SIXTH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME
Priority 1.6 Sustainable Development, Global Change and Ecosystem
1.6.2: Sustainable Surface Transport

Police Enforcement Policy and Programmes on European Roads
Contract No: 019744
Working Paper 31

Opinions of stakeholders about Traffic Law Enforcement (TLE) policy and practice

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| Status and date      | Final 11/06/2008                |
| Dissemination level  | Public                          |
| Workpackage          | WP 1 Strategic, legal, administrative and social context of Traffic Law Enforcement (TLE) in member states |
| Task                 | Task 1.3 Stakeholders’ perceptions and influences on TLE in member states  
|                      | Sub-task 1.3.3 Identify other influential stakeholders and assess their impact on TLE policy and practice |
| Project start date and duration | 01 March 2006, 30 Months |
| File Name:           | PEPPER_W31_WP1_20080611.pfd     |
# PEPPER Project Consortium

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Abstract

This Working Paper describes the opinions and perceptions of a range of stakeholders towards Traffic Law Enforcement (TLE) in a small sample of European countries (the United Kingdom, the Czech Republic, Sweden, Greece and Poland).

The findings are based on in-depth interviews held with a variety of professionals, some in decision making positions and most of whom are not involved directly in traffic policing. The interviews sought to obtain the personal views on police enforcement policies and practices regarding speeding, drink-driving, seat-belt use, advanced technology, cross-border traffic, and attitudes towards EU harmonisation and Directives in the area of TLE.

The findings – qualitative rather than quantitative in nature – revealed a wide range of opinions, both positive and critical in nature. The need for effective enforcement was universally recognised, particularly in the areas of speeding, drink-driving and seat belt wearing. There was far less agreement about what constituted ‘best practice’ or how effective current practices were.

The state of economic development, unique socio-cultural attributes and the current status of technological devices, were some of the factors mentioned as influencing the actual intensity and impacts of traffic policing. The same factors play a role in the level of support for harmonization and EU-lead traffic regulations.
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background and Method

Working paper 31 summarises the activities in Task 1.3.3 of WP1 in the PEPPER project. Task 1.3.3 explored, through interviews, the opinions of 50 people who are directly or indirectly involved in decision making and other activities related to TLE. This group included politicians and policemen, local and national government employees, researchers and academics. Working papers 17 and 15 report on complementary investigations of, police officials and the general public, respectively.

The interviews focused on the issues of speeding, drink-driving and restrain use, Harmonization and cross-border traffic enforcement. The interviews sought to obtain the personal views on police enforcement practices, current policies, the use of technology and attitudes towards EU directives. Appendix 1 and 2, respectively, show the introductory letter sent to the contacted persons, and the interview guide.

In practice, not all issues were of relevance to all the respondents or they did not have knowledge or an opinion about them. On the other hand, many had observations or expressed opinions on other aspects of traffic police work in their countries, on the legal and political systems in general, on the efficiency and integrity of government agencies, on their perception of public opinion. The most relevant of these are also reported here.

The interviews took place in the United Kingdom, the Czech Republic, Sweden, Greece and Poland. Different number of persons and different sorts of positions and professions were interviewed in each country, therefore obvious caution must be exercised in interpreting the findings, especially with respect to country differences.

Findings by Country

Significant findings in the UK

Uppermost in the mind of stakeholders, when talking about technology and enforcement, were the speed and surveillance cameras (or safety cameras as they are referred to in the UK). While the use of cameras meant that there was more automatic surveillance of drivers some felt this should be in addition to ‘normal’ traffic policing activities rather than as a replacement for it.

The interviewees were sensitive to the fact that the rapid increase in the numbers of safety (speed) cameras was accompanied with a widespread public feeling that the cameras were more about raising revenue than increasing safety. There did not appear to be similar concerns about Red- Light cameras or about camera for recording illegal use of dedicated bus lanes.
Automatic speed enforcement has generated public debates not only about the number of speed cameras but also about related issues; how should the revenue money be spent, what ‘tolerance’ (speed over the limit before triggering the fine) was appropriate, what is a suitable legal speed on motorways (there is always a lobby for raising the speed limits), how to provide also for more visible enforcement by “real” police – especially of ‘dangerous’ behaviours.

Some stakeholders were knowledgeable about developments in in-vehicle and other technologies and predicted that in the future several dangerous (and illegal) behaviours, such as close-following / tail-gating, abrupt lane changing and some overtaking maneuvers, will be controlled automatically. Others commented that in the future it was possible to think of systems making it (more or less) impossible to commit violations, while others commented on the fact that we don’t apply enforcement (or self regulation) that is already available and proved to be effective.

The interviewees foresaw several implementation and acceptance issues with in-vehicle based systems, (such as GPS positioning linked to speed limit input and a speed governor or speeding record) because of the need for international legislation and the support of the manufacturers. But some pointed out that a universal application would actually be more acceptable to the public.

Others expressed the opinion that vehicle and driving controlling devices be ‘sold’ as driver aids (both for safety and comfort) rather than legal measures to take control away from the driver. This position is strongest among automobile manufacturers and motoring clubs.

There was increasing concern about the use of drugs, both recreational and prescription – and, importantly, the possible impairment caused by mixing drugs and alcohol. It was recognised that the overriding problem was in having a reliable and cheap measuring technology for impairment and setting measurable ‘limits’.

The same measurement problem was mentioned for the increasingly debated problem concerning fatigue – especially for so called “business drivers”, people who drive a lot even though they are not considered “professional drivers”. It was frequently commented the legislation and enforcement of the use of mobile phones was not yet as successful as might have been anticipated.

**Significances findings in Czech Republic**

All interviewees shared in the feeling that the number of accidents on Czech roads is alarming. They also agreed that the political agenda, mainly in the form of legislation and funding, should be a major force in improving road safety. They considered it as the necessary starting point for an effective enforcement chain.

However, stakeholders (many of them in the political arena themselves) were critical of apparent inconsistency and lack of following-through, of political and legislatives initiatives
regarding road safety and traffic enforcement. Making laws and regulations is not sufficient, especially if loops-holes are intentionally inserted in the laws, or when resources for enforcing traffic laws are not provided or even reduced.

The Czech Republic is one of the few states with legal limit of zero Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC). The policy is enforced with random breath-testing, breath-test at any contact with driver, evidential breath testing devices, strict punishment and intensive media campaigns. The policy has been generally accepted by stakeholders and they perceive the public as supporting it, as well.

There is a wide Czech consensus that drink-driving is dangerous and that drivers should not drink and drive. However, there are recurrent calls to relax the zero tolerance limit. For example, the Car Association of the Czech Republic lobbies for increasing the limit up to 0.05%, similar to what it is in most EU states.

EU TLE recommendations and directives are seen by stakeholders in the context of “Unification” laws and agreements that are discussed at the highest political levels. In general, there is consensus about inevitability of unify laws.

Beyond the general acceptance by the interviewees of the principle and need for more harmonization (and cooperation) in TLE practices among EU states, one could sense skepticism about the sharing of databases, the protection of personal data, the comparability of national legal systems, as well as concerns about the limits of national sovereignty and a host of practical legal, administrative and technical issues. Stakeholders believed that skepticism is widespread also among the general public.

**Significant findings in Sweden**

The Swedish interviewees were ambivalent about harmonization of safety and TLE laws and practices in the EU. Seeing themselves ahead of the EU in these areas, harmonization may sometimes imply “lowering of standards”. As expected, some emphasized the desirability of the “common” for the Union, while others (or even the same people) pointed to the uniqueness of each country.

Swedish stakeholders have a positive and realistic view of what TLE technology can do for compliance and safety. They also pointed to the concurrent need for manual enforcement and support services. Specifically they mentioned speed and Red Light cameras, Intelligent Speed Adaptation, Alco-locks, and a variety of other in-vehicle devices that might assist drivers to behave legally or avoid risky situations.

The interviewees saw great potential in so called passive enforcement technology (in-vehicle driver assist devices) suggesting that more could be done for increasing their reliability and market penetration.
**Significant findings in Greece**

The interviewees considered the current position of road safety in Greece politics as relatively low, as judged by the level of interest in the National Road Safety Plan. The first plan of 2001 has had a large political support and some success. Traffic police was a major actor in the plan. The 2\(^{nd}\) Strategic Plan for Road Safety remains a document and not a funded action plan.

