

**20th Technical Community Meeting on Road Safety and the 10th
Meeting of the Western Balkans Road Safety Observatory (WBRSO)
Hotel Aleksandar Palace, Skopje**

18-19 March 2025

CONCLUSIONS

1. The 20th Technical Community Meeting on Road Safety was held on 18-19 March 2025 in the meeting room: 'Kongresna sala 2' at Hotel Aleksandar Palace in Skopje. It was a back-to-back meeting with the 10th Meeting of the Western Balkans Road Safety Observatory (WBRSO).
2. A minute of silence was held to honour the victims of the tragic nightclub fire in Kochani, North Macedonia. In response to this devastating event, the Government has declared seven days of national mourning.
3. Mr. Matej Zakonjšek, Director of the TCT Secretariat, welcomed participants and emphasized the meeting's importance in reviewing past progress and setting future goals. He highlighted that most of the regional partners in the Western Balkans have road safety strategies in place, and the rest should follow. He also added that each of the regional partners should establish dedicated road safety agencies/bodies, as they are a prerequisite for a comprehensive approach to enhancing road safety. The analysis of the Key performance indicators showed a need for increased seat belt usage.
4. Due to his inability to participate in this meeting, Mr. Nikolin Berxhiku, the representative from previous chairing of this meeting, kindly submitted his speech to be read in his absence.
5. On this meeting the chairmanship was handed over from the Albanian representative to the Serbian representative. Ms. Olivera Stević Ledenčan, the representative from Serbia took over as a next chairlady of this meeting of the Road Safety Technical Committee. She greeted the representatives and thanked the TCT Secretariat for organising the meeting and looking forward for the results from this meeting.
6. The proposed agenda of the meeting was adopted without comments.

7. Ms. Olivera Stević Ledenčan invited the floor for each representative to provide their update on the implementation of the actions from the Next generation road safety action plan. The representatives from each respective institution from the Regional Partners and Observing participants gave the latest update on the meeting.
8. Once presented on screen, the representatives had no objections to be published on the Transport community website, the preliminary data for 2024 road fatalities from the Western Balkans and the TCT Observing participants.
9. Mr. Darko Miceski briefly called for a roundtable discussion among observing participants presented on the meeting (Georgia, Republic of Moldova) regarding their completed activities outlined in the Next Generation Action Plan for Road Safety (2025-2027). This plan is aiming to improve overall safety in the observing partners, and it was prepared as separate, country-specific documents. He also thanked the present representatives from Moldova and Georgia for their valuable contributions on data collection.
10. On the topic of the agenda for Next Generation Action Plan for Road Safety 2025-2027 – what progress has been made, Mr. Goran Temovski asked the participants the following additional questions, and/or proposals with a possibility to develop discussion on the second day. The questions that remained unanswered by all, were:
 - To report until the next TC road safety meeting on the progress of the implementation of the actions Next Generation Action Plan for Road Safety 2025-2027.
 - On TAIEX Capacity building on increasing the level of vehicle safety, who volunteers to be the applicant. Is there any other proposal for TAIEX assistance in a form of a regional workshop?
 - For locally contracted experts, or Technical assistance and capacity building for road safety, is there any requests for 2026?
 - Regarding the six visibility events on the Safer to school guidelines what is the follow-up? Has it been used by each RP? Any advancement on its implementation? If any, what are the obstacles for not moving forward? Have you managed to find funding for the small-scale investments? Can we make an action plan for the further steps with these guidelines., or can we organise some conference with donors, sponsors and other stakeholders for financing small scale projects? Do you consider important for TCT to pilot one project around each biggest school in your capitals?

- Do you have any ongoing projects on Road Safety organised with Delegation of EU?
 - On accessing the EU CARE data system, what is the progress? Montenegro and North Macedonia are you publishing the data required to be able to enter the EU CARE?
11. Goran Temovski opened discussion on the possibilities of using the Locally contracted experts that the representatives will have to request timely for the secretariat to prepare the procurement.
 12. It is concluded that a volunteer institution from the region will have to submit the TAIEX application for requesting technical assistance for the Road safety working group. The TCT Secretariat prepared the application titled “TAIEX Capacity building on increasing the level of vehicle safety – in support of Regulation (EU) 2018/858 on the approval and market surveillance of motor vehicles and their trailers, and of systems, components and separate technical units intended for such vehicles, amending Regulations (EC) No 715/2007 and (EC) No 59/2009 and repealing Directive 2007/46/EC
 13. It was concluded that the answers to the questions be sent in writing no later than the next technical committee meeting. Also, any related proposals and requests for assistance to be provided by the next TC road safety.
 14. With an e-mail from Mr. Goran Temovski sent on 19.02.2025, it was officially announced as open the data collection and entering of the data for 2024 year in WBRSo platform. The deadline for completion is 30 April.
 15. Mr. Peter Whitten from the Commission presented to the TCT Road Safety Technical Committee on March 18, 2025, an update covered recent EU road safety developments, focusing on fatality trends, the European Road Safety Observatory (ERSO), and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). While EU road deaths decreased by 3% in 2024 compared to 2023 and were down 13% from the 2019 (baseline), this downward trend remains insufficient to meet the 50% reduction target. Significant variations persist across Member States since 2019, with countries like Greece and Spain showing slight decreases, Ireland and Estonia showing increases, while Belgium, Poland, and others remain on track for the target. The European Road Safety Observatory (ERSO), currently supported by NTUA (Greece), SWOV (Netherlands), and KFV (Austria), has recently published its 2025 Annual Statistical Report (with data up to 2023), specific analyses on vulnerable road users, thematic reports on children and professional drivers, and data on serious injuries.

