Vision Zero: Where do we stand now?

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The International Transport Forum and the Safe System
What is a Safe System?

• A vision: no one should be killed or seriously injured
• A set of principles (may differ by countries)
  – Human makes mistake and is vulnerable
  – Human body’s limited resistance to crash forces
  – Shared responsibility
  – Complementarity of measures
• A set of tools (adapted to each country)
  – Safe speed
  – Safe road users
  – Safe infrastructure
  – Safe vehicles
  – Safe post-crash care
## A paradigm shift is needed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is the problem?</th>
<th>Traditional road safety policy</th>
<th>Safe System</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is the appropriate goal?</td>
<td>Prevent all crashes</td>
<td>Prevent fatal and serious injury crashes</td>
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<tr>
<td>What are the major planning approaches?</td>
<td>Reduce the number of fatalities and serious injuries</td>
<td>Zero fatalities and serious injuries</td>
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<tr>
<td>What causes the problem?</td>
<td>Non-compliant road users</td>
<td>Inconsistent guidance to users (e.g. varying quality of infrastructure, operating speeds).</td>
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<td>Who is ultimately responsible?</td>
<td>Individual road users</td>
<td>Shared responsibility by individuals with system designers</td>
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<tr>
<td>How does the system work?</td>
<td>Isolated interventions</td>
<td>Combination of elements to produce a summary effect greater than the sum of the individual treatments</td>
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</table>
Safe System: What it means in practice

- **Safe speed**: based on human tolerance of crash forces
- **Safe Infrastructure**: is adapted to capabilities and limitations of road users and guide them in their driving choices ("self explaining" and "forgiving" roads)
- **Safe Vehicles**: are equipped to simplify driving task, offer protection and prevent crashes
- **Safe road users**: are educated and informed and driving behaviour is regularly checked
Status of implementation

• Countries have formally adopted a Safe System, backed up by a Safe System action Plan

• Countries apply Safe System principles, but it has not been formally approved (fear of “zero”)

• Countries include the label “Safe System or Vision Zero” in their strategies, but it does not translate into action

• Countries are still very far from Safe System policies, and road safety is low on the political agenda
## Status of implementation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Formal adoption of the Safe System or Vision Zero</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>Safe System adopted by Federal and State Ministers in the 2000s</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>Safe System adopted by government in 2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>Adopted by Parliament in 2003 and again in 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>Vision Zero adopted by government in 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>Vision Zero, started in 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Union</td>
<td>Safe System adopted in 2018. Detailed plan under development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The list above is not exhaustive. Many other countries apply Safe System principles, without a formal endorsement, for ex: Spain, France, Austria, Denmark, etc.
Some emblematic measures

• Sweden:
  – 2+1 roads with median barriers
  – Roundabouts
  – Review of speed limits (20, 30, 40, 50, 60 km/h etc.). “Credible speed limits
  – Systematic evaluation and monitoring

• Netherlands
  – Categorisation of the road network (each road = one function)
  – Large scale implementation of 30 km/h speed limit in urban areas
  – Large scale implementation of 60 km/h speed limit on access roads in rural areas
  – Roundabouts
  – Increased police enforcement

• Norway
  – 2+1 roads with median barriers
  – Market penetration of safer cars
  – 13 priority areas in the new programme

• Australia
  – Safe system assessment framework to help identifying for each crash scenarios the most effective treatment
Is Safe System effective? Evaluation of Sustainable Safety in the NL

- Decrease in risk was stronger than period before
- All measures together prevented 300-400 fatalities in 2007
- Benefit-cost ratio: 3.6 - 3.7

Source: Weijermars and Wegman (2011)
Common success factors

• Political consensus and leadership
  – Formal adoption of the Safe System helps keeping road safety high on the agenda and secure funding

• Safe system translated into an comprehensive action plan involving all stakeholders: collaborative approach

• Data driven: Regular evaluation, monitoring and reporting
  – Interim and ambitious targets on number of deaths and seriously injured, based on detailed evaluation
  – Targets key performance indicators (speed, seatbelts...)

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Some challenges

• Decentralization of policy making. Need to convince local authorities and build capacity at local level
  – However there are also good initiatives at local level
• Finding the necessary funding, when many competition priorities on the political agenda
• Creating political and societal support for measures that might be unpopular (lower speeds, cyclists helmets)
Safe System at city level: Goteborg, Copenhagen, London, New York

London adopted Vision Zero in 2018

Elimination of road deaths by 2041

Vision Zero is at the core of the Healthy Streets Approach

Vision Zero is part of our Healthy Streets approach to encourage active travel and public transport use.

I am determined to make London’s streets safer....For too long these tragic road incidents have been accepted as inevitable events. This would be unthinkable on other transport modes.

Sadiq Khan, Mayor of London
In conclusion

• A paradigm shift to a Safe System is possible
• A Safe System approach can lead to significant reductions in the number of deaths and serious injuries
• Strong and sustained leadership is essential to:
  – Create a sense of urgency for change
  – Convince and involve all stakeholders
Muchas gracias

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