Drink-driving enforcement by police was viewed favourably by the respondents. Drink driving was seen by them as the main safety issue on Greek roads, and they thought that the police do well with random breath testing program.

Greek stakeholders support greater use of technology throughout the enforcement chain, even if they disagree among themselves about automated speed cameras (perhaps indicating low support for speed control).

The interviewees agreed that Greece will need to adopt and implement EC directives on enforcement, and that the way of the future will be increased harmonization between EU states regarding TLE and related services (e.g. driver training, licensing, legal systems). They differed, however, in their assessment of how long it might take, the prerequisites, and the magnitude of the obstacles.

**Significant findings in Poland**

The interviewees in Poland were rank and file traffic policemen, not a mix of various stakeholders. Nevertheless, their opinions on TLE are of interest to the extent that they differ from the “official line” or point to issues affecting the actual practice of enforcement.

The underlying assumptions / attitudes police officers have on the “real” causes of accidents, and what needs to be done about it, may influence the manner in which they carry out their duties. This is even more likely when the field practice of traffic enforcement contains large element of general surveillance and allows a wide margin of police-officer discretion.

The interviewees held that drivers’ attitudes and style of driving are the main causes of road accidents. More specifically, the behaviours that account for the majority of crashes are excessive or inappropriate speed, drink-driving, inattention, carelessness, bravado, not giving right of way. Alcohol is seen as a facilitator for all the other unsafe behaviours.

The interviewees suggested that a major way of improving driving behaviour on Polish roads is to increase the number of police officers and equip them with more, and more advanced, speed detection units, breathalyzers, and other devices.

**General Conclusions**

The findings – qualitative rather than quantitative in nature – revealed a wide range of opinions, both positive and critical in nature. The need for effective enforcement was universally recognized, particularly in the areas of speeding, drink-driving and seat belt wearing.
There was far less agreement about what constituted ‘best practice’ or how effective current practices were.

Opinions about speeding, seat belt wearing and drink-driving issues were based on the specific current policies and enforcement practices in the each country. Yet many people were fully aware of existing differences between member states. This was most evident with regard to the questions of drink driving. In ‘zero limit’ countries (like the Czech Republic) the issues of having a higher limit (perhaps resulting from harmonization) was obviously different from those with a higher European ‘average’ limit (of 0.5%), or the United Kingdom with a higher limit of 0.8%.

Most interviewees appreciated the benefits of a lower BAC limit from an impairment perspective, setting a ‘zero limit’ was not considered as the best solution. This is because of potential practical problems with enforcement – at least when first introduced – but, even more importantly, because of the general role of alcohol in the European social and cultural lifestyle. Some interviewees opinioned that under certain conditions a zero limit could even have negative consequences. Nevertheless, it was considered that ongoing discussions would eventually likely to produce an EU consensus.

There was general agreement that blood based medical BAC testing takes time, is expensive, and reduces the efficiency of police enforcement. In some countries current legislation requires blood testing in a hospital setting as evidence of an illegal BAC. This is despite the fact that the police are often equipped with breath testing units that are as precise as blood testing.

In general, there was a sentiment supporting the use of modern technology for police traffic law enforcement and as means to increase compliance even without direct police involvement. Reservations were expressed about over-reliance on automatic technology (such as speed cameras) since this could reduce the important role of police surveillance, which was seen as crucial for dealing with a host of risky and illegal driving behaviours other than speeding and drink-driving.

Most stakeholders expected the current trend in enforcement technology to continue. They felt that a balanced combination of technology and traditional on-road police control was the most productive combination. In-vehicles driving-aid devices were also positively viewed as a way of improving compliance with traffic laws.

The harmonization of traffic regulations and sharing of enforcement information within Europe was also generally, but not always, welcomed. Harmonization of regulations and even practices was more acceptable than sharing of enforcement information. It was frequently pointed out that many difficult problems need to be resolved, most of all political and regulatory barriers, before this could happen. A number of interviewees noted the importance of a nation’s social and cultural characteristic in shaping its TLE system and the need of European TLE policy makers to be sensitive to national differences.
The state of economic development, unique socio-cultural attributes and the current status of technological devices, were some of the factors mentioned as influencing the actual intensity and impacts of traffic policing. The same factors play a role in the level of support for harmonization and EU-lead traffic regulations.
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BAC – Blood Alcohol Concentration
HITE - Hellenic Institute of Transportation Engineers
PEPPER - Police Enforcement Policy and Programmes on European Roads
TLE – Traffic Law Enforcement
1 INTRODUCTION

Working paper 31 summarises the activities in Task 1.3.3 of WP1 in the PEPPER project. Task 1.3 was about the social context of Traffic Law Enforcement (TLE). It was further subdivided into three sub-tasks, one exploring the opinions of traffic police officers and officials, the second one looking at opinions and attitudes of the general public, and the third sub-task, 1.3.3, has dealt with other stakeholders in the process of TLE.

This report is based on about 50 interviews with persons who are directly or indirectly involved in police enforcement, decision making and other activities related to TLE. This target group includes politicians and policemen, local and national government employees, researchers and academics. The interviews took place in the United Kingdom, the Czech Republic, Sweden, Greece and Poland. Different number of persons and different sorts of positions and professions were interviewed in each country, therefore obvious caution must be exercised in interpreting the findings, especially with respect to country differences.

The interviews focused on the issues of speeding, drink-driving and restrain use. Harmonisation and cross-border traffic enforcement issues were also examined. The interviews sought to obtain the personal views on police enforcement practices, current policies, the use of technology and attitudes towards EU Directives. Annexes 1 and 2, respectively, show the introductory letter sent to the contacted persons, and the interview guide.

In practice, not all issues were of relevance to all the respondents or they did not have knowledge or an opinion about them. On the other hand many had their own ‘agenda’ to voice, perhaps coloured by personal experience. They expressed their opinions, (sometimes as criticism or as praise), on other aspects of traffic police work in their countries, on the legal and political systems in general, on the efficiency and integrity of government agencies, on their perception of public opinion. The most relevant of these are also reported here.

Clearly, all opinions must be interpreted with the sample’s peculiarities in mind, and they should not be taken to reflect any official policy statements. Nonetheless, taken together, they do present a picture, however biased, of some of the thinking and issues that concern the way traffic law is, and can be, enforced within Europe.

The findings are presented, for each of the five countries taking part in the survey, in no particular order. It was not intended that these countries are either representative or typical of EU countries – or that they provide examples of either ‘good’ or ‘bad’ practice. They do however identify a number of critical issues and concerns that should be addressed both nationally and within Europe.
2 TLE IN THE UK: OPINIONS OF STAKEHOLDERS

The information summarised here was obtained by conducting in-depth interviews, usually by phone, with a variety of officials and stakeholders in the TLE chain in the UK. Some of the interviews were conducted in the context of a larger study that also addressed other policy issues. Therefore, a small number of people were interviewed from each of the following categories of stakeholders:
- legislators and public servants in the ministries making and monitoring traffic laws,
- law enforcement (police) officers,
- local authority administrators and traffic professionals,
- magistrates who deal with traffic offences,
- road safety researchers and academics,
- non-governmental organisations and charities involved in road safety.

The stakeholders interviewed covered the whole range of the enforcement chain, from legislation through police enforcement to the courts; they included employees of official government, local agencies and of private independent organizations; they consisted of practitioners, researchers and academics.

Stakeholders from every category were keenly aware that their influence on TLE, driver behaviour and safety is limited, as they are part of a chain and their impact depends on how well others in the chain perform. Many stakeholders expressed concern about the performance of other “links in the chain”, for example:

“I’m surprised by some of the behaviours I see, the police should have a bigger presence…”

Or:

“Some of the courts decisions you read about are shocking, sometimes they are too small and sometimes they are ridiculously high”

We believe that the data from these targeted and non-standard interviews are not suitable for statistical analysis and, therefore, the majority or common opinions are presented and no attempt is made to compare or differentiate opinions by type of stakeholder.

2.1 Importance of road safety on the political agenda

The current state of road safety in the UK was thought to be reasonable, especially when compared to some European countries; and even more so compared to developing counties in Africa and Asia. Of course, stakeholders could point to areas where further improvements were necessary or desirable, such as safety of children, pedestrians and cyclists.

