

ASECAP Webinar on Road Safety

Building a wide road safety culture to reach Vision Zero goal

22nd of June 21

Introduction

ASECAP held its 13th Road safety event in a digital way, with the high patronage of Mr Giuseppe Ferrandino, Member of the Transport & Tourism Committee, European Parliament.

This webinar, which brought together over 150 participants from 20 countries, was an opportunity to analyse and discuss how to build a wide road safety culture involving many of the interested stakeholders: road users, industry, policymakers from the European Commission and the Parliament and road infrastructure operators. The objective pursued is to draw recommendations that could help to reach the Vision Zero goal.

Welcoming and introductory remarks

Massimo Schintu, ASECAP President

The ASECAP Road Safety Conference is an important annual event that brings together the ASECAP members, the EU policymakers and the other stakeholders actively involved in the field of road safety. This event provides the opportunity to shed light on the projects and initiatives that are carried out by motorway companies on their network to improve road safety and contribute to building a wide road safety culture in their respective countries across Europe. It allows to have share knowledges and experiences with all the actors involved in road safety.

Road safety is the most important priority for toll concessionaires. ASECAP Road operators represent more than 87,000 km of motorways across 21 member countries and the concessionaires represented in our Association put in place, on a daily basis, actions aimed at ensuring high road safety standards for the users, thus fulfilling the EU Road Safety Action Plan's objectives and implementing directly, at the same time, the EU Directive on road safety infrastructure management along the TEN-T road network.

Road safety is indeed at the core of toll concessionaires' activities and it is the first and most important priority for us.

Massimo Schintu

Giuseppe FERRANDINO, Member of the Transport & Tourism Committee, European Parliament

The EU has reaffirmed its ambitious long-term goal: to approach zero fatalities by 2050 ('Vision Zero'). By approving the Valletta Declaration on Road Safety in March 2017, EU transport ministers also set a similarly ambitious target: to halve the number of serious injuries in the EU by 2030.

To achieve these targets, 'Vision Zero' must become a mantra shared by both policymakers and civil society, and a comprehensive communication campaign is essential to this end. We must implement the so-called 'Safe System' at EU level. We need to ensure safe vehicles, safe infrastructure, safe use of the roads (speed, sober driving, use of seat belts and helmets) and better post-accident care, all of which are well-established and important factors for a proper holistic approach.

Another key issue is sharing transport (e.g. car and bicycle sharing systems) and the development of new forms of mobility that offer new opportunities to tackle congestion, especially in the most populated urban areas.

EU funding is also important to prepare future road safety solutions and accelerate the achievement of road safety results across the EU and in countries that are lagging in adopting adequate road safety measures. Various funding

solutions already exist, such as regional funds (European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), Cohesion Fund) and the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF), which, by the way, will be voted in the ITRE-TRAN committee just this week. However, so far these possibilities have only been used to a limited extent. Awareness of the different instruments available is often low, a situation that is exacerbated by the complexity of the procedures for receiving funding. Shared forms of individual transport (car or bicycle sharing) are increasing - particularly as car-sharing increasingly focuses on electric vehicles and will have beneficial environmental effects. However, there are challenges still to be met: shared cars may be equipped with safety features with which drivers are unfamiliar, which will have an effect on safety yet to be determined.

We are on the right track, but at the same time I think there is still a lot of work to be done both at European and national level so that we can achieve the goals we have all set ourselves.

Giuseppe Ferrandino

Keynote presentation

Matthew Baldwin, EU Road Safety Coordinator, Deputy Director-General of DG MOVE, European Commission

Thanked Mr Ferrandino for his very good overview of EU priority actions. It was time to give road safety the same prominence that COVID19 has had as a public health issue. In 2020, the Stockholm Conference had issued an ambitious declaration right before the COVID lockdown, but we continued to push for progress at the global level – Stockholm was followed by a United Nations General Assembly resolution and the global road safety community was now working on a new plan of action for the decade. So, while we needed to restore the momentum to road safety, it was clear that there remains plenty of enthusiasm for road safety as most visibly seen during the UN Global Road Safety Week in May with an unprecedentedly strong and positive reaction on social media.

Mr Baldwin confirmed that the EU is strongly pushing to implement the safe system based on accepting that people make mistakes, but neither they nor other road users should die from them. We needed to take the physics of human vulnerability into account with layers of protection (safer vehicles, lower speed, road infrastructure, etc.). All these parameters have the capacity to reduce the impact of crashes and make sure that people don't die or be seriously injured as a result. In the safe system context, what we also need is to set targets! In the last decade, we had already set targets inside the EU that we have not reached for the last decade but the Member States had agreed to go again for a 50% reduction in deaths and serious injuries and was delighted to see the principle of 50% reduction targets also adopted at the global level.

