



# **THE DUBLIN COUNCIL MEETING AFTER**

## **– IN BRIEF –**

The 90th Ministerial Session of the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT) took place in Dublin (Ireland) on 17 and 18 May 2006.

The Session was chaired by Mr. Martin CULLEN, the Irish Minister for Transport and current Chairman of the Conference.

This meeting was marked by a major event in the history of the ECMT, namely the decision by Ministers to transform this organisation into an **International Transport Forum** dealing with global issues and open to participation by non-European countries as well as major economic actors.

At the meeting, Ministers also discussed the **sustainable development of transport**. This topic, besides serving as a basis for a general debate on the implementation of sustainable transport policies, provided Ministers with the opportunity to exchange views on several issues presented in specific papers, namely: sustainable urban transport policies, CO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub> emissions in the transport sector, achieving the target of 50% fewer deaths on the roads by 2012, and improved accessibility for all. The Council adopted a series of recommendations regarding actions to be taken in this respect.

Other topics of discussion on the agenda for the Dublin Session included: inland waterways and environmental protection, the allocation of the basic ECMT multilateral quota for international road haulage licences from 2007 onwards, and the activities of the Joint OECD/ECMT Transport Research Centre. The Council of Ministers took several important decisions in these areas.

Lastly, it should be noted that the Council of Ministers renewed the mandate of Jack Short as Secretary-General of the ECMT.

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# **PRESS RELEASE**

## **– AFTER THE MEETING –**

The 90th Ministerial Session of the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT)<sup>1</sup> took place in Dublin (Ireland) on 17 and 18 May 2006.

The Session was chaired by Mr. Martin CULLEN, the Irish Minister for Transport and current Chairman of the Conference. Almost forty Ministers from European countries as well as Associate and Observer countries from other continents took part in this meeting.

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This Ministerial Session first addressed two main items on the agenda which were central to Ministers' discussions.

### **1. REFORM OF THE ECMT**

At the Dublin Session, the Council of Ministers took a major decision regarding the ECMT's future by deciding to transform this organisation into an **International Transport Forum**. The aim of the new Forum will be to help both policy makers and the general public gain a deeper understanding of the essential role played by transport. Another aim will be to facilitate the integration of transport and logistics into general policymaking while taking account of major considerations with more far-reaching implications such as the economic, environmental and social aspects of sustainable development.

The yearly Forum will provide Ministers of Transport with an opportunity to discuss a single topic of global strategic importance, relating to all modes of transport, with leading figures in civil society. The founding members of the new International Transport Forum will initially consist of ECMT Member countries and non-European Associate Member countries. It is subsequently planned to open up participation in the Forum to other countries to make this event an essential annual international meeting for key actors in the transport sector.

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1. The ECMT, founded on 17 October 1953, brings together the Transport Ministers of 43 European countries: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, FYR Macedonia, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, the Russian Federation, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine and the United Kingdom. There are seven Associate Member countries: Australia, Canada, Japan, Korea, Mexico, New Zealand and the United States. Morocco has the status of Observer country.

## 2. SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT POLICIES

Under this item on the agenda, Ministers opened with a general discussion on the **implementation** of sustainable transport policies. The term 'sustainability' has been bandied about to such an extent that it is increasingly difficult to give a clear definition of what it actually means. The fact that it is a composite concept drawing on areas such as the economy, the environment and social issues, means that it lends itself to a broad interpretation, so broad, in fact, that practically all policies claim to promote sustainable development.

Despite widely differing national contexts, there is one striking attribute that sustainable transport policies from different countries all have in common, namely that in practically every single country the implementation of transport policy measures with regard to many aspects of 'sustainability' has failed to live up to expectations.

Accordingly, Ministers were invited to draw on their own experience to discuss the difficulties involved in implementing sustainable transport policies and to propose possible solutions.

Following this general discussion, Ministers discussed several specific topics chosen for their relevance to the theme of sustainable development. This gave them an opportunity, through a number of practical examples, to specify what type of policies in different areas would ensure the sustainable development of transport.

### 2.1 Sustainable Urban Transport

Cities around the globe account for approximately 80% of the population and around 90% of economic activity. It is therefore clear that urban problems are not solely the concern of local authorities but also of governments at the national level.

