



# Road Safety Newsletter



## 2016 awards inspire

*The European Road Safety Charter presented its annual awards on 20 May 2016, honouring some of the best road safety initiatives undertaken by Charter members. Six prizes were awarded, two to school-based initiatives, three to 'best practices' initiatives, and a special prize that went to the best of the five winners.*

In a fervent opening speech, EU Transport Commissioner Violeta Bulc vowed to continue to fight to achieve the goal of zero road fatalities. "We have seen positive signs," she said. "We have succeeded in reducing traffic deaths significantly, but we still have a long way to go."

In 2015, the Commissioner continued, 26 000 people were lost in European road accidents, with five times that number being seriously injured. "That's more than 70 people killed every day," she said, "the equivalent of two large airliners full of passengers every week. This is why we are here."

### **'Lieu de prestige'**

The awards ceremony took place in Brussels, at the Solvay Library, whose exquisite *art nouveau* interior was described by one participant as a 'hidden gem' of the European capital.

The audience included teachers and students, politicians and administrators, members of the manufacturing and research communities and others devoted to the same goal – saving human lives.

The award winners were selected from more than 150 entries. One of the school-based winners, the Lockerbie Academy, was singled out to receive the special 'Jaques Barrot Prize', presented by Commissioner Bulc in the presence of Béatrice Barrot, widow of the late former Transport Commissioner.

The event also featured themed discussions in which audience members were encouraged to participate. Topics included education and awareness-raising among children and young people; protection of vulnerable road users such as pedestrians and cyclists; and innovation in road safety practice.



Member of European Parliament Inés Ayala Sender, who sits on the Transport and Tourism Committee, insisted on the importance of civil society initiatives in the legislative process: “We at the Parliament learn a lot from schools, from victim’s associations, from researchers, insurance companies and car-makers. All of you help us to make better road safety rules.”

Former race driver and racing executive Jean Todt, now the UN SG’s Special Envoy for Road Safety, said: “Whether we are talking about a walking track or a bike path, or a road for cars and motorcycles, all over the world road safety is a priority for everyone.”

Belgian Transport Minister Francois Bellot emphasised the importance of translating useful ideas, like those on display during the awards event, into wider actions to benefit road users across Europe.

Finally, former racing champion and motor sport commentator Didier de Radiguès remarked on the need for role models, perhaps from the entertainment or sporting arenas, to make road safety ‘cool’ for young people.

In closing, Violeta Bulc commented on the positive atmosphere. “I feel inspired and I feel supported today by all of you as we walk this path together. We have heard your messages, we continue to listen to your ideas, and we will keep working.”

## The European Road Safety Charter

The Commission’s European Road Safety Charter, now the largest civil society platform on road safety, highlights real ‘ground-level’ initiatives, encouraging schools, businesses, and local governments to get directly involved in preventing road accidents.

Through membership in the Charter, more than 3000 public and private entities have brought innovative road safety measures and solutions to local communities, targeting schoolchildren and parents, company employees and all members of civil society.

The work of Charter members is highlighted through a range of actions that bring their knowledge and ideas to the widest possible audience.

The Charter’s specific aims include:

- Encouraging and supporting European associations, schools, universities, companies of all types and sizes, and local authorities in their work to improve road safety;
- Acknowledging valuable contributions to road safety by civil society;
- Facilitating the sharing of knowledge on road safety issues;
- Facilitating dialogue for the transfer of road safety experiences and practices at all levels of governance in the EU.

The European Union has been and remains fully committed to addressing the need for greater safety on Europe’s roads and highways. Through its actions in support of local road safety initiatives, including its **annual awards ceremony**, Europe’s Road Safety Charter continues to broaden its reach and influence, with the ultimate goal of reducing the number of road casualties through 2020 and beyond.





## The winners

**Lockerbie Academy, Lockerbie**, United Kingdom

*One of two selected 'school challenges' and also winner of the special 'Jacques Barrot Prize'*

Organisers of the 'Road Safety through Physics' initiative introduced a variety of road safety concepts, such as speed, velocity, distance, displacement and braking, within the framework of school physics lessons. Students investigated a simulated road crash put together by Police Scotland, and they surveyed parents and teachers on their knowledge of how to drive in bad road and weather conditions. They also developed a plan to provide resources and education to help drivers feel more confident and drive more safely.

More information: <http://www.erscharter.eu/en/content/road-safety-through-physics>

**Colegio Publico Miguel de Cervantes**, Gijon, Spain

*One of two selected 'school challenges'*

This public school carried out a number of initiatives around children and cycling. Classroom activities included mural painting, computer presentations and symposia with invited speakers. Children learned about bicycle repair and maintenance. There were practical 'hands-on' sessions where children learned basic riding skills. Lessons also focused specifically on road safety, including understanding road signs and markings. Bike tours, outings and weekend excursions were organised. Children were also encouraged to transmit the things they had learned to older siblings and parents.

