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## Editorial



By Niels Buus Kristensen  
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The times are gone for good where each of us, the member organisations of ECTRI, could rely on being merely a national research institution. The globalisation over the past decades has forced every ambitious research institute to consider itself as a European research institute with a global perspective and to act as an integral part of the international research networks.

This is the background on which ECTRI was established from the vision and persistence of the leaders of the founding institutes. Looking back at the five years since ECTRI's foundation it is evident that substantial progress has been achieved in strengthening both the organisational cooperation and the association's position in the European transport research arena. It seems fair to say that ECTRI is today established as a recognised partner in the building of the European Research Area.

However, now the time has come for a second phase of ECTRI's development with focus on deepening the internal cooperation through intensified research cooperation. At the end of the day, ECTRI's *raison-d'être* is to advance the common goal pursued by all its members: *to perform and promote transport research for*

*the maximum benefit of our society.*

Recognising this, ECTRI has as a concrete initiative launched seven "Thematic Working Groups" (TWGs) reflecting the top research priorities identified by the ECTRI members (see more inside).

A kick-off meeting of these TWGs was held in Oslo in September with participation of more than 70 senior researchers who will constitute the driving forces in the thematic working groups. An important aim is to create networks with strong informal relations among our researchers which can form the basis for closer research cooperation. The expectations are that the thematic working groups will contribute to the formulation of strategic research agendas as well as to their implementation by means of selected common research within their themes, and as such act as "incubators" of new ideas and projects.

Experience has shown that solely network-based cooperation can be fragile and that consolidation by more concrete collaborative research projects with specific outputs is a necessary part of a successful and lasting research cooperation between ECTRI members.

Hence, to keep up the spirit beyond the initial enthusiasm, which was fortunately apparent in Oslo, it is necessary to find resources for such collaborative research. In reality this will involve acquisition of external financial contributions since only few member organisations have sufficient own resources to allocate for such purposes.

Therefore, the thematic working groups are envisaged to actively promote formation of successful consortia for FP7 programmes as well as e.g. national/multilateral research programmes. Consortia which will not be confined to ECTRI but should seek the strongest research environments within their topic, irrespectively of whether they are ECTRI-members or not.

The perspectives for the thematic working groups, if successful, are far-reaching. Five years from now we might look back on the kick-off meeting in Oslo as an important event in ECTRI's development, where a first step was taken in consolidating the research cooperation between our members for the benefit of not only ECTRI but for the European transport research community as such.

## ECTRI Thematic Working Groups Kick-off meeting 11 & 12 September, Oslo, Norway

Further to the successful experience of the Working Group on Urban Mobility, ECTRI is pursuing its effort on deepening the internal thematic research cooperation between its members.

This form of increased cooperation is to be achieved by 6 new "Thematic Working Groups" (TWGs) which have been created on the following themes:

- Traffic Safety & Security,
- Energy and Climate Change,
- Freight Transport (including logistics, technology),
- Intelligent Transport Systems and Intelligent Infrastructures,
- Mobility (socio-economic, demographic e.g. elderly and disabled people, policy aspects),

- Transport Economics and Policy.

The ECTRI **thematic working groups kick-off meeting took place on 11 and 12 September 2007 at the Institute of Transport Economics (TØI) in Oslo, Norway.** About 70 researchers attended this event.

This kick-off meeting was divided in two parts:

- the first part was a plenary session during which different presentations were made in order to present ECTRI, the reasons and expectations for having the TWGs, the positive experience of the existing TWGs on Urban Mobility, the guidelines and processes to work in the new TWGs.
- the second part of the kick-off

was dedicated to the TWGs' meetings. The aims of these meetings were twofold: firstly to get to know other researchers, and secondly to define the Terms of Reference and strategic goals as well as the milestones of each group.

The moderators of each TWG subsequently presented their meetings' outcomes to the ECTRI Board.

More information: [www.ectri.org](http://www.ectri.org)



Report of TWGs' meetings to ECTRI Board

### ECTRI facts and figures

👉 **The Transport Research Arena 2008 (TRA 2008)** will take place in Ljubljana, Slovenia, from 21 to 24 April 2008 around the theme "*Greener, safer and smarter road transport for Europe*". The event is organised jointly by the Conference of European Directors of Roads, the European Commission and the European Road Transport Research Advisory Council. Jean-Pierre Médevielle, INRETS, José Manuel Menendez, UPM and Josef Mikulik, CDV and ECTRI Vice-President, are Programme Committee members of this conference. The objective of TRA 2008 is to forge new productive partnerships across all transport sectors. TRA 2008 will gather an expected 1,500 industry and research managers, senior researchers, engineers and scientists, as well as representatives of local, regional and national public authorities across Europe and around the world.