“Our record on child safety is not good”
And ironically,

“If congestion continues to get worse it will solve the safety problem”

Politicians are happy to reflect that UK has one of the best road safety records in Europe so road safety - of itself - is not seen as being as important as current ‘favourites’ such as security, global warming, congestion, public transport, etc. However, the need to maintain and even improve the situation is still recognised as being important, yet more difficult to attain.

“Getting further improvements will be especially challenging; cars and roads are getting faster and the police have lots of other stuff to do”

Stakeholders generally accept the accident reduction targets set by Government (UK does not have a formal National Road Safety Plan), which are similar to the EC recommendations, and believe that the UK is performing well compared to other countries.

“We set ourselves challenging accident reduction targets as does the rest of Europe, but we make a real effort to hit the target”

They don’t support the idea of “zero fatalities” target, at least the way they interpret this vision.

“The ‘target zero idea’ is laudable, but laughable”

2.2 Support for current TLE policies and practices

The contribution of TLE to road safety was widely recognised, and there was a feeling that, overall, enforcement policies were working as expected.

“Our roads are safe; we must be doing something right”

Some commented that we made the best use of the limited resources available but more effort was still needed.

Several interviewees made observations about the changes in society that are reflected in more aggressive driving and different attitude towards the police.

“Compared to say 10 years ago drivers are more aggressive and I see lots more dangerous things going on”

“Drivers think about speed cameras but not about real police”

Regarding the three targeted non-compliance areas— non-use of seat belt, drink-driving and speeding, there was a general feeling that seat belt wearing was no longer a problem in the UK and that drinking and driving was less of a problem than 10 years ago. The consensus was
that the current problem to be tackled was speeding, which still remains a serious safety problem.

2.2.1 Seat belt enforcement

The common perception of stakeholders in the UK regarding safety belt use is that -

“Most people do it automatically nowadays”

“A few people ‘forget’, but I don’t think they are criminals”

The interviewees thought the situation with respect to seat belt wearing was a success story.

“I think our wearing rates are amongst the best in Europe”

The UK devoted a considerable effort into ‘education’ before making wearing compulsory such that when the law was finally introduced, wearing rates became amongst the best in Europe. The programmes targeting rear seat passengers and the use of child restraints were also producing good results.

“If you believe in protecting yourself why would you not do it for your kids?”

Therefore, there is little or no concern with active enforcement of belt-use. However, there is an expectation that education, information and campaign continue to address the necessity and benefits of using seat belts and child restraints.

2.2.2 Drink–driving enforcement

A common observation was that ‘drinking and driving’ was now generally seen as being ‘socially unacceptable’. In the UK there is some support among certain stakeholders for lowering legal BAC limits for driving, which is higher than is in most other EU states.

“If we make the limit too low some drivers will think it is unrealistic and be more prepared to take a chance”

“If we lower the limit do we also [will need to] lower the punishment”

The UK does not have a systematic program of random breath testing, nor the legal framework to support it. However, in practice, police in the UK conduct a fair amount of breath tests. The police can stop vehicles (targeting vehicles, not drivers) at random to check their roadworthiness. At that time, officers may conduct a breath-test if they suspect the driver has been drinking (e.g. their breath smells or their speech is slurred).

A number of police forces do conduct widely publicised road checks campaigns – typically around public holidays, especially Christmas. Drivers involved in accidents are routinely checked for alcohol.
The UK practice of drink-driving enforcement was viewed favourably by many interviewees:

“*The police are very experienced in whom to stop and test*”

“*By targeting breath tests we save time and money and get a higher ‘hit’ rate than other countries*”

“I don’t think the way we enforce drink-driving is too far from the best method”

Many of the people also observed that the overall risk of being stopped and breathalysed was not high but, nevertheless, did not support adopting an enforcement policy of massive alcohol breathalysing at road checks.

Most stakeholders were aware that the UK will be coming under increasing pressure to introduce RBT and ‘harmonise’ with other European countries – and also introduce a lower BAC limit.

While there was some support for ‘joining in’ with the rest of Europe (with a lower limit and having Random Breath Testing) most thought that the evidence was not there and that the current system was working well.

There was some criticism of the practice of drink-driving enforcement, and of public campaign messages advocating not drinking at all.

“*Why don’t the police target people driving out of pub car parks?*”

“*Drivers know our limit is high [compared to other countries] but we still tell them that the only safe way is to not drink (anything) – a mixed message*”

### 2.2.3 Speeding enforcement

The general consensus was that still have a long way to go to achieve full compliance - if this is a realistic goal.

“*There are fewer speeders than there used to be, but most drivers still squeeze the (speed) limit*”

A number of those interviewed believe that most drivers judge that ‘speeding’ a small amount over the limit is acceptable and the norm.

“*We know that speed is a factor in a large numbers of accidents, but drivers still think that the problem is for other drivers*”

They also perceive the public as believing that those caught speeding by cameras were simply ‘unlucky’ (rather than law breakers).
The recent, and ongoing, rapid increase in the use of safety cameras was also viewed as a concern for a marked number of the public who viewed it as more of a way of making money (in fines) rather than as a way of improving safety.

“They are everywhere”

“We can call them safety cameras – but drivers still call them speed cameras and think they are just another way of taxing the driver”

“We do need to inform the public that the fines go to safety programmes and improving public transport”

Almost all stakeholders recognised that cameras and the automation of speed enforcement were here to stay and that they have an increasing impact on drivers.

“They’ve been around for a long time and finally drivers are taking them seriously”

Some are even critical of the police for not extracting all the potential benefits form the automated systems;

“We paint them yellow and sell devices that warn drivers they are there – no wander drivers get a mixed message”

Clearly, many stakeholders did not feel that they have the public’s support for “going all the way” with speed enforcement. Perhaps this feeling reflects also their own hesitancy in the matter. They don’t sense that speeding is “socially unacceptable”, as is the case with drink-driving.

“We need to keep the public on our side like we did with drink-driving”

2.3 Public’s acceptance of current enforcement practices

The general consensus was that the general public are supportive of efforts to improve road safety and the majority of current enforcement practices in the three target compliance areas. In the areas of speeding and drink driving, however, the interviewees noted issues that have been debated in public and possible differences among the people making up the “public”.

The majority of stakeholders considered that seat-belt wearing rates in the UK were high compared to many other countries and that the use of child restraints, although not ‘perfect’ was also improving; but the use of seat-belts in the rear could still be markedly improved.

“I think wearing rates are high”

“The public have been persuaded that its common sense”
While the public (and stakeholders) recognise the role of excess speed in accident causation, there is an ongoing public debate about a series of issues such as speed limits, particularly on motorways and in residential areas, the numbers of speed (safety) cameras and the trend towards automatic enforcement rather than police patrols. As was mentioned above, many officials are sensitive to the claims that many cameras are installed primarily to collect revenues.

“We have to think about what is an appropriate number of cameras”

The situation is somewhat different with respect to drink-driving. The interviewees perceive that the majority of the public supports drink-drive legislation and enforcement; that only a small proportion of the public support more intensive enforcement and tougher penalties; that there is no public support for ‘zero limit’ on BAC when driving; and that most drivers believe that the likelihood of being stopped and breathalysed was lower now than a few years ago.

A number of stakeholders (mainly researchers) expressed concern that the steady long-term improvement in reducing drinking and driving since the introduction of the breathalyser had now stopped and that there was a possibility it would start to become more of a problem. It was mentioned that more young/novice drivers might be driving over the limit than a few years back, and that other groups (e.g. women in well paid and possibly stressful jobs) might also become more of a problem.

2.4 Stakeholders’ views of Police work in traffic enforcement

The general view was that the police had a job to do, and they generally do it well.

“It’s their job; it’s what they’re paid to do”

In the UK different police forces and individual officers have a fair amount of freedom in what they do, such as issuing a ‘ticket’ or giving a simple waning, the amount of excess speed to be tolerated, and how many drivers to breathalyse per shift.

Published information about each force’s enforcement activities (such as the number of breath-tests conducted) were not seen as ‘ranking tables’ but it was thought that it might influence how police officers were ‘encouraged’ to act.

