

ESV 2001 – ITALIAN GOVERNMENT STATUS REPORT

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ABSTRACT

This paper will provide an overview of the main progress of the Italian government in these last two years in the field of road safety. It focuses on the adoption of the “National plan on road safety”.

As a matter of fact, for the first time in Italy all the aspects related to road safety have been resumed in an action plan. All the actors in this field have been involved in a common strategy: Central Administration, Local Administrations, Road Management Authority etc. had the common task regarding priorities, effectiveness and transparency directives. In the following statement it will be displayed how. Even though the plan has been designed to focus on the reduction of road casualties, the plan in this capacity is also a living structure devoted to time-lasting, due to its annual revision of the goals, performed on the basis of critical analysis of obtained results.

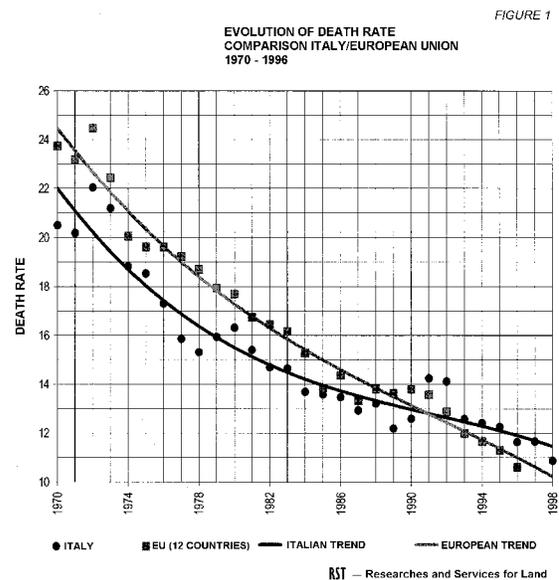
1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 State and tendencies of car accident in Italy.

In the last ten years road accidents have caused over 72 000 deaths and 2 400 000 casualties. A family each ten has endured a death or a wounded. About one third of such casualties is composed by youths less than thirty years old. This dramatic waste of lives and resources is often interpreted as a painful, but inevitable, tribute to the freedom of move and to the economic-social-development. Actually **there is no inevitability in this huge economical and social loss.**

In our country between 1972 and 1988 the year number of the car accident death toll has been reduced successfully from 12 000 to 7500. An average reduction of 2.2% each year, in line with other European countries. Anyway in the last ten years this reduction has slowed down progressively and the average rate finally was lower than 1.0 per year. In the same period. Within the 12 European countries, with proper mobile means, the year death car accidents reduction has been about 2.4%, more than double with respect to the Italian rate.

Because of this different dynamic, Italy that formerly in the seventies was among the four road safer European countries, dropped to a mediocre safe level. In the present state, this **late** that Italy has with respect to the other European countries, keener to the road safety, can be valued in an **increase of 2900 deaths per year**, approximately a daily 8 deaths more. Whether this tendency would be confirmed, by 2010 Italy would become one of the European countries with the lower road safety level.



Anyway road accidents have not only an unacceptable effect in terms of human lives. From a strictly economic point of view, road accidents wipe out professional resources. As a matter of fact they cause temporary inability, that means loss of working hours and absorb huge resources from the national public health. As a consequence they impose to the victims' families terrific expenses and destroy almost five million vehicles each year. Even firms are affected by this tragic tribute. Actually, one third of victims is caused by road accidents during working hours or on the way home from job places. These burdens, all together, determine a social cost of 21 billion euro per annum, according to 1997 data. This cost matches thoroughly that backed up by France;

a European country matching Italy in mobility levels and safety road conditions.

1.2 Conclusions

The need of a “National plan on road safety” basically comes up with assessments on the state of road safety in Italy. It can be resumed in the scarce figures reported in the preceding paragraph: an unacceptable high social-economical cost that imposes a drastic change to the entire country. Furthermore a definition of an effective and strict road safety politics is needed in order to cope with the main road accident risk factors.

2. MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PLAN.

2.1 Normative and proceedings references.

2.1.1 The institutional regulation.

The plan is aiming to get on conditions for a safe and sustainable mobility in order to reduce the dramatic daily road accidents victim tribute and the huge costs backed up by the State, firms and families.

The reference objective undertaken by the plan is based on the indications contained in the second program on road safety devised by the European Commission: reduction of 40% of **wounded-death toll by 2010**.

