



European  
Commission

Newsletter N° 18 | March 2015

# Road Safety Newsletter



## Excellence in Road Safety Awards 2015 Brussels, 4 February 2015

*The 2015 edition of the Excellence in Road Safety Awards ceremony took place on 4 February 2015, at the Square-Brussels Meeting Centre, in the heart of the Belgian capital. Five worthy winners – organisations based in France, Portugal, the United Kingdom, Greece and Poland – proudly received their awards from Violeta Bulc, the EU Commissioner for Transport, for their innovations and positive impact on European road safety. The ceremony was preceded by a 'World Café' session to debate best practices in road safety, attracting some 120 experts from the European road safety community.*

The Excellence in Road Safety Award, also known as the Charter Award, recognises the most innovative practices carried out under the European Road Safety Charter. The aim is to spotlight the hard work of organisations that engage in road safety and to save lives on European roads, whilst inspiring others to emulate them. The 2015 winners were selected from signatories of the Road Safety Charter platform, after an evaluation made by the European Commission.

"Road safety policy is one of the great European success stories," said Commissioner Bulc in her opening speech. "Since 2010, the annual number of road deaths has decreased by 19%. That means that in

2014, some 6 000 more people came home safely to their families than in 2010."

She made it clear that the 26 000 fatalities on Europe's roads is far too high a figure. Nor should we forget the many more who suffer horrific road traffic injuries. However she underlined the importance of acknowledging EU efforts to reduce the numbers of deaths and injuries on roads, whilst striving to do even more.

"Increased road safety is not rocket science, but saving thousands of lives requires hard work and persistence," added the Commissioner.



“Every generation must be taught about road safety – even experienced drivers need reminding of it from time to time.”

Commissioner Bulc praised the major contribution to road safety made by the European Commission, tackling big issues such as minimum standards for technical vehicle operations or the coordination of common standards for emerging technologies. She highlighted new areas where the Commission hopes to make a difference, such as EU-level analysis of serious road traffic injuries.

“But we must also engage the local level,” added the Commissioner. “That’s why we created the European Road Safety Charter, a platform

for bringing together all those local and regional organisations to share their experience in road safety with each other.”

Before handing out the 2015 Excellence in Road Safety Awards, Commissioner Bulc said it is great that Europe recognises the outstanding work of all kinds of organisations in this area. She noted that three of the winners (Greece, Portugal and the UK) offer road safety education targeted at children: “That’s a good and wise approach, going far beyond your traditional membership to take the road safety message to tomorrow’s drivers.”

Lastly, Commissioner Bulc urged all the winners “to keep going” and to consider making their projects pan-European so as to tackle emerging challenges.

## Winners of the 2015 Excellence in Road Safety Awards



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**Attikes Diadromes** is a Greek road operator company operating and maintaining the 70-km Attica Tollway completed in 2004. It received a Charter Award for its efforts to educate young people on the importance of road safety. The jury was impressed by the company’s willingness to adopt a high level of community responsibility by taking on a road safety project that lies outside its usual line of work.

“Road safety is always on our mind,” said Bill Halkias, Managing Director. He highlighted the ‘Eyes on the Road’ project designed to raise young people’s awareness of road safety through a two-hour seminar in high schools, with a focus on safety for mopeds and motorcycles. “Our goal is to reduce accidents among young people, be they car drivers, motorcyclists or passengers.” Feedback shows that road safety knowledge is dramatically improved among those who attend the seminar.

The company also developed ‘Little Atticus’, a fun theatrical play aimed at creating ‘road safety ambassadors’ among children aged 5 to 11. Seen by 44 000 children since 2006, the play will soon roll out nationwide.

**The Automobile Club of Portugal** (ACP) was founded in 1903 and is a member of the International Automobile Federation, representing 100 million drivers worldwide. The Jury decided to award ACP for the originality of its global road safety educational programme and its ability to reach a wide audience, with a focus on a younger audience.