Some of the more judgmental opinions about the police included the following:

“The police don’t want to alienate the public”

“Police like speed cameras, they don’t have to get involved”

“They have so may other things to do, such as sorting out accidents and escorting important people around that they don’t have much time to catch offending motorists”
2.5 Knowledge and opinion of EU Road Safety Policies and Directives

Most, but not all, were aware of the EU’s involvement and concern with the road safety situation on Europe’s roads. About half of the interviewed stakeholders were familiar with the existence of a ‘general’ policy regarding safety on EU roads, fewer were aware of its detailed contents (e.g. in terms of specific targets or the Recommendation on Enforcement). The general drive towards harmonisation in the transport sector was well recognised. The predominant attitude to the “Brussels Policies” was not particularly positive.

“More of their telling us what to do”

“If they all followed our lead it would be less of a problem”

“I’ve driven in Europe but feel safer in England”

“I don’t think many countries will hit the[safety]target”

Nevertheless, the issue of Cross-Border Enforcement was seen as a legitimate EU concern, but one that was far from being handled effectively. It was recognised as important for the UK and other countries, and that it will become even more important in the future. The following quotes express some typical opinions;

“Foreign HGV drivers just ignore our rules (e.g. on driving hours)”

“I don’t think the necessary information is there”

“If we can’t do it properly in our own country – how can we do it around the whole of Europe?”

“I think we are trying but its some way off yet”

“The problem is getting everyone to agree”

2.6 The future of Enforcement Technology and related issues

The general view was that the use of technology would continue to increase at a rapid pace, irrespective of whether this was good or bad. Technology freed up police personnel resources and allowed them to devote more time to issues like security.

Uppermost in the mind of stakeholders, when talking about technology and enforcement, were the speed and surveillance cameras (or safety cameras as they are referred to in the UK). While the use of cameras meant that there was more automatic surveillance of drivers, some felt this should be in addition to ‘normal’ traffic policing activities rather than as a replacement for it.
The interviewees were sensitive to the fact that the rapid increase in the numbers of safety (speed) cameras was accompanied with a widespread public feeling that the cameras were more about raising revenue than increasing safety. There did not appear to be similar concerns about (camera) technology that targeted red-light running and illegal use of dedicated bus lanes.

Automatic speed enforcement has generated public debates not only about the number of speed cameras but also about related issues; how should the revenue money be spent, what ‘tolerance’ (speed over the limit before triggering the fine) was appropriate, what is a suitable legal speed on motorways (there is always a lobby for raising the speed limits), how to provide also for more visible enforcement by “real” police – especially of ‘dangerous’ behaviours.

Some stakeholders were knowledgeable about developments in in-vehicle and other technologies and predicted that in the future several dangerous (and illegal) behaviours, such as close-following/ tail-gating, abrupt lane changing and some overtaking manoeuvres) will be controlled by automatically. Others commented that, in the future, it was possible to think of systems making it (more or less) impossible to commit violations, although this was some way off and the public’s response to such ‘control’ was uncertain.

Yet others commented on the fact that we don’t apply enforcement (or self regulation) that is already available and proved to be effective.

“Why have speed limiters in lorries but not cars?”

“Why do we sell cars that can go 3 times faster than the highest speed limit in this country”

The interviewees foresaw several implementation and acceptance issues with in-vehicle based systems, (such as GPS positioning linked to speed limit input and a speed governor or speeding record) because of the need for international legislation and the support of the manufacturers. But some pointed out that a universal application would actually be more acceptable to the public.

“If it is the same for everyone it will be less of a problem”

Others expressed the opinion that vehicle and driving controlling devices be ‘sold’ as driver aids (both for safety and comfort) rather than legal measures to take control away from the driver. This position is strongest among automobile manufacturers and motoring clubs.

“At the moment we are some way off the robot car”

There was increasing concern about the use of drugs, both recreational and prescription – and, importantly, the possible impairment caused by mixing drugs and alcohol. It was recognised that the overriding problem was in having a reliable and cheap measuring technology for impairment and setting measurable ‘limits’.
“The increase in recreation drugs is frightening”

The same measurement problem was mentioned for the increasingly debated problem concerning fatigue – especially for so called “business drivers”, people who drive a lot even though they are not considered “professional drivers”. It was frequently commented the legislation and enforcement of the use of mobile phones was not yet as successful as might have been anticipated.

“Businesses expect too much of their drivers for them to be safe”

“You still see drivers using their phones on a regular basis”
3 TLE IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC: OPINIONS OF STAKEHOLDERS

In-depth interviews were conducted with several officials and stakeholders in the Czech Republic. They included local politicians, Members of the Parliament, Member of the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament, police Ministry administrators and traffic police chiefs. These stakeholders represent different aspects of the enforcement enterprise: legislation; policy, funding and management; traffic police field work.

3.1 Importance of road safety on the political agenda

All interviewees shared the feeling that the number of accidents on Czech roads is alarming. They also agreed that the political agenda, mainly in the form of legislation and funding, should be a major force in improving road safety. They considered it as the necessary starting point for an effective enforcement chain. However, stakeholders (many of them in the political arena themselves) were critical of apparent inconsistency and lack of follow-through, of political and legislative initiatives, regarding road safety and traffic enforcement. Making laws and regulations is not sufficient, especially if loopholes are intentionally inserted in the laws, or when resources for implementing or enforcing the traffic laws are not provided or even reduced.

“There is lack of political culture and will in relation to road safety in The Czech Republic. There are tendencies to weaken the road safety legislation – e.g. the case of the restraint systems for children, there are still exceptions and transitory periods in the last year’s legislation.”

"There is the National Road Safety Strategy and the Enforcement Action Plan, but the key issues do not change – mainly the legislation. In the last year there was positive development, in the shape of new traffic law. But at the same time the numbers of traffic police officers is decreasing during the last 10 years (20% decrease),and technical equipment is insufficient."

Another observation made by stakeholders is that in the Czech Republic road safety is considered to be the responsibility of only the police and, therefore, is viewed mainly as a matter of limiting or punishing drivers. Other stakeholders need to be more active and safety needs to be promoted also by positive means.

“Activities for increasing road safety are reduced only to police enforcement, but also other tools should be used and other organizations involved. Traffic police is the only organization dealing with road safety”.

“Road safety is based only on repression now, and this is, I suppose, wrong”. “The insurance companies should be involved to motivate drivers, local authorities should participate more, principles of traffic calming should be applied.”
Nevertheless, most stakeholders remain optimistic that the new legal actions will be effective, especially if the general public is more informed and involved and accepting their responsibilities as well.

“Last year’s legislation and policies/measures, mainly the penalty point system, are effective. But there is the need to improve the public perception of the road safety problems and accident consequences – fatalities, property damages, environmental damages.”

3.2 Opinions about current policies and practices in TLE

Speeding, drink-driving and non-use of seat belts are perceived by the interviewees as the main causes of fatal accidents in The Czech Republic. For that reason, they agree that enforcement of these behaviours is indeed very important.

3.2.1 Enforcement of Seat belt wearing

Opinions about police enforcement of belt use reflected some ambivalence by many interviewees. They believed that seat belt wearing is being enforced, as part of everyday controls, and supported enforcing use of restraint systems by children and juniors. On the other hand, they held to the old attitude that use or non use of seat belt by an adult person is one’s own decision and that it should be treated in other ways then police enforcement (insurance etc.).

“Seat belt use is a matter of prevention and education of drivers, rather than of repression.”

The support for imposing high fines on seat belt violators is not unanimous among stakeholders.

“More informational campaigns and less strict punishments, because absence of seat belt endangers just drivers himself.”

“Police controls of seat belts have mainly informative and preventive goal. The fees for violation of seat belts norm could be lower.”

It appears that the message of previous belt-use campaigns - that driving without seat belts threaten other – has not filtered to all stakeholders, including legislators.

Czech stakeholders would have liked a technical, rather than enforcement, solution to the issue of belt use, such as automatic warning or ignition interlocks. They pointed to the old age of the car fleet and the high cost of cars with new safety technology, as factors impeding higher belt use rate.
3.2.2 Drink-driving enforcement

The Czech Republic is one from small group European countries with legal zero limit of Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC). The zero tolerance policy was introduced in middle of 20th century. Random breath-testing, intensive media campaigns, breath-test as part of very control (contact with driver), strict punishment, police well equipped with screening and evidential breath testing units, are the other elements in the policy of drink-driving enforcement. The policy has been generally accepted by stakeholders and they perceive the public as supporting it, as well.

“There is enough of attention give to enforcement of drink driving, and Czech Republic has in this regard very good results in comparison to other European countries.”