He went on to explain that EU had adopted key performance indicators: for the first time at the EU level, we have 10 KPIs including all different aspects of the safe system, and Member States, with EU financial assistance, were now gathering the data. He also stressed the need shared responsibility of all actors: we need to work at the European, the national, the local and the global levels where all actors need to be involved, whether governments, private sector players, researchers NGOs, or individual citizens.

On top of this new inclusive partnership that the EU was establishing, the EU was not afraid to legislate where we have the legal competence and where we can make the difference. We were very proud of the General Safety Regulation which brings in such issues as intelligent speed assistance, automated emergency braking. These measures will save a huge number of lives.

At the EU level, we are also looking at issues such as speed and alcohol where further European guidance or recommendations could help the Member States tackle these serious issues.

Finally, it was important to remember that the European Union needs to be a global actor. The EU was working hard in the context of the action for the new UN decade of road safety but also with Africa, the Western Balkans

and the Eastern Partnership countries, in particular in relation to road safety observatories as an important starting place for road safety analysis. The EU was also a major investor in the UN road safety fund.

We need to act at all levels - EU, national, local and global - to address road safety as a public health issue and to save lives.

Matthew Baldwin

Introduction of the subject

João Neves, ASCENDI

He presented one important project that is being implemented on the ASCENDI motorway network: the development and certification of a new Safety Barrier solution for bridges and viaducts with 30 cm concrete kerbs. Firstly, he explained the reason that led to a safety barrier upgrading programme: when the road concessions were awarded to ASCENDI the requirements for safety barriers were fully integrated into road design. However, during the construction phase, the European Standard for Vehicle Restraint Systems was partially adopted by Portugal. Therefore, in order to assess the compliance of its network with the best practices regarding safety barriers, ASCENDI carried out in 2018 and 2019 an audit that focused on 4 intervention types:

- median barriers
- bridges
- slopes
- obstacles and transitions

Following the audit, the safety barriers upgrading programme has been launched, which shall last until 2023 and has a €17 million budget. It is implemented on six road concessions with permanent and annual monitoring.

Then, he highlighted the 3 problems they faced:

- No certified solution is available in the market to be installed over a bridge's 30 cm high curb.
- Every new solution has to have a Motorcycle Protection System (mandatory in Portugal)
- Currently installed solutions have no CE certification => unknown performance

These difficulties led to the Development and Certification of a new Safety Barrier for bridges and viaducts with 30 cm concrete kerbs. In view of getting the CE product validation and certification, computer modelling and simulation and full-scale crash tests were carried out by an engineering company.

Concerning the transition part of the barriers, full development and certification are expected for the second semester of 2022.

Development and Certification of a new Safety Barrier solution for bridges and viaducts with 30 cm concrete kerbs: an indispensable contribute for Ascendi's Safety Barrier Upgrading Program.

João Neves

Christine Allard, SANEF/ABERTIS GROUP

Mrs Allard presented a new type of road safety campaign based on a positive and cognitive concept: gratitude. In 2020, 131 patrol vans were hit on French motorway networks and many agents were shocked or even injured.

The safety of our motorway agents is a permanent concern. Our agents are exposed to traffic, inattention and sometimes to accidents. They are however very visible, with their fluorescent yellow outfit, vans adorned with red and white zebras, their flashing light arrows. After communicating through humour, testing pedagogy, pushing behavioural analysis and understanding drowsiness phenomena, our conviction is that the time for gratitude towards good drivers has come. Gratitude promotes a form of social well-being and generates a positive impact on people.

At Sanef, we believe that the “Thank You”, repeated over and over, will generate a positive emotional response. That’s therefore the key to what we’re looking for with this “Thanks to You” (Merci à vous) campaign: the recognition that a virtuous behaviour will engender other virtuous behaviours. It is a sensitive, emotional gamble, but one that deserves to be tried to help preserve the lives of our agents and our customers.

The campaign reflects the thanks sent to motorways agents and to customers, to promote good behaviour and thus encourage everyone to reproduce them. To make an even safer experience while driving on motorways. It’s declined through different situations (ex: thank you for respecting safety distances). It is declined through the different situation on motorways: in case of breakdowns, for information given through radio, on work areas, thank you when you adapt your speed through the area works, etc. The campaign is a multi-channel campaign broadcast on all media for a 12-week campaigns starting in May until July. We have good feedback from customers since the implementation of the campaign and also on the social networks.