Particularly the plan is designed as a functional tool to the creation of cultural conditions, within the regulation framework, resources, technical instruments and infrastructure interventions and organizational assets. These are needed to reduce the road accident number of 2700 death toll and the 120000 of wounded toll per annum and in order to determine a consequently reduction of road accident social cost. This last is around six billion euros per annum with reference to the present conditions and 12 billion euros with respect to the future condition of our country that would be got if the present tendency remains.

The Regulation is inspired to two principles: **Agreement** and **Subsidizing**, where it is clear that the Parliament is constituted not only by a system of intervention defined and realized by the govern. As a matter of fact such a system of actions and incentives is referred especially to Regions, local Administrations and to the boards of service and transport network management.

Furthermore, the regulation prescribe the compulsory assessment of coherence and effectiveness of interventions and sets that the results of such assessment have to be widely delivered through the

“*Report of Parliament on the State of the Road Safety*”. Under this profile the “*National plan of Road Safety*” is aligned, as a reference point, on the contents and organizational modules adopted by the countries that have got the highest level of road safety. These are all strongly characterized by horizontal road safety politics, based on the collaboration through miscellaneous sectors of public Administration. Such modules, constantly monitored on results, are performed providing incentives and partnerships between public and private. This form of control is the base for a progressive finalization of the actuation phases of the Plan itself:

- I. The Minister of Public Works, through his own decree, in agreement with the Minister of the Interior , Health, Transport and Navigation, defines the general addresses and guide lines for the actuation of the “*National plan on road safety*”. This paper is submitted to the opinion of the competent commissions of Chamber and Senate.
- II. Subsequently, the Ministry of Public Works, following the suggestion of the Ministry of Transport and Navigation, defines the contents of the Plan, that will be updated every three years.
- III. The Minister of the Public Work devises the ways for acting the “*National plan on road safety*” , through the predisposition of “*Annual Actuation Programs*”.
- IV. Finally, the Ministry of Public Works, verifies yearly ... *the state of actuation of the plan and the coherence of the interventions for the road safety at the aims and at the addresses of the National plan on road safety. The results of this assessment are submitted to the Parliament.*”

2.2 Plan contents

2.2.1 Problems, fields of intervention and action lines.

The logic-conceptual profile of the Plan is developed in three main sections:

- a) determination and analysis of main problems and relative factor risks;
- b) definition of the fields of intervention, namely the application (interventions, on high risk infrastructures, interventions on urban areas, protection of exposed users and weak users, road accidents in working hours and on the way home) of the actions finalized to remove and cope with the main risk factors;

- c) determination of the main lines of activity, namely the whole of actions, which will be developed in a coordinated way by the different subjects involved in acting the plan.

Has to be remarked the nature of the plan and particularly the reference to the agreement and subsidizing principles contained in the institutional regulation of the plan. The nature of the plan implies that in the same field of intervention will operate simultaneously Administrations of different sectors and different levels, without exclusion of any private subject. Accordingly it implies the need to coordinate and organize the miscellaneous contributions in the “*fields of intervention*” and in the “*lines of activity*” to avoid dispersions and repetitions, which would have negative repercussions on the effectiveness levels of the Plan itself.

The fields of interventions are defined in relation to the main problems of the road accident rate and focus on each problem which best global action would be proper to optimize the specific levels of road safety. In other terms, the matter of a road safety improvement is split in different specific problems.

The widespread rule breaking of drivers and the high rate of death pedestrian and cyclists in our cities form as much subdivisions of the problem of the road safety as the high rate of accidents which distinguish many young and old drivers and the presence of infrastructure components responsible of death tolls 10 times higher than the national average.

Each of these actors is due to conditions and specific risk factors and requires as much specific ways and intervention means.

Accordingly the Plan shall determine the more relevant problems and fix for each of these a specific intervention field, (namely a specific strategy against the risk factors present in that particular problem area). Finally, for each of these intervention fields, for each strategy, will be defined the action systems that shall be created by the different sectors and levels of the public administration, with the desirable collaboration of private structures and organizations.

2.2.2 Rules, incentives, direct interventions, coordination.

With reference to agreement characteristics and subsidizing reported in the above paragraph, the action of the “*National plan of Road Safety*” will be developed in four distinguished ways:

- a) **Address and Regulation activities**
Elaboration of technical Regulations or manuals, standards and parameters finalized to better the safety performances of the infrastructure network, transports, vehicles

and govern tools for mobility etc. In this field reports and studies are involved. These are finalized to verify the effectiveness of the Regulation in force with respect to the objectives to better the safety level. This at the aim to point out the need and the opportunity to update the Regulation Framework.