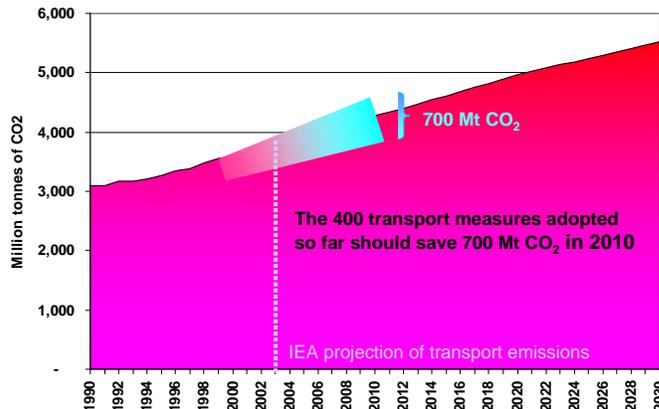
At the Council meeting in Lisbon in 2001, Ministers agreed a number of key messages regarding the implementation of integrated **sustainable urban transport policies**. In Dublin, Ministers' files contained a report on the extent to which these key messages had actually been acted upon not only in ECMT member countries but also in several non-European countries. While confirming the relevance of these messages and how they should be applied within different administrative contexts, the report reveals that countries have been slow to take action due to a whole series of barriers relating, in particular, to the policy and decision-making framework for urban travel. Besides barriers of a legal, regulatory and financial nature, it has to be said that the lack of sufficient public participation and clearly defined alternative solutions, together with failure to conduct follow-up and assessment work, has often brought the very process of developing and implementing such strategies to a standstill.

The discussion of this subject allowed Ministers to review continuing barriers to the implementation of sustainable urban transport policies and, by drawing on their experience, to identify the most effective means of taking action in this respect at the level of government. It also provided them with an opportunity to reaffirm their commitment to applying the key messages for governments agreed in 2001 and prompted them to adopt a new message relating specifically to the assistance that national governments must give to local or regional authorities in the development, assessment and monitoring of sustainable urban transport strategies.

## 2.2 Transport and the Environment

The environment is one of the major components of sustainability for transport policy. Ministers had an opportunity in Dublin to discuss policy measures aimed at reducing CO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub> emissions in the transport sector.

Transport CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions Reduction from Measures adopted in the OECD-ECMT Region



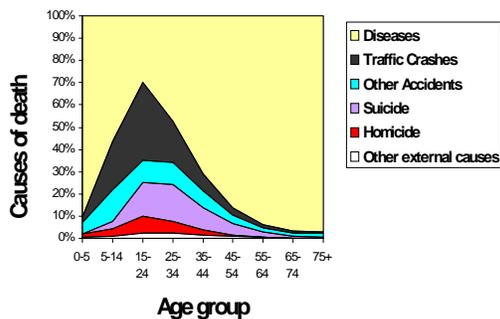
In 1995, ECMT Ministers adopted a joint declaration with the automobile industry on **reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions** from new cars, and in 1997 issued a series of recommendations aimed at stepping up efforts to reduce emissions in the transport sector. An overview of the measures introduced nationally since then was presented at the meeting in Dublin. This report shows that the most effective measures are those which are aimed directly at reducing the fuel consumption of vehicles. It was for this reason that Ministers stated their willingness to give priority to a series of what, in many

cases, are relatively inexpensive measures in this area, in contrast with the emphasis that government programmes often place on highly costly options whose impact on CO<sub>2</sub> emissions is fairly limited. For example, although the goal of energy independence can justify giving priority to bio-fuels, it is also a fact that this expensive solution is undoubtedly not the most effective way to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Among the measures that Ministers chose to prioritise on the grounds of economic efficiency, it is worth mentioning differentiated vehicle taxes by CO<sub>2</sub> output, the introduction of regulations on the energy efficiency of tyres and other vehicle components (for example lights, air conditioning, etc.) that are not taken into account in vehicle approval tests, training in eco-driving and, possibly, the installation of on-board driver self-assessment systems, the reorganisation of goods distribution systems and improved vehicle fleet management, taxes on fuels and carbon, etc.