Road safety is not taught in Portuguese schools. So in 2012 the ACP launched ‘ACP Kids’, a national road safety educational programme for children aged 3 to 9. It targets schools (teachers can register and get promotional material), has a travelling roadshow and reaches

young TV viewers via cartoons on popular channels. The goal is to make children ambassadors for road safety, so they can spread their knowledge to parents, siblings and friends alike. The ACP works with the Ministry of Education to guarantee the quality of the education materials. According to Rosário Abreu Lima, ACP’s Director of Institutional Communication, “By 2013, ACP Kids had reduced the number of children injured in road accidents by a factor of four.”

**The Cycle-Smart Foundation** is a UK registered charity, located 25 km west of London. It received the Charter Award for its long-term efforts and creativity in encouraging children to wear helmets and be more visible while cycling. CSF’s work also shows that a very small charity can still have a major impact and create great added value, not least by mobilising partners to work together for a common goal.

Since 1998, CSF has actively promoted the use of bike helmets for children. Its mission now extends to promotion of all aspects of safer cycling – including bike lights, cycle training and bicycle maintenance. It works on safer cycling education, including through programmes for schools and parents, and a reward scheme for young cyclists who wear a cycle helmet. Volunteers and road safety officers hand out on-the-spot prize envelopes to children aged between 5 and 15 seen to be wearing a cycle helmet. Since 2008, police officers have joined this effort.

“Our Helmet Watch Scheme is a carrot not sticks approach,” said Angela Lee, the charity’s founder and Chief Executive. “By rewarding positive safety behaviour, we can counter peer pressure among children not to wear helmets when cycling.”



The PKP Polish Railway Lines Company is awarded for its complete action plan to increase safety at railway level crossings. Its sustained campaigns are constructive and informative, taking pro-active action to reduce accidents at these risk spots. Since 2005, PKP has run all-year-long road safety campaigns under the 'Stop and Live!' banner. In October 2012, the focus expanded to tackle the serious problem of accidents at level crossings.

The company's campaigns on this issue include educational lectures in schools, driving schools and businesses, and awareness-raising events with YouTube videos, accident simulations and rescue demonstrations at level crossings. Over 24260 kids have taken part in these training sessions. Other initiatives include the 'Report a Glitch' website on technical problems at crossings, and physical marking or IT-based systems used to warn drivers as they approach level crossings. "Thanks to our campaign, plus education and better infrastructure, fatalities at Polish level crossings have dropped by half since 2005," said Jakub Woźniak, head of PKP's Communication and Promotion Office.

## ERS Charter World Café: from experience to excellence

Just before the Awards Ceremony on 4 February 2015, the European Road Safety Charter team hosted a 'World Café' in the Square-Brussels Meeting Centre. Charter members from all over Europe were given the opportunity to exchange their views and experiences on best practices in road safety.

Over three short and informal sessions, interacting with as many other people as possible, participants sat around 10 tables to debate three topics: 1) The genesis of a road safety action; 2) What are the opportunities and challenges?; and 3) How to evaluate road safety actions.

When the hour was up, team members gathered and shared the conclusions of these lively debates. On topic one, it was noted that companies often launch awareness-raising actions for their own



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Sanofi is a French healthcare company with a presence in over 100 countries worldwide. Every day, some 30000 of its employees take to the road to visit customers. Sanofi is awarded for its extensive road safety training plan directed at its sales teams, setting a good example of employer responsibility. Although road safety campaigns rarely address work-place related road crashes, this company has shown that businesses can do much by themselves. Sanofi's action also underlines how responsibility for road safety can go far beyond actors inside the automotive industry.

Since 2007, the firm has developed an internal road safety policy to keep employees safe. The initiative includes dedicated training programmes, awareness campaigns at work, an annual awards scheme to encourage safe driving, and accident analysis. "Road safety training is key for us: we do it often and repeatedly," says Frank Zarifian, Sanofi Global Operations HSE Senior Director. "Over the last eight years in Europe, we've halved the number of road accidents involving our vehicles."

employees, using internal or external resources. For topic two, opportunities include company volunteers and social media, while challenges are often linked to a lack of funds or motivated people. On the last topic, it was noted that successful evaluation of actions may depend on indicators, methods and tangible results. All in all, it was concluded that road safety actions need the support of motivated people and adequate funding. Better actions have added value (e.g. improved road safety culture), so can be transferred to other regions/countries.