More information: <http://www.gijon.es/directorios/show/483-colegio-publico-miguel-de-cervantes>

**Automobile Club Albania (ACA)**, Tirana, Albania

*One of three 'best practices' winners*

Organisers developed a targeted education campaign for children aged 5-12. First, over the course of one year, a series of 26 educational animated cartoons, called 'Green Light', were broadcast on a national television network. Evaluation of the programme revealed a positive effect on viewers. Subsequently, the Ministry of Education agreed to allow the use of the 'Green Light' series in 80 public schools. The programme is now being extended to other schools across Albania.

More information: <http://aca.al>

**Centrum Bezpieczeństwa Ruchu Drogowego (Centrum BRD)**, Łódź, Poland

*One of three 'best practices' winners*

This group organised classes and created an e-learning platform to raise awareness of road safety issues among a broad range of learners, from preschoolers to the elderly. Teaching was adapted to individual groups and courses included a combination of theory



and practical training, as represented by the 'Casper – The Child Safe on the Road' programme and the 'First Aid – It's easy!' programme. The same organisers have also designed a 'Rescue Drone', an unmanned aircraft that can locate road accidents, guide rescue teams to the scene and even deliver first-aid materials for responders.

More information: <http://www.centrumbrd.pl>

**Børneulykkesfonden Danish Children Accident Prevention Foundation (DCAPF) and Codan Forsikring Insurance Company**, Copenhagen, Denmark

*One of three 'best practices' winners*

This partnership is responsible for Denmark's annual National Reflector Day. On the last Thursday of autumn, thousands of reflectors and reflective vests are handed out all over the country. A special running event, 'The Reflectors Run', sees children and adults running while covered in reflectors, and kindergarten teachers deliver fun lessons about reflectors. The campaign includes TV and cinema spots and ads on trains and in newspapers. In 2015, partners launched an original reflective clothing line and a kit for running clubs.

More information: <http://xn--brneulykkesfonden-00b.dk>





## Interview with racing legend **Didier de Radiguès**

Didier de Radiguès is a man who knows something about driving. The Leuven native debuted as a motorcycle racer in 1979, winning four 500cc Grand Prix Championship races during his motorcycling career, as well as the non-championship Macau Grand Prix. He then took up sports car endurance racing, winning the 1997 Belgian ProCar Championship, the Spa 24 Hour race and the 2001 American Le Mans Series championship.



Today, de Radiguès appears regularly as a motor sport commentator on Belgium's RTBF television. Knowing how to drive means being a safe driver, he says. "Driving a vehicle on the road is not like pushing a wheelbarrow in your garden. It's about driving with expertise!"

De Radiguès has driven fiercely and fearlessly on some of the world's top racing circuits, so his views on riding a motorcycle on Europe's public roads are surprising: "I feel vulnerable," he says, "Like all bikers, you feel vulnerable because you have a sense that you're not really driving on a network that is suited to your vehicle. We need more dedicated space for motorcycles ... and other drivers need to know more about what it's like to be a motorcyclist."

De Radiguès talks about motorcycles, in particular, with great insight and passion, but his ideas about road safety make sense for all kinds of drivers. For example, he says there should be open driving circuits where everyone can train under safe and secure

conditions. He talks about changing the way we teach driving, with more and better attention paid to how car drivers interact with other kinds of vehicles, like motorcycles and bicycles, but also with pedestrians. And he believes in life-long driver education.

For people with a passion for speed, he says, "I would like to see special 'safety zones' set up at major motor sport events, with stands and presentations aimed at spreading the messages of 'vigilance, moderation and prudence'."

### What are the keys to safety, then?

"The primary elements," he says, "are awareness, accountability, training, development, communication, infrastructure and education."

Asked what he thought about the projects singled out at the European Road Safety Charter Awards (touching, as they do, on just about every item on his checklist), he was impressed with the practical, innovative initiatives.

"My favourite was the Lockerbie project," de Radiguès says, "because they managed to integrate road safety within a common school subject." The assembled guests at the awards ceremony agreed, voting to give the Special Prize to Lockerbie Academy's 'Road Safety through Physics' project.

De Radiguès admits he had not heard of the Charter before being invited to the ceremony in Brussels' Solvay Library: "I think it is a great initiative and more people should know about it. I am really and truly impressed by the level of commitment among all of the stakeholders."

De Radiguès says he believes in the EU goal of 'zero fatalities'. "I think we can do it for the simple reason that we have identified precisely the causes of road accidents and it therefore only remains ... to provide solutions for change," he explains.

Technology can provide some of those solutions, he suggests, and manufacturers and equipment suppliers can make vehicles safer in terms of handling, power delivery and driver protection. And lawmakers can put in place better systems for assessing the abilities of individual drivers.

"I do not agree with the idea of removing humans from the equation, as with the introduction of driverless vehicles," he says. "I want to see humans remaining central to the driving experience. But the right to drive should be reserved for those willing to take the necessary steps to become true experts. The stakes are just too high."

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