On the other hand, some stakeholders (mostly those in political positions) suggested what they conceived as improvement in alcohol testing practices, more targeted breath-testing, instead or in addition to the random breath testing procedure.

“Why don’t the police target people driving out of pub or in car parks? Why allow them to sit in car and cause accident?”

This is perhaps also a reflection of some public sentiment, which may be expecting more positive detection of drinkers are not sufficiently aware of the preventive function of the Random Testing policy.

Two controversial issues, which are currently discussed in the media and in the parliament, were also voiced by the interviewed stakeholders. Both are in some ways technical issues, but they also might have larger implications on the efficiency and impact of drink-driving enforcement. One issue concerns allowing evidential breath-test in accident case; the other is the proposition to raise the legal BAC limit from zero to 0.02 %.

Under current legislation only blood tests, in hospital setting, are accepted as drink-driving evidence in cases of accidents. This is despite the fact that police is equipped with breath testing units that are as precise as blood testing. Medical testing takes time, it is expensive, and it reduces the efficiency of police enforcement. Many stakeholders expressed a wish to change the situation. However, they also doubted that a change will take place due, in part, to strong opposition by forensic medicine lobbying.

There is a wide Czech consensus that drink-driving is dangerous and that drivers should not drink and drive. However, there are recurrent calls to relax the zero tolerance limit. For example, the Car Association of the Czech Republic lobbies for increasing the limit up to 0.05%, similar to what it is in most EU states. Ironically, the same organization organized a recent campaign promoting not drinking at all, because “Alcohol does not know how to drive your car” [‘Alkohol Vaše auto řídit neumí].
Some of the supporters of relaxing the zero limit claim that it is “just” a technical issue. They quoted the (essentially correct) fact that zero BAC is not a medically - clinically reliable measure, as up to the 0.02% alcohol could be naturally generated in the bloodstream by means of various metabolic processes not including ingestion of an alcoholic drink. Therefore, charging a “violator” whose BAC is over 0% but no more than 0.02% is unfair. In fact, a medical blood test of such a case will result in a “Negative” outcome.

The arguments about unfairness and unnecessary extra testing costs, were countered by other interviewees, who pointed out that the technical issue can be handled by police procedures (e.g. issuing a warning citation when BAC measured is equivalent to 0.02% or less), without changing the basic legislation, a move that can send a wrong and confusing message to the population.

3.2.3 Opinions about speeding enforcement

Most of the registered traffic offences in The Czech Republic are the speeding offences, which are very important target of enforcement. While speeding was recognized as a risk factor, several interviewees wished to add that “not only driving over the speed limit is [dangerous]”; also irregular speed, lack of courtesy or plain reckless driving behaviour, often associated with speeding.

“In general, the big trouble in Czech Republic is reckless driving. Mostly connected with high speed.”

Another factor seen as responsible for speeding is the fact that vehicles sold to the public are capable of driving way over the any legal speed.

“It would be better to start debate for convincing the car producers not to produce such strong and fast cars, [instead of installing]not to install the speed limiters on strong and fast cars.”

Automatic speed enforcement is accepted by all stakeholders, as are Red Light Cameras.

“Camera systems for enforcement of speed, red light and other offences are useful, especially with regard to today’s demands. Good documentation of offence is required. Also density of traffic flow is high so that it is not so easy to carry out the control in classical way. There are still some legislation needs to make automatic enforcement fully effective. Police needs more cars with high quality search and measurement devices and with recording techniques (to record offence and also as a tool against corruption).“

But many voiced concerns about insufficient police and other administrative resources to handle the large amount of citations that would be generated by automated cameras.

“The biggest trouble is with exacting of so many violations, which the automated technology is able to record.”
3.3 Opinions about Automated Enforcement

Czech stakeholders see the increased reliance of Traffic Enforcement on advanced detection, recording, communication and processing technologies as inevitable.

“Human resources are and will forever be limited and numbers of traffic law violations will increase together with increasing car use – therefore the importance of technology in enforcement will still increase.”

But they also see a continuing important role for traditional enforcement and visible presence of police personnel on the road.

“Most effective enforcement is combined – police officers on the streets together with automated systems. There is evolution in the violations, rise of new violations etc., so the policemen on the streets are necessary.”

“Most effective is the policeman on the street – but at the same time it is the most expensive way with low productivity.”

“Crucial point is to use other means for speed management than only police enforcement – particularly traffic engineering measures.”

“The ideal would be the combination of cameras and policeman controls.”

Many believe that police checks, in person, have unique benefits.

“Police controls have two benefits compared with the automatic technology: quick resolution of a violation event (on the spot) and preventive function.”

or

“It is not only about the fees; many times is useful to talk with the driver and alert him to the wrong doing.

Stakeholders pointed out several limitations and concerns regarding automated enforcement technology referring mainly to speed enforcement.

“Cameras could be useful but also link to some problems – human rights and privacy, huge amount of administrative actions, and also the danger of conflict of interests between road safety minimize violations and business interests of a firm providing the outsourced services more violations mean more work and income.”

“…automated speed enforcement systems, could be very helpful; but doubts about the possibility of following-up all violations – that will represent huge administrative and financial burden.”
Many interviewees were somewhat sceptical about the contribution or acceptance of in-vehicle devices that could encourage or force compliance, such as Alco-locks, or seat-belt reminders.

“speed limiters or alcolocks – such measures represent no obstacle for “the inventive Czech people”, there is always possibility to overcome them.”

They did approve of systems that worked automatically without driver involvement, such as automatic head light switching.

### 3.4 Stakeholders’ view of Public’s acceptance of current enforcement practices

In the view of most stakeholders, the general public sees traffic law in a positive way. Furthermore, they believe that most people accept the idea of more traffic police control, and other safety measures announced by the government in 2007.

They credit positive media and directed campaigns for strong public support for the safety measure in general and for TLE, in particular. Social rejection of Drink-Driving and support for intensive enforcement in that area, was often given as an example good synergy between information campaigns, media discussions and police enforcement.

“Interesting phenomenon is, that the information campaigns which accompany some new legislation have greater impact, than the legislation itself – e.g. the campaign before the implementation of new legislation in July 2007 has increased safety on the roads very markedly already in June.”

The interviewees pointed to certain subgroups in the citizenry who do not support TLE or to issues that are of concerns to some citizens.

“Some people take the enforcement as necessary, some people take it as bullying”

“The acceptance of TLE is lower only by motorcyclists. Due to different lifestyle and different values they perceive police enforcement as oppressive and they are diminishing it.”

Human rights and privacy issues are on the public agenda also in relation to TLE, particularly regarding automatic cameras, mass records or “vehicle owner responsibility”.

Another concern is that speed (or other control) enforcement is done selectively at road spots where it is easy to catch drivers making a violation, in order to increase revenues from citations. Some people might even suspect that police officer benefit personally at such locations. The interviewees rejected this minority perception, defending the police.

“Some drivers think, that speeding enforcement is done at locations where the policemen are able to earn as much money on sanctions as possible. But this is not true. Police measure the
speed at sites where speeding could be most dangerous, as near schools, public transport stations etc. – and set up their controls there.”

The way of future for European road safety lays in improving traffic law enforcement through new technology devices, unification and good practices of rules. Combination of traffic engineering measures, policeman controls, technology devices (control technologies around the streets as well as passive enforcement devices inside cars) seems to be an effective way to improve road safety.

3.5 Stakeholders opinions on EU level TLE policy

EU TLE Recommendations and Directives are seen by stakeholders in the context of “Unification” laws and agreements that are discussed at the highest political levels. In general, there is consensus about inevitability of unified law but opinions are not uniform.

“To implement unified European enforcement legislation would be of extraordinary importance for road safety in Czech Republic – our legislation is very bad; worst legislation is probably just in Germany. When the European Union would impose such legislation upon us, it could have just good effects.”

“Attempts to unify the enforcement at EU level get at the problem of geographic differences, because its hard to enforce the violations in the same manner; various violations have various seriousness in various countries.”

“Some unified methodology could be useful as well, but not unified authority.”

Beyond the general acceptance by the interviewees of the principle and need for more harmonization (and cooperation) in TLE practices among EU states, one could sense scepticism about the sharing of databases, the protection of personal data, the comparability of national legal systems, the limits of national sovereignty, as well as concerns about a host of practical legal, administrative and technical issues. Stakeholders believed that scepticism is widespread also among the general public.