The conference will be complemented by a major exhibition showcasing how recent and future

road research and technological development in Europe is responding to the challenges of climate change, and offering new solutions in urban transport, in long distance transport and in traffic safety.

More information on the conference website: [www.traconference.com](http://www.traconference.com)

👉 ECTRI is supporting the **14<sup>th</sup> International Conference Road Safety on Four Continents (RS4C)** to be held in Bangkok, Thailand, from 14 to 16 November 2007. Accordingly, Josef Mikulik from CDV, Czech Republic, is a member of the International Advisory Committee, and Hélène Fontaine from INRETS, France and Péter Holló from KTI, Hungary are members of the Scientific Committee. Prof. George Giannopoulos, former ECTRI President, will also participate as keynote speaker. A preliminary programme and further information including the registration for the three-day event are available on the conference website: [www.vti.se/RS4C](http://www.vti.se/RS4C) or by email to [RS4C@vti.se](mailto:RS4C@vti.se).

👉 The 23<sup>rd</sup> World Road Congress was held from 17 to 21 September at the "Palais des Congrès" in Paris, France. On this occasion, **Guy Bourgeois, ECTRI's President**, made a presentation on "**ECTRI's role in the structuration of the transport European Research Area**" during the session SP17 "Evolution of demand and supply of research and public support to innovation", that was held on 21 September.

👉 The **ERTRAC Conference "European Road Transport and Climate Change"** was held in Brussels on 26 September 2007. Prof. Robert Sausen from DLR took part in the Panel discussion "Future Trends in Road Transport" as ECTRI representative. More information at: <http://www.ertrac.org/events.htm>

👉 ECTRI has prepared a **contribution to the European Commission consultation on the Green Paper European Research Area: new perspectives**. This can be downloaded from the ECTRI website in the Publications part.



Scientists of the Institute of Transportation Systems of the German Aerospace Center (DLR) have analysed more than 4,000 accidents on behalf of the German Federal Highway Research Institute (BASt). Police reports of the region around Braunschweig, Germany, give information about courses and causes of accident events. Out of this, the scientists can deduce approaches for the development of Advanced Driver Assistance systems (ADAS).

According to the data of the German Federal Statistical Office 336,619 car accidents with personal damage happened in Germany in 2005. The accident cause is almost always an error of the driver. To support the driver in difficult situations, assistance systems are developed. The Institute

of Transportation Systems investigates causes of driver problems and develops and tests ADAS.

The accident analyses show three focuses where drivers need to be supported:

**Intersections:** Drivers frequently don't realise other prior vehicles or cyclists because they are inattentive or looking at something else. An assistance system should detect these vehicles and inform or warn the driver in time.

**Rear-end collisions:** Rear-end collisions often happen at intersections or in grade-separated traffic, while cars are driving in a row and one of them abruptly brakes. An assistance system should request the driver at an early stage to adjust the distance and the speed to the situation on the road. It should furthermore support the driver during an emergency brake.

**Single car accident:** At single car accidents only one vehicle is involved. Causes are mostly high speed, wet and slick roads or inebriated drivers. A supporting system should e.g. adjust the vehicle speed to the situation.

ADAS can help to prevent more than 70 percent of serious accidents of the delineated accident types. Scientists investigate in a dynamic driving simulator, whether the causes identified by the accident analyses are reflected by drivers' behaviour. In a next step prototypes of assistance systems can be implemented in the driving simulator and tested concerning their accident avoiding effects.

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## ECTRI member events (1)

✚ The **4<sup>th</sup> International Congress on Transport Research in Greece**, co-organised by the Hellenic Institute of Transport, the Hellenic Institute of Transportation engineers and the National Technical University of Athens, will take place in Athens from 27 to 31 May 2008. It is organised concurrently with the 10<sup>th</sup> International Congress on Applications of Advanced Technologies in Transportation (AATT 2008). The Congress themes are Freight Transport and Logistics, Transport Policy, Transport Safety and Security, Urban and Rural Traffic Management, Maritime Transport and Design of Ports, Air Transport, and Rail Transport and Fixed Route Modes. The notification of abstracts acceptance will be on 29 October.