→ Find out more:

The commitments and reports are published on the European Road Safety Charter website: <http://www.erscharter.eu/>



# European Motorcyclists' Forum 2015: Safer motorcycling in Europe now!

From 3 to 5 February 2015, EU policy-makers joined motorcycle users, industry and experts in Brussels to look at ways of tackling motorcycle safety challenges for the next decade. On day one, participants focused on knowledge, access to the industry, the road environment, communication and strategies.



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The next morning's session, at the European Parliament, began with a presentation and discussion on the three-year RIDERSCAN project. Aline Delhay, the Project Coordinator and outgoing Secretary General of FEMA (Federation of European Motorcyclists' Associations), said that RIDERSCAN offers a detailed picture of motorcycling in Europe. It also highlights the importance of taking into consideration the variety of use of motorcycles (leisure/commuting) and the sociocultural differences (revenue, age, family composition) when making policy at European level and when seeking the right measures to tackle motorcycle safety at national level.

Secondly, the project has revealed the importance of better understanding riding characteristics in traffic. It is essential that there be focused research on behavioural knowledge (riding models – what makes riding different from driving in terms of mental processes and traffic behaviour), if we want technological development to also positively impact motorcycle safety and not create further hazards for riding on EU roads.

## Motorcyclists are a knowledgeable community

The project also underlined the vast pool of expertise and knowledge available in the motorcycling community, be they riders, industry, trainers, mutualised insurers, etc. Road authorities and policy-makers should make use of these to better understand motorcycle accident causation factors and to identify priority measures. They could also use this expertise and knowledge for the purpose of acceptance and dissemination of these safety measures/messages. So the involvement of the motorcycle industry clearly enhances the effectiveness of safety policies in tackling motorcycle safety.

RIDERSCAN highlighted the problem of implementing infrastructure guidelines, which are available in most Member States but not used by road designers and maintenance authorities. This should be a priority action for Europe, as it is one of the critical issues for the revision of a list of EU standards to integrate PTW (powered two wheelers) requirements, notably road-side barriers (EN1317).

Lastly, said Ms Delhay, the project underlines a commonly identified need for road authorities and the motorcycling community to work on improving the quality of the training for initial riders on the framework side (training curricula, trainers, testers) and on the content side (developing the hazard awareness/overconfidence part of the training/evaluation).

In the ensuing discussion, Mr Szabolcs Schmidt, head of the European Commission's road safety unit, said the EU should be proud of its work to make European roads safer. But he agreed that motorcyclists' safety needs more attention, as over 19% of road accidents involve PTWs. Hence the importance of the Commission's mid-term evaluation of road safety policy orientations for 2011-2020, plus plans to improve road infrastructure safety and to include reporting on serious road traffic injuries.

Member of the European Parliament Ms Inés Ayala-Sender (S&D) emphasised the importance of including PTW users in road safety plans. Fellow MEP Wim van de Camp (EPP) called for a focus on the positive aspects of motorcycling, with extra work on training and the needs of older motorcyclists. Dolf Willigers, new FEMA General Secretary, said that motorcycling will become more important for EU mobility, not just leisure. Jesper Christensen, FIM CAP Director, said he feared that complex EU regulations are discouraging motorcyclists.

To wrap up the session, Pierre Van Eslande, ITF Working Group Chairman, presented the OECD/ITF Motorcycle Safety Report. Its key conclusions note the lack of national infrastructure for PTWs, the need for a toolbox of measures for PTW riders, the need to promote appropriate behaviour of all road users, and the need for a safe system approach for safer PTWs.

### Find out more...

If these subjects have revved up your interest, then check out the Road Safety website at: [ec.europa.eu/roadsafety](http://ec.europa.eu/roadsafety)

European Youth Forum for Road Safety (EYFRS) also has a Facebook page at: [www.facebook.com/EYFRS](http://www.facebook.com/EYFRS)

EYFRS has its own website at: [ec.europa.eu/eyfrs](http://ec.europa.eu/eyfrs)  
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Published by: Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport | European Commission — BE-1049 Brussels  
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