**NO<sub>x</sub> emissions** contribute to photochemical smog and ozone pollution in urban areas, and the levels of airborne NO<sub>x</sub> are higher than they should be given the introduction of increasingly stringent exhaust emission standards. The reasons for this situation are analysed in a report examined by the Council of Ministers in Dublin. This report suggests that the main problem lies in the approval tests to which new HGVs are subjected. These tests fail to accurately reflect driving conditions in built-up areas, where emissions levels are highest. Similar problems, although on a lesser scale, are also encountered with cars and other light vehicles. The solution is to improve the tests. Although work has in fact already started in this respect, it would be advisable to avoid any prejudicial delay. Accordingly, Ministers signalled their intention to expedite the discussions currently in progress on improved testing and vehicle certification. In addition, they also agreed to ensure that adequate regulatory measures are swiftly introduced to guarantee heavy duty vehicles employing NO<sub>x</sub> emissions control systems that rely on injection of (ammonia-based) additive can only be used when the additive injection system is working properly, given that vehicles which have been fitted with such systems, and which fail to use the necessary additive, can produce higher emissions than older vehicles already on the road

## 2.3 Road safety

**Causes of Death in OECD Countries By Age Group**



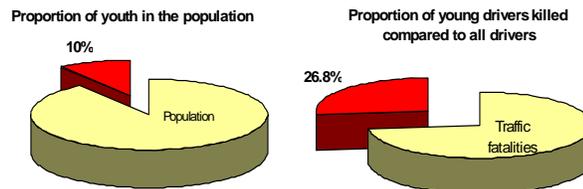
Source: WHO

made in achieving this objective.

Although there have been many positive developments, it has to be said that if current trends continue the original objective will not be met. In fact, there would need to be 50 000 fewer deaths on the road in 2012 alone, compared with 2004, to meet the target. Since only six years are left in which to meet the original objective, exceptional efforts need to be made, starting immediately.

Sustainable transport is also safe transport. At present, over 180 000 people are killed in road accidents every year in ECMT Member and Associate Member countries, i.e. one person every three minutes. The cost of mobility in terms of the number of lives lost is unacceptable if transport is to be developed on a sustainable basis. It is for this reason that in 2002, at their Council in Bucharest, ECMT Ministers agreed on a common goal of **reducing the number of road deaths by 50%** over the period 2000-2012. Now that we are half-way through this period, Ministers were presented with a mid-term report which takes stock of the progress

Proportion of youth in traffic fatalities and population. OECD countries, 2004.



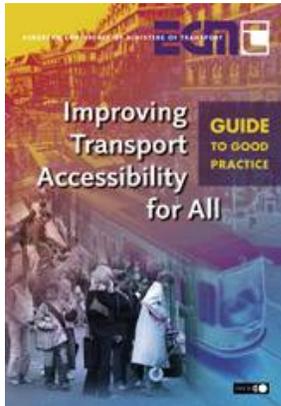
Source : IRTAD. Refers to persons under 24 and old enough for solo driving.

Accordingly, the report presented to Ministers proposed several priority actions. This report, of which the Council took note, is partly based on a paper entitled “**ambitious road safety targets**” which was also included in the file prepared for Ministers. The priority actions identified in the report include recommendations to:

- ⇒ effectively tackle the main causes of poor road safety, an area where, despite the measures already taken, much progress remains to be made. The main culprits are speed, drink driving, failure to wear seatbelts and the behaviour of young drivers. Two special reports by the Joint OECD-ECMT Research Centre on **young drivers** and **speed management** respectively were presented to Ministers and highlighted the major contribution that measures in those areas could make to reducing road fatalities;
- ⇒ ensure that existing legislation is properly implemented both now and in the long term;
- ⇒ raise public awareness of the issue of road safety and the need for action;
- ⇒ create a suitable organisational and institutional framework for road safety measures;
- ⇒ put the necessary funding in place.

At the end of their discussion of this item on the agenda, Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to reducing the number of road deaths by 50% by the year 2012 and signalled their intention to act rapidly in the key areas identified by the report presented to them in Dublin.