We believe in positive messages, attitudes, behaviors for a positive impact. The time has come for a simply and positive communication to change behavior.

Christine Allard

Bernadette Moreau, VINCI-AUTOROUTES FOUNDATION

Mrs Moreau presented the main results of the study on the health and driving behaviours of lorry drivers carried out by an interdisciplinary team of researchers. She then outlined the related awareness-raising campaign that was organised on the VINCI Autoroutes network. The scientific study involved 515 drivers of 17 different nationalities, of whom 50% were French. Interviews were held at several motorway rest areas. The objective of the study was to better understand the truck drivers’ perception of their own behaviour on roads and of their healthy living behaviours. The study’s main lessons:

- Long trips that keep drivers away from home for several days prevent them from adopting healthy lifestyle habits, which can have a negative impact on their health.
- Truck drivers have strong experience.
- A real risk of accident due to lack of attention and sleep :1 in 2 has ever ridden on rumble strips through distraction, drowsiness, or wanting to be guided).
- Awareness of the risk for road crews on motorways - 1st risk factor identified: when there is another lorry passing them while they are trying to change lanes to avoid a crew vehicle on the side of the road.
- Professionals who know they could do more to be healthy: Almost 3/4 of them carry extra weight; less than 1/3 of lorry drivers say they make sure to exercise; above-average tobacco consumption.

Based on the study’s results, the VINCI Autoroutes Foundation and the Carcept Prev Foundation launched a prevention campaign on 1 June at three rest areas on the VINCI Autoroutes network. The objective of the campaign was to deliver prevention messages targeting lorry drivers more effectively in order to improve their health and safety, as well as the safety of other road users. At the rest areas, truck drivers were invited to participate in various workshops with sleep specialists, nutritionists, relaxation therapists, sports therapists, and representatives of both foundations, all of whom spoke to them about the risks they face and gave them practical advice for avoiding these risks.

Lorry drivers’ jobs experiences cannot protect them from risky behaviours, especially the increasingly common use of distractors on the road, lapses in concentration, and drowsiness. All of these can cause accidents that can have serious consequences for the drivers themselves, other road users, and road works crews. Awareness-raising campaigns are meant to help inform and guide drivers that are looking for support.

Bernadette Moreau

Bernhard Lautner, ASFINAG

The safe system approach is well known, and it implies shared responsibility among all involved people, the challenge being to transform the safety system approach into the daily work of our employees and workers. This is what we try to do within the road safety program. Motorways are complex but are the safest roads among European roads. Nevertheless, we must consider the changing technology and the infrastructure with limited resources. Accidents occur and operation and maintenance will assist all the partners.

There is a framework around this, the regulations, the standards, the enforcement, and education: this is the picture of ASFINAG safety system within the road safety program. We try to bring it to all users and involved partners and to engage in all these areas to bring in our point of view, our experience and our help.

The following points should be taken into account when speaking of road safety:

- The motorways are complex systems
- Technology is changing
- Resources are limited
- The human has a limited ability
- Speed is the core and link
- Accidents will occur

All parts of the system must be strengthened. Engagement and partnership in (and from) all areas of the system.

Motorways in Europe are operated within the highest standards. Thus they are the safest Roads. Further improvements are difficult and needs to bring the Safe System Approach to all partners on political, management and operational level.

Bernhard Lautner

Interactive discussion moderated by Emanuela Stocchi, ASECAP Chair of Permanent Committee II on Road Safety & Environment Committee.

Claire Depré, Head of Unit – Road Safety, Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport European Commission

Awareness-raising is important because there have been too many lives stupidly lost, and we cannot afford to lose more lives in stupid road accidents. When we look at what can be done at the EU, national, regional and local level from the road user perspective, the key element to have in mind is shared efforts. And that will probably make it happen much better in the future in order to have better road safety figures. Also, there is a need to take into account new mobility patterns behaviours which are changing. This new trend means that the solutions that were implemented in the past may no longer be sufficient and efficient today and tomorrow. Therefore, this is crucial to remain permanently focused on the targets.

Furthermore, data is very important to shift from reactivity to tackle proactively road safety and avoid unsafe situations altogether. This is why the European Commission has put forward KPIs as a key element of the EU Strategic Action Plan. Concerning KPIs, there are a lot of ongoing works at the EU level and with the Member States to try and define a precise principle but also start developing them. This issue was discussed during the EU Road Safety Results Conference that took place in April.

One aspect that was not mentioned during the conference is the role of the Resilience and Recovery Facility (RRF). Its role is crucial and she would have liked more EU countries to highlight road safety during the event. Another to tackle road safety is to use the EU agenda on sustainability.

