

# ICORSI

Independent Council for  
Road Safety International

## International Symposium

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# Speed in a high speed society

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Speed is "almost no.1" in importance  
Very great potential, many 100,000 lives every year  
Still, almost nothing happens



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# Speed and safety

- Strong statistical and casual relationship – both risk and consequence
- UN, WHO etc all put speed very high on the agenda
- Two aspects: Lowering speed limits and compliance with speed limits
- Speed limit minus 10 kph → 3 kph lower average speed
- 100% compliance → 20-50% fewer fatalities
- What about LMIC with 90% of all injuries and fatalities?

# Speed changes

ETSC: 32 countries established SPF:s in 2006. Very poor follow-up, almost only motorways

Very poor results so far, exceptions from France and Switzerland with downward trends for parts of the time: 0.7 – 1.0% per year

No significant decreases in the US or Australia either. In Australia a steady downwards trend, but only 0.3% per year

Sweden, 1997-2017: Compliance rate: Steady 45%, average speed: -4kph → 0.2kph per year

# Attitudes

- Swinging, both for and against lower speeds, most against, and no basis for working with norms
- Example: In the US drivers answered that it is unacceptable to exceed the speed limit **by more than 20 mph (32 km/h)**.
- Swedish interviews: Drinking and driving is far more important than speeding; the latter only being no.6 on the list of dangerous behaviours
- Law makers seem to agree: Sanctions are much stronger for drinking and driving than for speeding

# The car regime and speed control (1)

- Many actors: car manufacturers, supply industry, oil companies, local and national governments, car owners, associations, media etc, speed limits and compliance never a topic
- Speed performance have gone up, while the speed limits have remained the same. No reaction, almost no research
- In the 1990-ies: Three promising trials with Speed Limiter (SL) in private vehicles
- Still; the car regime said no, replaced it by ISA (Intelligent Speed Adaptation) – a **voluntary** (in many senses) system
- Not even research, in spite of promising results (SL: up to -50% fatalities, ISA: -18%), and very cost beneficial (benefit-to-cost ratio: Market driven (3.4), Authority driven (7.4))

## The car regime and Speed Control (2)

- No governmental action, but EuroNCAP has introduced a Speed Assist function which, however, is very "weak" (only one fifth of a Driver Assist systems, and being **voluntary**, compared with all other NCAP-systems that are obligatory if they are installed)
- Media and Car owner associations are strong actors in the car regime.
- No speed limit on parts of the German Autobahns. As a "compensation" three manufacturers in Germany have a kind of "Gentleman's agreement" of limiting the speed to 250 km/h in all their cars...
- What about LMIC?

# Comfort and speed

- New technology – very advanced comfort systems
- One – of many examples: “Magic Body Control” developed by Mercedes Benz. “Humps will be eliminated” .....
- **Effect on speeds----- ??**
  - **Naturalistic driving**
- For the first time we will be able to study “normal driving” including compliance, **actual speed adaptation** behaviour
- EU project UDRIVE is one of the projects: however no results regarding speeds. Why not trying Speed Limiter in cars!?

# Campaigns / Enforcement

- **Speed campaigns** have a very small effect. Meta-analyses have shown that while drinking and driving campaigns have an effect of minus 18% on all accidents, speed campaigns have an effect of minus 4%
- **Speed cameras** are an effective intervention in reducing road traffic collisions and related casualties. Still many questions: Migration effects? Cost benefit? Scale?
- In Russia, a new policy was introduced where fines for driving up to 20 km/h above the speed limit was eliminated. The prevalence of speeding went up again..
- **Section control** is more effective with a compliance rate coming very close to 100%, with documented large reductions of killed and severely injured. Still very premature though.

# Infrastructure - *Traffic Calming*

- Efficient speed management in a large scale with humps and roundabouts, to the benefit of vulnerable road users, liveability and urban renewal.
- European cities are quite active; and small scale trials in many cities
- Further rigorous evaluations of such interventions are needed; also large scale
- Why not Speed Limiter as an alternative/complement?

## *iRAP - The International Road Assessment Programme*

- iRAP provide tools and training to help countries make roads safe. Inspection of high-risk roads and develop Star Ratings and Safer Roads Investment Plans.
- Even though they have developed a “Speeds tab” there is no clear roads towards lower speeds. For instance, when discussing pedestrians the focus seems to be *“efficiency for vehicles”, “to clear the junction quickly”* and similar aspects....

## **Speed and other qualities**

- Strong relation with perceived safety, emissions, noise, mobility of car users and vulnerable road users, accessibility, attractivity and the economy.
- The lower the speeds in cities the more “spontaneously perfect” interaction between motorists and pedestrians and bicyclists (Swedish trials)
- High potential but much more evidence is warranted

# Actors

- There are lots of global actors. Road safety has become good business for many....
- Bloomberg Philanthropies funded “Road Safety in 10 Countries Project (RS-10)” with US\$125 million over a 5-year timeline (2010–2014). The primary goal of RS-10 was to reduce deaths and serious injuries in LMICs by focusing on proven preventive and care interventions. 10 countries participated.
- So far only China, Turkey and Russia have reported results on speed interventions: The progress is not very impressive. One exception; the city of Dalian where section control was introduced.
- Knowledge from LMIC is very scarce, Two important exceptions, however, comes from Kenya and Ghana, where successful traffic calming measures have been introduced even on highways and motorways with lots of vulnerable road users living and visiting these roads.
- In India, almost every village and a large number of residential neighbourhoods now have rumble strips or speed humps on roads passing through them.

# Final

- Many actors; road safety is good business
- High level commitment – UN decade of action - ambitious goals and targets regarding fatalities
- Failed to a large degree
- Speed is very high on the agenda; one of very few main contributing factors
- OECD, Sweden 1996: “In built-up areas, mixing vehicles and pedestrians and cyclists means that the maximum speed should be 30 km/h to protect vulnerable users”.
- Very slow progress; residents are desperate!
- Why is speed as a SPF not working? Because the car regime still sets the “speed scene”
- The positive relation between speeding and safety has to be discontinued
- **Our leaders** must realise the responsibility they have to transfer **societal** views on risks
- **They** need to be involved in setting quantitative targets regarding speed levels
- **They** need to demonstrate **courage** and **independence** and be faithful to road safety promises
- **The car regime must be challenged**