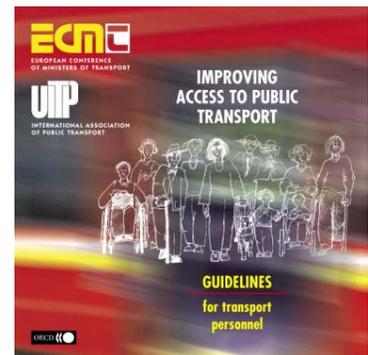
## 2.4 Access and Inclusion



The Recommendations and Resolutions approved by ECMT Ministers over the past twenty years provide a solid basis on which to pursue the **development of accessible transport systems**. The ECMT has recently updated its Guide to good practices first published in 1999. This new publication entitled "Improving transport accessibility for all: A Guide to good practices" was presented to Ministers in Dublin and provided a basis for discussion of the means of improving access to transport for everybody as part of the general discussion on the sustainable development of transport.

Over the next 20 years, the population aged 65 years and over will increase by 40% and the number of those aged over 80 years will double. Over half of the population aged over 75 years suffers from some form of handicap. Access to transport is therefore a major challenge for the sustainable development of mobility, particularly in view of the fact that people who have difficulty travelling for all kinds of reason (handicap, age, accompanying children, luggage) account for 25% of the population. Given current demographic trends, governments can no longer treat accessibility as simply one option among many. It is clearly an economic and social imperative and an issue that is an integral part of a framework of action aimed at promoting the development of high-quality, efficient and sustainable transport networks.

The Guide submitted to Ministers specifies which areas of transport accessibility should be targeted for priority action by governments. Attention is drawn, in particular, to the effective introduction of door-to-door transport services, the potential role of taxis and the training of transport personnel, especially drivers. The last of these actions has a particularly important role to play in providing a better response to users with sensorial and cognitive deficiencies or mental health problems, an area which continues to be the poor relation of policies for accessible transport. With regard to the latter, Ministers' files included a joint ECMT-UITP publication specially issued for this meeting entitled "Improving Access to Public Transport: Guidelines for transport personnel".



At the end of the discussion of this item on the agenda, Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to implementing decisions by ECMT Ministers on improving transport accessibility and approved the policy signals from the Guide to good practices and in particular those relating to priority areas for action by governments.

### 3. OTHER ISSUES

Among the other issues that Ministers examined in order to make a formal decision without discussion, mention should be made of the following.

#### 3.1 Inland Waterways and Environmental Protection

Inland waterways can contribute to making transport more sustainable, particularly when they substitute for less ecological transport modes. However, the development of waterways can have substantial impacts on the environment. Enhancing waterways to make them suitable for inland navigation can severely damage the ecological value and quality of water bodies. Modifying the course of a waterway by changing the characteristics of the river bed and banks can significantly affect the level and flow rate of water along the entire length of the waterway and can also alter the dynamics of sediment transport, which in turn can affect the entire watercourse corridor and in particular the ecology of flood plains. Consequently, there may be major impacts on biodiversity, and enhancement work can completely transform the natural habitats of flora and fauna. Furthermore, dredging can sometimes have serious repercussions, particularly when sediments are contaminated with industrial waste.

To help ensure that the **environmental impacts of inland waterway improvement works** are assessed and managed properly and avoid the risk that infrastructure projects in this sector are blocked when planning and consultation procedures break down, the ECMT with support from the Dutch government undertook a study on inland waterways and environmental protection. The final report was presented to Ministers in Dublin. This report is based on best practices observed in the sector and consists in an analysis of several major projects: Seine-Northern Europe in France; Straubing-Vilshofen on the Danube in Germany; Danube-Eastern Vienna in Austria; various projects on the Danube in Romania and the Bystroe canal in Ukraine.

The basic conclusion is that the speed and success of the decision-making process is crucially dependent on the way in which the public, environmental actors and industry stakeholders are involved in the project. Things go wrong when there is too little consultation too late in the planning process. An optimal framework for strategic planning should comprise a strategic environmental assessment incorporating multimodal corridor assessment, as well as encompassing other uses of the waterway (hydropower generation, flood protection, irrigation, industrial and drinking water abstraction and discharge of wastewater). Strategic planning for development of waterways would benefit from a focus on the river basin level, to match the framework developed for the environmental protection of water bodies. In terms of priority action, the report stresses the need to rapidly develop a strategic vision for the protection and development of the Danube, since that is where most of the inland waterway development projects posing as yet unresolved environmental problems are to be found.