- b) **Incentive and support measures**
Incentives, financials and technical supports to the local Administrations (which are owners of a large part of the road network) and to the managing organizations of infrastructure networks and transport services for projects and interventions finalized to better the road safety.

This kind of action get mainly to achieve two objectives:

- incentives for elaboration and put into action of **projects** and **interventions** in order to configure them even as a reference model;
- supply a **technical** and **financial support** for heavy intervention due to their innovative and experimental contents or due by the presence of particular risk factors.

- c) **Direct interventions.**
Initiatives devised directly by the Central Administration in order to better the road safety. Such interventions regard mainly the prevention field, control and repression, sanitary control, National interest of road network safety improvement, cognitive action. Finally also the sensitization and information addressed to users, technicians and settlers who operate in this field.

- d) **Coordination activity**
Initiatives devoted to create proper condition either for a better coordination among the miscellaneous Administrations, which have govern responsibility in the matter of mobility and road safety or in the development of partnerships between public and private sector.

2.3 Plan, programs, actuation.

2.3.1 Contents and tools of action.

In order to assure the widest and most efficient participation either every govern responsible body involved in mobility and road safety or those anyhow concerned to the road safety improvement (structures

and private bodies included), the Plan is divided as follows:

- a) **contents** (problem area, priority intervention fields and action levels);
- b) **actuation tools** (economical and technical support measures, specific agreements, addresses for the elaboration of “*Projects for road safety*”, priority criteria, access forms to incentives and support measures).

2.3.2 Actuation and programming mechanism.

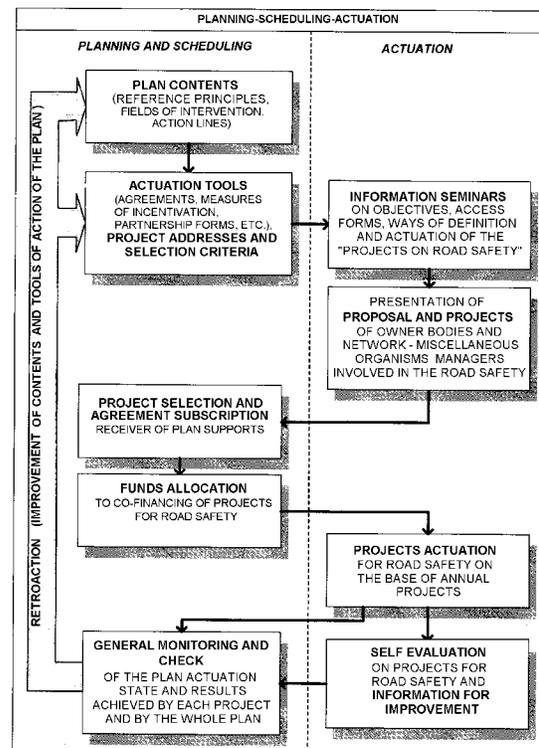
To the actuation tools are assigned the task to ignite, organize and assist the actuation process, which will be divided in eight macro-phases, as reported below:

- I. Definition of the **Actuation ways** (direct interventions, layouts and inter-institutional agreements, partnerships, incentives and support provisions) of **project addresses** to approach incentives and support provisions (criteria, parameters, fields of interventions, priorities, etc.) and **selection criteria** of projects for road safety.
- II. Organization of **information seminars** about intervention fields, reference objectives, elaboration of “*Road Safety Projects*”, priorities, forms and requirements to access to incentives and support measures, way of actuation projects, selection criteria, referred to all organisms (public and private) involved in the Plan actuation.
- III. **Proposals and projects presentation** by owners and managers bodies of the road network and all other involved organisms (public and private).
- IV. **Projects selection** receivers of the support action, incentives and co-financing of the Plan and **subscription of the agreements**.
- V. **Funds Allocation** for co-financing of the “*Road safety projects*”.
- VI. **Actuation** of the agreements and projects on the road safety , on the base of actuation annual programs (corresponding to the annual schedule of the Plan).
- VII. **Critical self review** on the effectiveness levels of each projects performed by the actors of the Plan. Gathering of information concerning the possibility to better the effectiveness of the projects regarding road safety and the different action guidelines.
- VIII. **Monitoring and general review** on the Plan actuation state and results achieved in terms of reduction of road accident casualties.