More information: [www.ictr2008.gr](http://www.ictr2008.gr).

✚ POLITO will host in October the **Management Committee and the Working group meetings of the two COST Transport actions 355 and 356**. COST 355 main objective is to develop a more rigorous understanding of the conditions under which the process of growing unsustainable transport demand could be reversed by changing travellers' and transport operators' behaviours, bringing together researchers from 40 research institutes in 22 different nations. The 5 to 7 October meeting will be the last one before the final conference, to be jointly held with the ISCTSC conference in Anecy (France) in May 2008.

COST 356 aim is to design harmonised methods to build better environmental indicators by using existing European indices, to be ap-

plied to the decision making process of the transport sector in the different European countries. COST 356 experts coming from 19 different nations will meet in POLITO from 10 to 12 October. During both events, participants will be welcomed by Cristina Pro-nello, professor of Transport at POLITO, Italy, and chair of the "Transport and Urban Development" Domain Committee of the COST programme.

More information on COST 355: <http://cost355.inrets.fr> and <http://www.isctsc.org/>.

More information on COST 356: <http://cost356.inrets.fr>.





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## ECTRI member events (2)

 **#railtec 2007, 12-14 November, Dortmund 2007 – Networking the rail sector.** Internationalism – interaction – interdisciplinarity: these are the three main threads of #railtec 2007, which will run under the theme of “Mobility Networks”. Combining a trade fair for the rail industry and a transport policy congress, #railtec is a leading promoter of pan-European mobility. The three-day event will showcase products and services designed to increase and enhance mobility and offer visitors the opportunity to discuss key issues within this area. Visit Fraunhofer at the stand 3/06 at the "Forum Nordrhein-Westfalen" in hall 3B.

 **Rune Elvik to defend his third doctoral dissertation -** On 2 November at Aalborg University in Denmark, Chief Research Officer Rune Elvik of the Institute of Transport Economics (TØI) in Oslo will defend his thesis “Speed and road accidents. An evaluation of the Power Model” for the PhD degree.

It will be the candidate's third doctoral degree. In 1993, he was awarded the Dr. Polit. degree at the University of Oslo, for his thesis “How rational is the road safety policy?” In 1999, he obtained the Dr. Philos. degree at the same university for his thesis “Assessing the validity of evaluation research by means of meta-analysis”. Rune Elvik is the

principal author of “The Handbook of Road Safety Measures”, published by Elsevier, and is Editor-in-Chief of the review *Accident Analysis & Prevention*. His last thesis can be downloaded from TØI's website [www.toi.no](http://www.toi.no). Search for report 740.

 **The HUMANIST Network of Excellence** will organise a European Conference on Human Centred Design for Intelligent Transport System in Lyon, France on 3 and 4 April 2008.

More information on:  
[www.conference.noehumanist.org](http://www.conference.noehumanist.org)



## EURFORUM PROJECT

« European Research Forum for Urban Mobility »

The European Research Forum for Urban Mobility -EURFORUM- was set up under the leadership of UITP to define research priorities in the field of urban passenger and freight transport.

The outputs of EURFORUM will be threefold:

- a State of the Art Report on Urban Mobility Research in Europe, including a Vision on Urban Mobility with Time Horizon 2020,
- a Strategic Research Agenda for Urban Mobility,
- a proposal for a permanent

European advisory body on urban mobility research.

During plenary meetings held in Brussels in February and June 2007, the EURFORUM partners discussed draft versions of these documents with selected European urban mobility actors. The results of these discussions were fed back into the reports.

The conclusions of the project will be presented at the final conference, which will be held at the Committee of Regions in Brussels on 19 November 2007. High level political speakers will give

their vision on how the role research can play for better urban mobility.

Guy Bourgeois, ECTRI President, will participate in this conference as panel member.

Attendance is free, and participants are registered on a “first come, first served” basis—registration forms are available on the EURFORUM website.

More information can be obtained from **Izaskun ARENAZA**, UITP, [izaskun.arenaza@uitp.org](mailto:izaskun.arenaza@uitp.org) or on the EURFORUM website: <http://www.eurforum.net>

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## Upcoming ECTRI Events

- Next Assembly and Board meetings  
> Bratislava, Slovakia, 12 and 13 November 2007