At the Dublin Session, Ministers took note of this report and approved the actions it recommends, in particular the opening of discussions on the development and protection of the Danube. These recommendations will be sent to the Pan-European Ministerial Conference on inland waterways due to be held in Bucharest in September 2006.

### 3.2 Multilateral quota

At the last Ministerial Session in Moscow in May 2005, Ministers had decided to reform the ECMT multilateral quota system. To this end they had approved the criteria and methodology proposed for the future allocation of ECMT international road haulage licences, and had also asked that concrete proposals be submitted to them at the Dublin Session for the calculation of basic quotas from 2007 to 2010.

The work that has been carried out in this area has provided a basis on which agreement has been reached on the **allocation of the basic quota to Member countries for the period 2007 to 2010**. This agreement was ratified by the Council of Ministers in Dublin. The new allocation to which Ministers have agreed is now calculated on the basis of ten criteria whose respective weights have been adjusted according to the priorities set by the Member countries. While the size of the basic quota remains unchanged, the new licence allocation allows a more balanced distribution between countries and takes greater account of their commercial needs according to the size of their economies, the volume of their international trade, the level of activity of their hauliers, as well as whether or not they are EU Member States.



### 3.3 Joint OECD/ECMT Transport Research Centre

The Joint OECD/ECMT Transport Research Centre (JTRC), which had been established by decisions made by ECMT Transport Ministers and the OECD Council, first became operational on 1 January 2004. This Centre accommodates both ECMT research activities and the OECD Road Transport Research Programme. All fifty Member Countries of the ECMT and OECD are full members of the Centre.

The strategic lines of approach and first programme of work (2004-2006) of the JTRC were approved by ECMT Ministers at their Session in Ljubljana in 2004. At the Dublin Session, the Council of Ministers:

- ⇒ approved an evaluation report on the activities of the Centre since its creation; this document emphasises two important aspects for Ministers: the benefits of merging the research activities of the ECMT and the OECD, and the policy relevance of the Centre's work to date;
- ⇒ adopted a new programme of work for the period 2007-2009, the proposed projects and activities primarily relate to infrastructure, transport operations, transport safety and security, environmental costs and sustainable development, globalisation, trade and the spatial impacts of transport.

### 3.4 Appointment of the Secretary-General

The Council of Ministers decided to renew the mandate of the Secretary General, Jack Short, for a period of five years. Mr. Short, who is an Irish citizen, was first appointed to this post in 2001. He joined the ECMT Secretariat in 1984 after holding various posts in the Irish Ministry of Transport and Ministry of Finance.



### 3.5 Election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairmen

The Council of Ministers elected its Chairman and Vice-Chairmen as from 1 July 2006. The Transport Minister of Bulgaria was appointed Chairman for a period of one year from this date. The Finnish Minister of Transport and Communications was appointed first Vice-Chairman, with the second Vice-Chairman's post now falling to the Transport Minister of Turkey. The three Ministers appointed will successively assume the Chair of the new International Transport Forum for the next three years.

The first session of the International Transport Forum will be held in Sofia (Bulgaria) in 2007.

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**PRESS**

ECMT Council of Ministers  
Dublin 17-18 May 2006

**1. Main documents submitted to the Council :**

- Declaration on the development of ECMT : Creation of an International Transport Forum;
- Report on Implementing Sustainable Urban Travel Policies: Applying the 2001 Key Messages ;
- Review of CO<sub>2</sub> Abatement Policies for the Transport Sector;
- Report on NOx Emissions;
- Report on Reaching the Target of Reducing Road Fatalities by 50% by 2012 ;
- Report on Improving Transport Accessibility for All;
- Report on Inland Waterways and Environmental Protection;
- Report on Basic ECMT Multilateral Quota as from 1 January 2007;
- Programme of Work and Evaluation / Report on Progress with the Joint Transport Research Centre (JTRC)

**2. Reference documents :**

- Research report from JTRC :
  - Young Driver Risks and Effective Counter-Measures,
  - Speed Management,
  - Ambitious Road Safety Targets;
- Peer Review on Road Safety Policy in the Russian Federation;
- Improving Transport Accessibility for All: Guide to Good Practice;
- Improving Access to Public Transport: Guidelines for Transport Personnel.

**These documents will shortly be available on Internet at the address below:  
<http://www.cemt.org>**