2.3.3 Core planning/scheduling and local actuation.

The actuation tools, and particularly the “*Projects for road safety*”, the agreements and incentives measures represent as a whole the operative focal point among the phases: **planning and scheduling, developed jointly at a national level, and the actuation phases, developed mainly by owner and manager bodies of road network** (with particular reference to Regions and to the Local Administration) **and other organisms** (public and private) **which are involved in the actuation of the plan.**

The focal objective of this actuation way is devoted to create the conditions for a strong active involvement of Regions and local Administrations (in the role of owner and management bodies of the infrastructure systems within 82% of wounded and 64% of deaths for road accidents), management bodies of the state road network and public-private organisms which could contribute to better the road safety levels.



2.4 Plan resources and investments in road safety.

The resources, which will be available by the state budget to the “*Road safety Plan*”, will constitute only a part of the budget Plan. As a matter of fact the

financial outfit of the Plan is useful **to stimulate and help investments in road safety** by:

- a) owner and management bodies of services and transport networks.
- b) other public and private organisms which could be effective on the road safety.

At this aim, among the Plan objectives, also an informative and sensitizing action of public and private subjects about direct and indirect costs caused by road accidents is deemed. This also because to contain such costs through interventions and actions to hinder road safety risk factors

It regards, basically, the development of an informative/formative action pondered on a better awareness of the problem and to point out operative tools, actions and conditions. These allow to reconcile social solidarity and economical objectives. At this aim among the effectiveness indicators of the plan will be given particular relevance to the relation between the resources amount given to the Plan itself and the investment volume as a whole in road safety involved (directly or indirectly) by the Plan.

3. THE ROLE OF THE MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND NAVIGATION.

The initiatives expected in this field of activity aim to remove risk factors connected directly to the mobility type, driving capacity and to the vehicle.

In this field, many action lines are expected. These, as well as the balance among the different ways of transports involved in the new "*Central Plan of Transports*", define specific fields of intervention. In the short and medium period, three action lines are settled: know-how improvement, vehicle safety and drivers.

3.1 Data collecting and analysis concerning accidents.

The availability of reliable data, on which the Plan is based, represents a priority need.

The Data Elaboration Center of Transport and Navigation Minister, encompass also the data concerning every single drivers: infractions, sanctions and road accidents data where the drivers have been involved. Such a whole of data establish a quantitative and qualitative informative base of large interest. This is finalized to the analysis of the state of the road accidents and risk factors, with particular reference to the vehicle characteristics, drivers and their behaviors.

Starting from such data, which represent the global accidents occurred, can be inferred all the meaningful aggregation such those regarding: age, sex, driving

license category, vehicle type, vehicle damages, accident dynamic, characteristic of the accident site, environmental conditions etc. The results of such deepened analysis will allow to define the strategy more effective to cope risk factors connected to driving behaviors.

3.2 Vehicle safety.

3.2.1 Building characteristics.

It is possible to better the vehicles safety level through the introduction of **diversified incentives regimes, related to particular active-passive safety equipments**. These would be added to those already in force. Such incentives would be pressing actions to car manufacturers in order to fit safer vehicles.

It has to be clarified that such interventions, cannot introduce compulsory regulations at national level. This because vehicle technique characteristics are harmonized to European level, and hence these would hinder free trade within European Union.

3.2.1 Efficiency control of vehicles in service.

In the field of safety vehicle in service particular relevance have the efficiency controls. Therefore it would be objects of the Plan:

- a) Calibration activity regarding the control of authorized garages for periodical revisions, through the following measures:
 - I) monitoring the violations pursued by authorized garages. These found through periodical inspections acted by Ministry of Transport and Navigation;
 - II) remake of sanction regime through the following procedures: warning, suspension to CED connection, the revocation of the granting;
 - III) technical personnel qualification courses of agencies;
 - IV) compulsory presence, during revision operations, of technical personnel in charge.
- b) Technical control of vehicles during the phases of road circulation, through the institution of "*Mobile operative units*". These in collaboration with the Interior Ministry, through the use of mobile units equipped properly and managed by the technical personnel of the Ministry of Transport and Navigation; previous authorization from the road police.
At this aim has been identified a **pilot project**, finalized to the vehicle technical

control in the phases of road services: efficiency of vehicle safety equipment (brakes, tyres, steering components, exhaust systems, lightning and signaling devices, mass in running order, etc.).