Regarding KPIs, the EU-funded Trendline project is collecting 2024 data for 8 standard and 10 experimental indicators using updated methodological guidelines, with data processing currently underway.

16. Republic Council for Road Traffic Safety (RCRTS) of North Macedonia represented by Ms. Marija Gjosheva-Krsteski made a presentation about Campaigns of the republic council for road traffic safety with a special emphasis on the importance of using the seat belt. This presentation by RCRTS first explained the Council's purpose and role before detailing its planned campaigns, with a particular focus on promoting seat belt use. According to the RCRTS Work Program for 2025, various campaigns targeting specific groups will be implemented using a defined methodology. A key initiative highlighted is the dedicated seat belt campaign, using the hashtag #BuckleUp, which aims to address common excuses for non-use and achieve specific safety goals. The presentation underscores the legal requirement for seat belt use, noting alignment with EU legislation and referencing key articles (Art. 23, Art. 164) of the Law on road safety. It stresses the urgent need for improvement in seat belt usage statistics, concluding with recommendations for using seat belts and driving responsibly.
17. It was concluded that the next campaign for the Visibility Event to Promote Seat Belt Use in the Western Balkans scheduled for spring in Skopje to be organised jointly with the RCRTS.
18. Mr. Daniel Pavleski from the PIU of the World bank within the Ministry of transport in North Macedonia, presented on the topic Road Safety within the Local Roads Connectivity Project (LRCP). This project aims to implement improvements in five selected municipalities, focusing on creating comprehensive safety strategies and action plans. Participants explored ways to enhance data collection processes, improve infrastructure management, and develop more effective road safety measures.
19. Mr. Dejan Jovanov's presentation addressed the significant challenges Regional Partners face in meeting the ambitious goal of a 50% reduction in road traffic fatalities, noting that while initial efforts yielded a promising 35% decrease, progress has markedly slowed. His assessment identified critical weaknesses hindering further success, including a lack of sustained political will, insufficient institutional capacity often marked by the absence of dedicated lead agencies and adequate funding, unreliable data collection, and inconsistent enforcement, which contribute to a disconnect where documented strategies don't translate into fewer deaths. Emphasizing the need for regional partners and observers to develop

strong 'road safety champions' and learn from successful models like Sweden, it was found that the original 50% target now appears unattainable. Therefore, the presentation served as a crucial wake-up call, urging a shift towards setting more realistic targets, focusing intently on building institutional capacity, establishing clear responsibilities, improving data systems, implementing visible interventions, concentrating on key priorities rather than minor details, and adopting a more systematic and committed approach overall to make tangible progress in road safety.

20. Mr. Belin Matts-Åke (WHO) informed the participants on the Global Road Safety Conference where the critical topics for improving road safety worldwide were addressed. reviewed global efforts since the UN's increased focus in 2004. The road safety policy can be distinguished before and after the 2004. Road traffic injuries are serious influence to the world health sector. The global international community meet in Marrakesh (46 countries). It was emphasized a multi-sectoral approach, integrating road safety into sustainable development goals with a focus on implementation and accountability by sustainable financing mechanisms. The private sector was significantly involved. The importance of the role of the lead agencies that need to have clear mandate, authority, independence, sustainable funding and leadership function. Challenges like funding, political shifts, and the need for national strategies were stated. The World Bank's Global Road Safety Facility was noted as a potential support resource.
21. Ms. Emma MacLennan representing the Eastern Partnership road safety observatory, highlighted that the European Union intends to utilize information and data gathered by road safety observatories as a key resource in the formulation and development of its road safety policies. This emphasizes the recognized value and importance of observatory data in informing evidence-based policy decisions at the EU level. Her presentation focused on data collection and analysis, stressing the need for accurate, timely, and comparable data across regions. The Eastern Partnership's regional observatory attempts standardizing data collection, identifying gaps, sharing best experience, developing training programs to enhance road safety strategies.
22. The technical committee concluded that the two observatories will collaborate on sharing information about donors considering road safety investments, developing and sharing targeted trainings for various working groups (e.g., professional drivers, nurses) on utilizing microdata to tailor road safety policies, providing training on injury data analysis, and exchanging their scheduled training and event calendars.