With regard to infrastructure, safer roads is an important part. A legal instrument – the Road Infrastructure Safety Management Directive – is now in place. But there is a need to work further on the following elements:

- ❖ Network-wide assessment methodology: progress has been made, but efforts must be pursued

- ❖ Lane markings and road signs: this is a complex issue because practices are different from countries to countries and there is a different perception on how to approach this subject at the EU level.
- ❖ Digitalisation: although this is not so much highlighted in the EU Action Plan, DG Move and DG Connect work together on this issue.
- ❖ Safer vehicles
- ❖ Road safer use: Commission will continue its works on the issue in the context of the revision of the Driving Licence Directive. Public consultations will be launched during autumn of 2021.
- ❖ Assessment of human performance - the way I behave is influencing the safety of others: speed and speed management are one of the key areas, but also a distraction, alcohol will also be taken on board.
- ❖ Enforcement: need to focus more on it.

What is very close to my heart is cooperative road safety where everyone is responsible a bit about the others.

Claire Depré

Bill Halkias, President of International Road Federation, IRF

Bill Halkias reminded the joint cooperation between the ASECAP & IRF with the MOU signed in 2019 during the road safety event in the Parliament premises.

IRF is a Global, Independent, Not-for-profit Organisation established in 1948. Based in Geneva, Switzerland with UN Ecosoc status since 1951.

Assisting public and private stakeholders in the Roads & Mobility sector for the past 70 years with 3 Strategic Pillars of Activities:

1. Knowledge
2. Connections
3. Advocacy

We work in standards to export throughout the globe with the Africa project to put the standard in these continents. We build capacity and we do road safety management.

Key Issues:

1. The Safe System Approach: start changing the way we think. Road safety is the sole responsibility whether you're a driver or policymaker, your responsibility does not increase or decrease according to who you are. The system should be designed to forgive human errors. We need safe roads and appropriate speed to keep road users safe. Education and enforcement technology are important.
2. A wide Road Safety Culture: we require the involvement interaction and participation of all stakeholders. To engage the youth and private sector. Traffic safety education should become part of our school system.
3. Engineering & Road Safety Action Plans: the next EU directive on road safety is an important step by making road safety central.
4. Partnerships, Cooperation & Collaboration: at the international level in the roads safety to build a wild road safety culture/ IRF with the global alliance is building a coalition to advance this. Maybe we can do that in Europe. The long term objective is the creation of a multi-stakeholder coalition.

The culture and standards for achieving higher levels of Road safety lie in the joint efforts of public and private sector as well as in programs to engage Youth in this process of knowledge.

Bill Halkias

Ellen Townsend, Policy Director, European Transport Safety Council, ETSC

Ellen Townsend provided some figures from the last decade and then highlighted what needed to be done for the next one up to 2030. Over the decade 2010-2020, the EU-27 collectively reduced the number of road deaths by 37% over the period 2010-2020, while the initial EU objective was a 50% reduction. But behind the general good trend, it is to be noticed there were six consecutive years of stagnation with only a 6% reduction over the 2013-2019 period. Therefore, much progress remains to be done for the decade to come. On the new EU target 2030, she stressed the importance of monitoring KPIs on speed, distraction, drink-driving etc to better understand the cause of road deaths and serious injuries and solve these problems. Also, there is the need to take up new transport safety challenges such as automation. To improve road safety, she outlined some recommendations for the EU:

- ❖ **Infrastructure:** the EC to deliver on its intentions in its EU Road Safety Strategy to set up an expert group to develop a framework for road classification that better matches speed limit to road design and layout, and a Forum of European Road Safety Auditors to facilitate the exchange of experience on safe system methodologies.
- ❖ **Road users:** the EC to adopt speed limit recommendation for all roads; drug-driving; drink-driving (zero tolerance limits and encourage alcohol interlocks); distraction; ambitious new driving licence rules and cross-border enforcement update.
- ❖ **Vehicle safety:** propose a new harmonised regulatory framework for automated cars; evaluate the currently available assisted driving systems' risks to road safety, such as driver overreliance and distraction; set up a European Road Safety Agency whose one of the main tasks could be to monitor automotive driving, including independent crash investigation.

Finally, she made some key recommendations to the Member States, such as the implementation of the Road Infrastructure Safety Management Directive on all roads, the elimination of all removable obstacles from the roadside, the installation of two-wheeler friendly barriers, the application of best practice in the enforcement of speed limits, stringent seat belt and drink driving enforcement, and tackling fatigue amongst all road users, in particular truck drivers.