- c) Compulsory periodical revision of mopeds and motorcycles, in line to standard adopted by European States.

3.2.2 Transport of dangerous goods.

Improvement of road traffic transport of dangerous goods, through the institution of *consultants of safety transport of dangerous goods* (acting a specific European Union Directive), either through limiting traffic provisions on risk infrastructure components or the development of satellite systems to localize vehicle positions, or through the constitution of a “*direction room*” to manage emergencies.

3.3 Drivers.

Vehicle drivers represent the “*weaker*” component, among those involved in the road safety issue. The road traffic is already widely ruled by Traffic Code, that encompass the behavior rules to be followed for a safe driving. Anyway, these rules are often unattended (speed limits, safety distance, restraint system use, etc.). As a consequence, a State assessment of the rule knowledge is needed, in order to address possible interventions for training or updating of driving behavior.

Furthermore, more efficient sanction rules are advocated. At this aim three specifics initiative have been determined.

3.3.1 Knowledge check concerning traffic and road safety.

At the aim to assess the real level of regulation knowledge, which manage the road traffic, among all the road users, a **pilot project** is in progress of study. It regards the specific survey on drivers, carried out through the delivery of questionnaires regarding road circulation rules. The survey uses a computer network, with check points placed in strategic places of high people concentration (malls, service areas along freeways, etc.). The data collected will allow the assessment of citizens knowledge in this field, subdivided by sex, age, education, geographic area, etc.

3.3.2 Training.

- Knowledge improvement of road circulation rules either by drivers or all the road users, with

the active participation of the Ministry of transport and Navigation and programs of road education.

- Certificate for mopeds driving with notes of the National General Register Office concerning qualified drivers.
- Development of specific knowledge, practical and theoretical, concerning the vehicle drivers, in order to improve vehicle control and the driving behaviors, even in critical situation (driving on iced roads, into fog, driving on freeways, etc.). In this field even a widespread information on a proper behavior into tunnels is included.

3.3.3 Updating of rules and Regulations at the aim of road safety.

The third initiative concerning vehicle drivers is consisting of a complex of updating proposals of rules and technical regulations finalized to encourage safe and responsible driving behaviors:

- a) Scored driving license. The validity of all the driving licenses shall be linked to a score range of 0-20. At the time of the release of the driving license it will be attributed a max score of 20. The score loss, but the attribution of other sanctions, is linked to the violations of the most important behavior rules. At the time of getting the lowest score of 0, it will be required the participation to updating training courses in order to gain the lost scores.
- b) Note of the General Register Office of drivers caught while driving tampered mopeds with the consequently suspension of the license at the second check.
- c) Withdrawal of the driving license to whom is not complying to the revision of the driving license. For the time being it is provided the withdrawal of the driving license only in the case the driver, who must comply the revision, is caught while driving.
- d) Severe sanctions for violations concerning the speed limits, the safe distance, the use of safety belts and helmets.
- e) Introduction of pocket instruments for indirect test of blood alcoholic level. The future introduction of such instruments will allow a precautionary control of drivers and not only in the cases of suspected drunken driving.
- f) Reduction of the legal limit from 0.80 to 0.50 grams of alcohol per liter of blood.
- g) Differentiation for new licensed drivers (for the first spell of three years of driving) of the

provided limit for alcohol blood content (e.g.: 0.20 g/l).

3.4 Accomplishment of the plan

During the first year and half after the entry into force of the law that has instituted the “National Plan of Road Safety”, the following objectives has been made:

- a) Issuing of the document that establish the rules of actuation of the Plan.
- b) Launch of the pilot project on the technical control of the vehicles in the circulating phase.
At this aim a fleet of seventeen Mobile Operative Units (e.g.: point 3.2.2.b) that has started to operate in February 2001.
- c) A law disposition has been issued in order to provide since this year the compulsory periodical revision of mopeds and motorcycles.

3.4.1 Objects in progress of accomplishment.

Within one of the two branches of the Parliament a law disposition has been already approved in order to act many of the measures proposed by the Plan (par.3.3.3) and among these:

- a) Scored driving license;
- b) Special driving license for mopeds driving.
- c) Specific sanction tighten up, etc.