“In the case of the 2004/345/EC proposal for cross border enforcement, there is problem with personal data treatment, which represent a risk of abusing them.”

“In the case of the cross border enforcement proposal, the European Commission went totally out of bounds. The offences have no cross border applicability! It’s not possible to inflict sanctions on Czech citizens for offences committed abroad and vice versa. EC wants at least to have all-European validity for driving license suspension – but even in this effort it is not successful. Therefore, there is no sense to inform about other offences.”

“But the possibility of collecting all of the inflicted fines is chimera. Reason is the difference in the law exacting between Czech Republic and for example the Netherlands.”
“How to handle cases which present offence in one state, but do not present offence in the state of the offender?”

Social and cultural characteristics are also very important in solving traffic safety issues. Especially regarding the unification issue, it is necessarily to pay attention on national differences.

“How can not have higher than zero limit of BAC, they will exploit it request raising the legal BAC. But in The Czech republic is we need a bigger restriction than in other states.”
4 TLE IN SWEDEN: OPINIONS OF STAKEHOLDERS

Six persons professionally involved in traffic and safety work, but not directly related to TLE, were interviewed.


2. Traffic engineer of the Linköping municipality and working with traffic safety planning.

3. Teacher in a driving school in Linköping.

4. Employer at the Swedish Road Administration working with traffic solutions for traffic safety (physical planning and physical measures).

5. Head of the National Association for Road Safety, NTF consisting about 50 member organisations. NTF represents different interest groups in the community with the common goal to increase traffic safety.

6. Staff member of the NTF, responsible for research projects.

4.1 Views on current situation in safety and TLE

The interviewees see Sweden as a pioneering country in road safety initiatives, including the area of TLE in general and in speed control, drink-driving and seat belts, in particular. Sweden is a model for other states and for EU Directives.

“Although we did this even before the EU directive so it is automatic for us.”

“A goal of zero vision already exists. We are going to reach it.”

“Roads are being improved and new speed limits introduced.”

Although they are generally optimistic about the direction that Sweden is going on road safety, they suggest that politicians could do more to achieve the zero vision.

“the feeling is that the politicians have not really followed up what zero vision demands even as regards political decision-making”

“It’s easy to say that more money is needed. On the other hand I consider that what the politicians have is an opportunity to influence and push harder on the legislative issues.”

The Swedish interviewees were ambivalent about harmonization of safety and TLE laws and practices in the EU. Seeing themselves ahead of the EU in these areas, harmonization may sometimes imply “lowering of standards”. As expected, some emphasized the desirability of
the “common” for the Union, while others (or even the same people) pointed to the uniqueness of each country.

“Having the same rules is good. If we constitute European Union now, then rules should permeate the whole field.”

“I think each country can have its own plan and then stick to it. Our situations are completely different. We have different cultures, etc...”

4.2 Stakeholders perception of public’s acceptance of enforcement practices

**Speeding**

“All interviewees believe that the public supports the safety policies, the speed limits and the enforcement practices. The public in Sweden are an involved civic society, and once they approve of speed limits they also accept the need to enforce them. “they have voted for those people and they represent the public. It’s rather obvious. In Sweden we have referendums; Everything has to be discussed ad infinitum.”

“When creating legislation the police must naturally always have control. I think most people accept that there is a check on it.”

But on a individual level, the behaviour is not necessarily in complete line with the public stand of the same individual.

“Well, the public probably wants road safety, particularly where they live so, yes, they want it. On the other hand it is not certain they themselves want to keep to that speed when out driving. The right hand does not know what the left hand is doing, so to say.”

“In fact, people rather boast a bit about speeding... /.../ We don’t see the danger in high speeds”

“It is still speeding where people feel in some way that their integrity is being infringed.”

**Drink-driving**

Drink-driving legislation is generally accepted.

“As regards drunk driving we have a high acceptance”

“I believe that most people do, yes. Particularly drunk driving, I think there is great acceptance for that.”

“Well, this much can be said: there is no doubt at all that people are willing to drive sober.”
“Alco-locks in cars and soon naturally in heavy vehicles, all commercial traffic. When the technology has been developed I think it will also be a sales argument in the future. Ours [the organization of the interviewee] have alcolocks. I believe it will come.”

**Seat belt**

Use rate is already high. Seat belt use is not a subject of primary enforcement in Sweden, but it is addressed through informational campaigns. The interviewees believe that further progress in this area must depend mainly on technology.

“Well, we have a relatively high incidence of using seat belts. However, to get any further technology is needed. It’s impossible to improve through information.”

Potential of new technology in TLE Swedish stakeholders have a positive and realistic view of what TLE technology can do for compliance and safety. They also pointed to the concurrent need for manual enforcement and support services. Specifically they mentioned speed and Red Light cameras, Intelligent Speed Adaptation, Alco-locks, and a variety of other in-vehicle devices that might assist drivers to behave legally or avoid risky situations.

“It is in fact possible to change people’s behaviour. If people know that speed cameras exist on certain roads, for instance, then they will decrease their speed.”

“Obviously we need live people to monitor, but technology has allowed some people insight and a little understanding, as well as having a reducing effect on speeds, etc.”

“I believe cameras are cost-effective in relation to the result obtained. However, cameras are not sufficient as regards driving under the influence and other traffic offences. I don’t think we can do without the presence of the police.”

The interviewees saw great potential in so called passive enforcement technology (in-vehicle driver assist devices), suggesting that more could be done for increasing their reliability and market penetration.

“I think all these technical support systems are good and they should perhaps be more forceful than they perhaps are marketing them. Like the problem of sleep. I believe sensors that can sense drowsiness and so on are excellent.”

“I cannot set priorities, but support for speed adjustment, we’re talking about technical support now. Alco-locks in cars and seat-belt reminders. The technology is already available in these three areas.”
5 TLE IN GREECE: OPINIONS OF STAKEHOLDERS

Interviews were conducted with members of the Hellenic Institute of Transportation Engineers (HITE), driving instructors, and a member of the European Road Safety Charter.

5.1 Importance of safety and traffic enforcement in the political agenda

The interviewees considered the current position of road safety in Greece politics as relatively low, as judged by the level of interest in the National Road Safety Plan. The first plan of 2001 has had a large political support and some success. Traffic police was a major actor in the plan.

“In 2001 the 1st National Strategic Plan for Road Safety was laid down under Ministry of Public Order. Traffic Police was the only public service involved which made a big progress and contributed most to the objectives set for road safety. The numbers of police checks have increased a lot”

The 2nd Strategic Plan for Road Safety remains a document and not a funded action plan.

“Prime Minister has declared that road safety is an issue high on his political agenda but there is no statutory action supporting this statement, the National Strategic plan on road safety has not been applied or adopted, there is neither budget nor a unique authority responsible for the issue of road safety.”

The ministry of Public Order and the police are seen as responsible for road safety, but TLE is just one of the tasks of police and, according to the interviewees, it is performed in the same way as it has been done in many years, only with higher fines.

5.2 Views on current enforcement policies and practices

The interviewees were rather critical of the way traffic policing is carried out in Greece.

“The problem with the current enforcement policy is that the checks are in a way set-up, having as target the collection of big numbers of violation tickets and not real enforcement” [in the sense of systematic work-plan with compliance or safety objectives] “In principle what is left from the newly introduced policies[of the first strategic safety and enforcement plan] is the “high fines”. There is no change in attitude of traffic police or the public; this can only be achieved through education.”

The interviewees believe that the public at large do not support their traffic police, mainly because they see it as focused on money making.
“I consider the traffic law enforcement in Greece to be too much focused on money collection through fines (non systematic and high level of fines). When the checks are set for confirming (minor) violations, you lose trust in Traffic Police and do not accept the increased level of enforcement and what should be the target of government authorities.”

They also believe that the enforcement policy (such as exists) of Traffic Police command is not truly supported by the rank & file police officers on the roads, especially with regards to the high fines.

“I believe that Traffic Police forces (at low level) do not accept the level of the fines and for this reason they face difficulties in doing their job. This refers to low level traffic policemen because the high level officials adopt the political directions.”

“The policeman on the street many times is forced to twist his duty and assign other kinds of violations with lower level of fines. They would prefer to be ordered to perform real enforcement and not to be checked by the number of tickets they bring back to the office.”

