



Putting consumers first

**national consumer agency**

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## Cars in Ireland 'least safe in Europe'

9 May 2007

Consumers in Ireland are missing out on a life-saving technology that could reduce road crashes by 20%.

Only 52% of cars here are fitted with technology that comes as standard in 75% of new cars in Denmark, and two thirds of cars sold in Lithuania and Latvia.

Ireland came bottom of the survey, making it the slowest country in Europe to adopt Electronic Skid Control (ESC).

- ESC comes as standard on just 52% of new cars sold in Ireland;
- It is optional on 18%;
- On 30% of cars it is not available.

### New device

The new device costs just €130 before tax to fit to new cars, the EU claims.

The technology works by recognising when a skid is starting to happen. The electronic control unit applies brakes to individual wheels, bringing the car back under control.

It even works in wet and icy conditions.

The AA claims consumers are not even being made aware of the existence of the technology. It is lobbying for the device to be made available tax-free to motorists here.

### Choose ESC!

But motor dealers may soon have no choice on fitting the technology, which it's claimed could save 4,000 lives and 100,000 serious accidents across Europe every year.

Studies in Sweden show an overall reduction of 22% in crashes, rising to 32% in wet conditions.

And a study in Japan has suggested a decrease in accident involvement of up to 35%.

Campaigners are pressing the European Commission to back compulsory anti-skid technology in a campaign dubbed Choose ESC!.

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