
FERSI supports UN 6th Global Road Safety Week - Street for life #Love30



Speed is an important risk factor in road traffic. In urban areas speed and speeding particularly endanger pedestrians, cyclists and other vulnerable road user groups. We all know that. But how did we come to these insights?

The answer is: with research that explored the issue of speed. Research results clearly showed the importance of speed and speeding as a risk factor, the extent to which non-motorised road users are at risk in cities, and the large safety benefits that could be realised if average and maximum speeds were reduced.

The Forum of European Road Safety Research Institutes (FERSI) supports the 2021 UN Global Road Safety Week (17-23 May) with the slogan Streets for life #Love30.

FERSI is a non-profit organisation that forms a network of European road safety research organisations. FERSI brings together research institutes from 22 European countries. All FERSI member institutes have a governmental mandate to perform pre-normative road safety research and are the main discussion partner of their national government for road safety issues. They analyse road safety developments, prepare solutions to be translated in legislation and guidelines, and evaluate the implementation of solutions. FERSI members have participated in or led important road safety research projects, which have also been identified and co-financed by the European Commission.

Research showed that it is important to ensure low speeds of motor vehicles within urban areas, particularly when encountering vulnerable road users like pedestrians and cyclists. Hence, establishing 30 km/h zones is a very important measure towards more traffic safety in cities in general and for vulnerable road users in particular. Lower speeds sustain our lives.

Some major key research results on speed and speeding:

- Around one third of road fatalities are caused by excessive or inappropriate speed¹.
- There are fewer crashes when speeds are lower, and crashes that do happen are less severe².
- A 1% increase in average speed results in approximately a 2% increase in injury crashes, a 3% increase in severe crashes, and a 4% increase in fatal crashes².

¹ ETSC (2019) [Reducing Speeding in Europe - PIN Flash 36](#). Brussels, European Transport Safety Council.

² ITF (2018) [Speed and crash risk – Research Report](#). Paris, OECD/ITF.

- Cutting the average speed by 1 km/h on all roads across the EU would save more than 2000 lives per year³.
- More than two third (70%) of those killed on EU urban roads are vulnerable road users (pedestrians, cyclists and powered two-wheelers)⁴.
- The mortality risk of pedestrians when hit by a car at an impact speed of 50 km/h is a factor 6 higher than at an impact speed of 30 km/h⁵.
- More than half (56%) of European car drivers admit to having speeded in built-up areas at least once in the previous month⁶.

The 2020 Stockholm Declaration⁷, adopted by governments worldwide, calls for a focus on liveable streets and, in line with available evidence, a maximum road travel speed of 30 km/h where vulnerable road users and motor vehicles mix. FERSI believes that commitment to this approach must be at the forefront of the new Decade of Action for Road Safety to achieve the Global Goals.

Now is the time to urgently deliver on this call to action by reducing and enforcing traffic speeds that are safe for everyone, everywhere, prioritising low speed streets in all residential areas and near schools.

More information:

<https://fersi.org>

<https://www.unroadsafetyweek.org/en/home>

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³ ETSC (2019) [Reducing Speeding in Europe - PIN Flash 36](#). Brussels, European Transport Safety Council.

⁴ ETSC (2019) [Safer roads, safer cities: how to improve urban road safety in the EU – PIN flash 37](#). Brussels, European Transport Safety Council.

⁵ Martin, J. L., & Wu, D. (2018). In European Commission (2021). [Road safety thematic report – Speeding](#). European Road Safety Observatory. Brussels, European Commission, Directorate General for Transport.

⁶ Holcher, S., & Holte, H. (2019) [Speeding. ESRA2 Thematic report Nr. 2](#). ESRA project (E-Survey of Road users' Attitudes). Bergisch Gladbach, Federal Highway Research Institute.

⁷ <https://www.roadsafetysweden.com/about-the-conference/stockholm-declaration/>