Drink-Driving enforcement by police was viewed more favourably by the respondents. Drink driving [and not speeding] was seen by them as the main safety issue on Greek roads, and they thought that the police do well with random breath testing program.

“I propose to extend the application of the random breath testing throughout the day, 24 hours. Alcohol is in my opinion No. 1 danger (and other substances such as drugs and narcotics).”

“Important steps forward have been done in random alcohol checking field. Starting from 200.000 checks in 1998, moved to 800.000 tests in 2001 and 1.500.000 checks in 2006. Target is ¼ of drivers to be checked annually.”

The interviewees were aware that belt use rates in Greece are low compared to many EU states. While they considered information campaigns and education as more appropriate tools to promote restraint use, they were also critical of police actions in belt-use enforcement.

“The number of checks has increased in volume but is not applied systematically and it seems that there is a loss of objective.”

5.3 Views on Technology and Enforcement

Greek stakeholders support greater use of technology throughout the enforcement chain, even if they disagree among themselves about automated speed cameras (perhaps indicating low support for speed control).

“I believe it is necessary and should be placed in various parts of the TLE chain. We have the negative example of the partial use of technology with film using cameras to keep BUS-LANES free of cars. The use of technology must be efficient and statutory supported.”
“I find very useful the dynamic signs which indicate the real speed of the passing driver in contrast to the existing speed limit at this point.”

“I do not agree on Automated speed enforcement because I believe that we do not possess the cultural level necessary to use the technology and the information only for the purpose of road safety concern for abuse of privacy. I believe that it will not be possible to apply the measure because of people’s reaction.”

Opinions about in-vehicle driver assistance systems were diverse; the technology is clearly judged by expected safety impact and not by compliance or enforcement relevancy.

“I am definitely against the use of passive enforcement means, because the driver’s resources are very limited and this technology (e.g. intelligent driver speed assistance) leads to the opposite results on road safety, according to a study carried out by our organization privately.”

“I am not an expert on this technology but I am positively positioned to start with.”

“I believe that systems like the sleep alert are positive.”

5.4 Views on EC enforcement recommendation and harmonization of TLE in the EU

The interviewees agreed that Greece will need to adopt and implement EC Directives on enforcement, and that the way of the future will be increased harmonization between EU states regarding TLE and related services (e.g. driver training, licensing, legal systems). They differed, however, in their assessment of how long it might take, the prerequisites, and the magnitude of the obstacles.

“I agree in principle with the main points of the recommendation. Regarding speed driving, I agree with the recommendation because I believe that systematic enforcement may bring a change in the behaviour of drivers.”

“I do not believe that the application of the recommendation is possible in the short term because of lack of statutory arrangements and lack of coordination between involved authorities.”

“I believe that there should be a uniform European driving license and a prerequisite for the acquisition of this driving license should be the knowledge of the driving code peculiarities of every country. Foreign drivers should be allowed to drive only if they have a European driving license. Cross border enforcement should be applied.”

“It is necessary to create the same level of education, training and culture regarding driving and road safety.”
There could be benefits for Greece from adopting EU directives and from harmonization:

“EU has much more well targeted rules and regulations which will help Greece. But these rules and regulations should not only apply to usage but to infrastructure as well.”

The uniqueness of Greece (and each state) must be considered

“The peculiarities of each country must be taken into account in order to bring national initiatives in line with EU policy (speaking about Greece).”

“If the change is not a part of the society it will fade away and be devaluated.”

“In the long run: with a lot of optimism I hope there will be a convergence of the Greek environment to the European recommendations or directives.”
6 TLE IN POLAND: OPINIONS OF STAKEHOLDERS

The interviewees in Poland were ten rank and file traffic policemen, not a mix of various stakeholders. Nevertheless, their opinions on TLE are of interest to the extent that they differ from the “official line” or point to issues affecting the actual practice of enforcement.

6.1 Views on typical police enforcement practices

The interviewees described what traffic patrols actually do. While checking speed, drink-driving or seat-belt use were common activities, checking for other violations occupied a very significant part of their time. Some of the other checks, such as vehicles’ technical condition or validity of driving document, requires long contact with a stopped vehicle.

Patrols target certain types of vehicles more than others. For example, professional drivers (of buses, coaches, trucks and TIR lorries) are checked more thoroughly. It is in their case that more attention is paid to the vehicle's technical condition, validity of the driver's medical examination certificates, compliance with the allowed driving schedule and duration. Similarly, old vehicles may be targeted too for vehicle condition check, while new vehicles or young drivers may be targeted for speed checks and alcohol checks, respectively.

The interviewees viewed the role of a traffic policeman not only as a dispenser of citations and fines, but also of an educator and “character reader”. Not every violation has to be punished. Sometimes a reprimand was sufficient. This was often the case with restraint use violation.

“For minor offences, such as the non-wearing of seat belts, you can reprimand the driver, but with grave offences, such as failing to give right of way, you give tickets.”

“Seat belt offences usually end in verbal reprimands.”

Police patrol personnel put high value on general surveillance; just being seen on the roads and being seen doing some road checks is believed to improve traffic behaviour, including that of cyclists and pedestrians.

“Thanks to our visibility, the more police are on the road, particularly in crucial areas where there tend to be more offences, then, surely, that limits the number of offences.”

“When they spot a stationary police patrol by the road or driving along the road, they try to be more alert and don't break the law.”

“The mere visibility of policemen and police radars contribute to drivers complying with the law.”
Therefore, the interviewees suggested that a major way of improving driving behaviour on Polish roads is to increase the number of police officers and equip them with more, and more advanced, speed detection units, breathalyzers, and other devices.

6.2 Opinions about the causes of traffic crashes on Polish roads

The underlying assumptions / attitudes police officers have on the “real” causes of accidents, and what needs to be done about it, may influence the manner in which they carry out their duty. This is even more likely when the field practice of traffic enforcement contains large element of general surveillance and allows a wide margin of police-officer discretion.

The interviewees held that drivers’ attitudes and style of driving are the main causes of road accidents. More specifically, the behaviours that account for the majority of crashes are excessive or inappropriate speed, drink-driving, inattention, carelessness, bravado, not giving right of way. Alcohol is seen as a facilitator for all the other unsafe behaviours.

When asked of their opinion about lowering urban speed limit from 60 km to 50 km (a widely debated issue at the time of the interview) their general support for the initiative was very qualified. They were concerned about their ability to enforce the lower speed limit, they worried that the speed limit might be detrimental to the flow of the traffic, and they wondered whether there could be some other solutions, rather than a general law on a speed limit in built-up areas.

The police have a rather poor view of pedestrians and cyclists. They don’t see them as “vulnerable road users” but as careless road users. They pointed to the fact that alcohol abuse is an issue with all road users, not only drivers but also pedestrians and cyclists.

“Pedestrians are to blame for many road accidents. Pedestrians generally don’t comply with traffic regulations.” “This is a frequent cause of accidents: pedestrians just don’t pay attention, don’t look around, trust traffic lights, trust whatever is going on. This is crowd mentality: one person moves and instantly everybody else follows.”

Policemen think that the same goes for cyclists: they cannot anticipate, they do not signal to show that they enter the road, they do not have lights lit.

"Due to the lack of cycle tracks, cyclists very often ride on pavements. They ride on pavements and then they ride on a pedestrian crossing and this is against the law."

The policemen were convinced of the efficacy of seat-belts. “Seat belts have saved many lives. Since seat belts became the law, there’s every sign that they have been saving lives.”

“Failure to use seat belt does not generate more accidents of itself. No doubt, however, that it contributes to a higher number of casualties.”
“Drivers, disregard seat belt regulations but even minor bumps, cause injuries of the front of the body, i.e. the face, the head, the chest.”

Nevertheless, when it comes to enforcing seat belt use law, police often substitute the fine with a verbal admonition. According to some, they tend to do it with older drivers in old vehicles, in rural areas, and less likely in the case of young urbanite drivers and passengers in new vehicles.

Their support for the law requiring adults to transport children in appropriate child restraints was unequivocal, but at the same time, they were very understanding of the many reasons (both objective and subjective) why some children were not properly secured inside vehicles, and were inclined to reprimand the responsible adult rather than issuing a fine.