18,830 people lost their lives in road traffic in the EU in 2020, 10,860 less than in 2010, representing a 37% decrease. Renewed efforts at EU and Member State level are needed to reach the new EU targets to halve road deaths and serious injuries by 2030 compared to 2020 levels.

Ellen Townsend

Vassiliki Danelli-Mylona, President at Road Safety Institute, Panos Mylonas

The Hellenic Research and Educational Institute (RSI) "Panos Mylonas" for the Road Safety and the Prevention and Reduction of Traffic Accidents was established on May 12th, 2005, after the tragic loss of Panos Mylonas, a 22-year-old University student of Mechanical and Aeronautical Engineering and WRC youngest accredited journalist. RSI is a non-for-profit organization founded by university institutions, private entities, an audit company and a large number of agencies and volunteers.

We believe that along with the construction of modern motorways' network and the RSI "Panos Mylonas" continued work, we have a significant contribution in road crashes reduction. We have been working hard for building the traffic safety culture in Greece with all those who have been supporting us.

Key points are Quality Education, Awareness Raising, Stakeholder engagement Involving Authorities and Civil Society and the appropriate communication as well.

The mission of the institute is to increase society's awareness for traffic safety culture and safe behaviour of road users and also to support the Government and stakeholders to act for the prevention of traffic crashes towards vision zero.

We have been working a lot on quality education and awareness raising working with the public and the private sector to build a relationship with organizations for a strong safety culture which need to be further strengthened in Greece.

We developed educational programs for all age groups starting with kids in primary schools and even kindergarten, but also in secondary education, also adults addressing the business sector as well.

Further to education, we have developed 150 campaigns during the last 14 years, based on data, findings and observation through specific protocols. Among awareness campaigns, the first ever flash mob on road safety was organized by RSI and the EU in 2014 in the center of Athens; This was one of those moments where drivers were happy to be stopped on the road!

We have also given importance to engaging stakeholders and involving Authorities with interventions in the Parliament, encouraging traffic police enforcement, working closely with municipalities and collaboration with ministries.

Traffic Safety Education is essential and should be implemented in different social activities involving younger people and their families in order to increase society's awareness.

Vassiliki Danelli-Mylonas

Malika Seddi, ASECAP Secretary-General

Malika Seddi put emphasis on the social contract of motorway concessionaires: they are committed to safeguard road safety and guarantee congestion-free traffic on their network.

Within the frame of a contract signs with the State, Grantor, and under its permanent control, the concessionaires see themselves entrusted with a mandate by the public service to finance, to build, to run and to maintain their network. Well maintained infrastructures are key element for road safety as recalled by Mr Fernandino.

To make the network safe, the maintenance and operation is done all year long by patrollers 24 hours a day and operators managing the traffic control center in order to make appropriate road management decision and actions. ASECAP members have achieved very good results on their motorway network: road fatalities have decreased by 64 % since 2001. However, progress remains to be done because motorways accidents are mainly caused by drowsiness, alcohol, Inattention, distraction, dangerous manoeuvre and speed limit violation. Another big concern for road operators is the safety of their workers on their network: they are more and more hit by distracted drivers. ASECAP members consider Road Safety as their key mission and they are strongly committed to reaching "Zero Vision" target of the European Commission and UN promoted by a safe system approach. ASECAP members foresee that Connectivity, automation will in the future be additional solutions, means to improve road safety. The existing infrastructures will require to be upgraded, adapted & modernized for full deployment of autonomous vehicles) which will contribute to have "forgiving road".

Building a safety culture is working in partnership with local and state road authorities, education providers, business and industry, vehicle manufacturers, community organisations ASECAP members share their knowledge, experience and best practices with other experts and the EU institutions. from that perspective, ASECAP and its members on road safety through their collaboration with different groups (C-Roads, EU ITS Platform, PIARC, CEDR, IFR...) and being involved in EU projects

The social contract of road concessionaire companies is road safety first and congestion free traffic. The motorway is an infrastructure specially designed and built with highest quality and technological standards which make the motorway infrastructure safest than other road infrastructure. Nevertheless, our ambition and objective is to reach the ones set by the European Commission: Vision zero.

Malika Seddi

Concluding remarks

MEP Giuseppe Ferrandino took the floor to highlight the following key elements. He believes that well maintained infrastructure and well-equipped vehicles are important elements that contribute to improving road safety. However, this is not sufficient. Strong efforts must be concentrated on the human factor in order to change behaviour and mentalities: educating young people is crucial and this is the way forward. He also called for massive investments in the road safety field.