending the application of 2008/96/EC Directive on road infrastructure safety management to urban areas
- Vehicle technology is one of the major pillars of road safety and safer vehicles are always a major cycling concern for local authorities. We know for example that local authorities have to work on some types of vehicles like construction lorries in order to make them safer for cyclists. We hope that the Commission will be pushing for those technologies and designs<sup>24</sup> that can increase the safety for those outside the vehicle concerning updates to the General Safety Regulations
- HGVs and lorries are of particular concern. Other than safety within the vehicle itself the Commission could promote the work of local authorities such as Transport for London in their CLOCS programme<sup>25</sup> on how the construction industry can work on vehicle safety, or investigate the banning of HGVs in urban areas during the day (such as Paris). This could be included within work on SUMP which has an excellent opportunity to include road safety measures
- Speed is a crucial element of road safety<sup>26</sup>. The Commission should include Intelligent Speed Assistance in all new vehicles (General Safety Regulations). 30 kph should be the recognised default speed limit in urban and residential areas<sup>27</sup>
- Make a commitment to high standards of cycle-friendly design a condition of local/national funding transport-related funding streams<sup>28</sup> (for example TEN-T<sup>29</sup>, SUMP, H2020, Structural Funds etc.) where cycling could be impacted or included
- Continue the work on driver distraction, particularly with regard to smartphones and new in-vehicle technologies, and
- To provide local authorities and member states with good information concerning connected vehicles and road safety as well as provide funding and research for smart city development that includes cycling and walking safety and comfort. This includes making sure that connected vehicles are promoted as a major tool to make vehicles safer for cyclists

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<sup>23</sup> <http://etsc.eu/commission-road-safety-review-leaves-out-serious-injury-target/>

<sup>24</sup> [http://www.ecf.com/wp-content/uploads/ECF-report-on-HGV-cabs-direct-vision-and-amendments-to-Directive-96\\_3.pdf](http://www.ecf.com/wp-content/uploads/ECF-report-on-HGV-cabs-direct-vision-and-amendments-to-Directive-96_3.pdf)

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.clocs.org.uk/>

<sup>26</sup> <http://www.ecf.com/advocary/mobility/traffic-calming30-kh/>

<sup>27</sup> <http://en.30kmh.eu/the-initiative/who-is-behind-this-eci-2/>

<sup>28</sup> <http://www.ecf.com/advocary/eu-funding-2/>

<sup>29</sup> <http://www.ecf.com/advocary/eu-funding-2/eurovelo-cycling-and-the-ten-t/>