For example:

“Sometimes child restraints are not used by granddads driving their grandkids not having child seats in their vehicles.”

“They most often fail to install child seats on short distance drives”
7 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The questions of what may constitute effective traffic enforcement, how to plan it, how to assess its deployment and how to evaluate its impacts, have been addressed, in some form or another, in Working Packages 2, 3, and 4 of PEPPER. The “reference authorities” for these issues are enforcement practitioners and professional research literature examining these questions in an objective manner.

However, the likelihood of adopting (and adapting) a “good” enforcement strategy and most effective practices, do not depend solely on professional judgment and wishes (even if there were a consensus among enforcement professionals, whereas often there is not). The opinions (learned or not) of other stakeholders and of the general public are important elements in the political process of gaining legal, administrative and financial support for any combination of enforcement policies, technology and practices.

Therefore, awareness of issues that are of concern to stakeholders about enforcement in their countries, contributes to better understanding of the likelihood of support for the policy approach advanced by the EC Recommendation.

Although stakeholders from only five countries were interviewed, the 50 persons came from a wide range of professions, organizations experiences and current responsibilities. Their countries differed in road safety conditions and enforcement activities. They might be seen as a wide ranging focus-group (although interviewed separately) rather than as a representative survey sample. As a consequence, a large number of different general enforcement issues were identified along with several factors that either assist or hamper TLE.

The main topics addressed within the context “Safety and TLE“, were issues of speeding, seat belt wearing and drink-driving. In addition, opinions about the use of technological devices (such as speed cameras, passive control systems and other in-vehicles devices), the ongoing moves towards harmonization of traffic laws within the EU and questions of cross- border enforcement were expressed.

Opinions about speeding, seat belt wearing and drink-driving issues were based on the specific current policy and enforcement practices in each country. Yet many people were fully aware of existing differences between member states. This was most evident with regard to the questions of drink driving. In ‘zero limit’ countries (like the Czech Republic) the issues of having a higher limit (perhaps resulting from harmonization) was obviously different from those with a higher European ‘average’ limit (of 0.5%), or the United Kingdom (with a higher limit of 0.8%; albeit aligned with very severe penalties) which would be required to harmonize ‘downwards’.

Therefore, although most interviewees appreciated the benefits of a lower BAC (Blood alcohol concentration) limit from an impairment perspective, setting a ‘zero limit’ was not considered as the best solution. This is because of potential practical problems with enforce-
ment – at least when first introduced – but, even more importantly, because of the general role of alcohol in the European social and cultural lifestyle. Some interviewees opinioned that, under certain conditions, a zero limit could even have negative consequences.

There was general agreement that blood based medical BAC testing takes time, is expensive, and reduces the efficiency of police enforcement. In some countries current legislation requires blood testing in a hospital setting as evidence of an illegal BAC. This is despite the fact that the police are often equipped with breath testing units that are as precise as blood testing.

In general, there was a sentiment supporting the use of modern technology for police traffic law enforcement and as means to increase compliance even without direct police involvement. Reservations were expressed about over reliance on automatic technology (such as speed cameras), since this could reduce the important role of police surveillance, which was seen as crucial for dealing with a lots of risky and illegal driving behaviours other than speeding and drink-driving.

Most stakeholders expected the current trend will be continue and it should be properly managed and monitored. The development could not be stopped and it was obvious that the use of technology would continue to increase at a rapid pace, irrespective of whether it was good or bad. A balanced combination of technology and on-road police control was considered to be the most productive combination. In-vehicle driving-aid devices were also positively viewed, as a way of improving compliance with traffic laws.

The harmonization of traffic regulations and sharing of enforcement information within Europe was also generally, but not always, welcomed. Harmonization of regulations and even practices was more acceptable than sharing of enforcement information. It was frequently pointed out that many difficult problems need to be resolved, most of all political and regulatory barriers, before this could happen. A number of interviewees noted the importance of a nation’s social and cultural characteristics in shaping its TLE system and the need of European TLE policy makers to be sensitive to national differences.
8 ANNEXES

8.1 Annex 1: Initial letter or e-mail sent to the person.

I am contacting you in connection to the EU research project “PEPPER”. “PEPPER” is an acronym for “Police Enforcement Policy and Programs on European Roads” referring directly to the Traffic Law Enforcement by Traffic Police across Europe.

The project is financed by the 6th Framework Research Program of EU. There are 18 institutes from 17 countries participating in PEPPER. The objective of PEPPER is to contribute to the improvement of the efficiency and effectiveness of Traffic Law Enforcement as a contributor to Road Safety. The project finishes at the end of 2008 and its results will be available to all involved and interested agencies in the Traffic Law Enforcement chain, through newsletters, the internet, dedicated workshops and conferences.

One of the subtasks in PEPPER is to interview road safety officials in a number of European countries on how enforcement policies and practice contribute to safety. During the interview we will also discuss both national and local policies and the recommendations set out by EU (Recommendations 2004/345/EC 21/10 2003). Your contribution to this study would be very valuable and I would therefore like to make an appointment with you to discuss these matters. The interview will take about 40 minutes. I will contact you in the next couple of days with the hope of finding a suitable time when we could meet.
8.2 Annex 2: Interview guide

PART I NATIONAL POLICY AND STRATEGIES

General questions

1. Firstly, could you say a little about your role in decision-making process and about your relation to road safety and to traffic law enforcement?

2. How important is your countries current enforcement policies to improve road safety with regard to each of the following:
   - Speeding
   - Drinking and driving
   - Seat belt wearing

3. Do you believe that road safety is high on the political agenda?

4. Do you have a national road safety plan?
   - If not - then why.
   - If yes – what is your opinion on this strategic document?

5. Do you think that your current policies for these safety problems are effective?
   - If yes – In what way?
   - If not - What is wrong and how might they be improved?

6. What do you think about applying technology on TLE?

7. What technology do you think will have the greatest impact (include some examples?)

8. What do you think about passive enforcement (no sanction but a soft hand to guide e.g. Driver Assistance systems)?

9. What technology or systems do think will be most successful concerning passive enforcement?
10. Do you or your organisation (political party or authority) participate on some decisions regarding road safety or enforcement?

If yes – then:

a) how?

b) has it increased the effect of enforcement?

c) has it resulted in a public debate about traffic enforcement?

If not - then why.

ACCEPTANCE

11. Do you believe the general public accepts current enforcement practices with respect to:

- Speeding
- Drinking and driving
- Current road safety

If not – then:

a) why not?

12. Do you believe that the police on the street accept these practices?

If not – then:

a) why?

b) in your opinion what would they like to do instead?
PART II - EU RECOMMENDATION
I would now like to turn to the recommendations made by EU (Recommendations 2004/345/EC 21/10 2003).

1. Do you know the existence and content of these recommendations?

*If not recap the main part of the policy*

2. What is the opinion of you and your organisation about particular points of the Recommendation?

   a) Automated speed enforcement systems and following-up of all violations registered by them
   Do you and your organisation (political party or authority) agree with this measure? Why and why not?
   Do you and your organisation (political party or authority) feel obliged to implement this measure? Why and why not?
   Will you be able to implement this measure? How will it be implemented?

   b) Application of random breath testing
   Do you and your organisation (political party or authority) agree with this measure? Why and why not?
   Do you and your organisation (political party or authority) feel obliged to implement this measure? Why and why not?
   Will you be able to implement this measure? How will it be implemented?

   c) Intensive enforcement actions concerning the non-use of seat belts
   Do you and your organisation (political party or authority) agree with this measure? Why and why not?
   Do you and your organisation (political party or authority) feel obliged to implement this measure? Why and why not?
   Will you be able to implement this measure? How will it be implemented?
d) Cross-border enforcement

Do you and your organisation (political party or authority) agree with this measure? Why and why not?

Do you and your organisation (political party or authority) feel obliged to implement this measure? Why and why not?

Will you be able to implement this measure? How will it be implemented?

3. What do you say about the idea of bringing the national initiatives more in line with EU policy?

4. At the moment EU make recommendations is that enough or should they be firmer?

5. Do you think that the measures proposed by the Recommendation could represent some threats for freedom, civil rights or security of member states’ citizens?

INFORMATION

6. Is there in your country sufficient public debate concerning this issues?

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

7. In your opinion what is the most effective way to carry out enforcement?

8. How do you see things changing in the future with regard to enforcement?