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Prizewinners at the World Road Safety Film Festival

On 23 March, the Palais des Nations hosted the first World Road Safety Film Festival on the occasion of the 48th session of the UNECE Working Party on Road Traffic Safety (WP.1). The festival was organized by UNECE in cooperation with Laser Europe.

“This is the first time that such a festival has been held at the Palais des Nations and it illustrates one of the major concerns of our member States – road safety”, said José Capel Ferrer, Director of the UNECE Transport Division, opening the Festival.

Films were shown from over 30 countries representing all regions of the world. Selected by an international jury composed of experts in communication for road safety, the films were classified in the following five categories: communication and campaigns, education for road safety and driver training, risk prevention for professional drivers, road safety innovations, and television broadcasts.

The jury, chaired by Luis Franco (Montevideo), was composed of Angelo Ferlazzo (Rome), Rohit Baluja (New Delhi), Martine-Sophie

Fouvez (European Conference of Ministers of Transport) and Georges van Aerscht (Belgium). The prizes were presented to the winners by Marek Belka, UNECE Executive Secretary.



In the category Communication, first prize was awarded to Denmark for the film «Dead Man Walking», by Jonas Arnby. In the category Education, first prize went to Israel for the cartoon film for children entitled «Zoo on Wheels», by Einat Bilitzki. In the Professionals category, first prize went to «Portrait of Claude Nurdin », by Fouad Benhamou. First prize in the Innovations category went to the Develter driving simulator. In the TV broadcast category first prize was awarded to «Secours pour un cerveau câblé pour ça », prepared by Romain Cipièrre for the town of Aubagne in France.

The jury awarded special prizes to films from the Sultanate of Oman, Morocco and Cambodia. ✨

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Awareness through guilt



Interview with René La Coursell, CEO of the Danish Road Safety Council.

Denmark won first prize in the Communication category with the film “Dead Man Walking”.

The Danish film shows a youngster who has killed one of his friends in a car accident while he was driving. You see him dragging around the dead body of his friend who is gripping his ankle. Why

do you target youngsters?

Because one third of injuries and deaths on the road are due to young drivers between 18 and 24 years old. So we really have to address them. But the problem is that they are not really listening. In order to get them to listen to you, you have to grab their attention. We did a lot of interviews with these young drivers. The problem is that they are not afraid of getting themselves killed, even killing somebody else. The only thing that matters to them is their friends. So much of our campaign is aimed at guilt, and the major guilt for them is injuring or killing their friends.

You are using the same approach for other groups?

No! Humour is a good way of scaring people. But scaring is not always possible. You can scare people into wearing safety belts by showing them bad accidents. But to ask them to behave it is difficult to be scary.

How was Dead Man Walking received?

There is a very funny story about this film. When we tried to ↓

Children set the rules



Interview with Dan Link, Vice-Chairman of the UNECE Working Party on Road Traffic Safety, and Head of Infrastructure and Traffic Safety, Israel.

Israel won first prize in the Education category with the film “Zoo on Wheels”.

What are the best films for raising people’s awareness on road safety?

There are thousands of ways to influence people. Some are very deductive films. They show you how to cross the street, you have to look right and left, you don’t do it in the vicinity of a bus, and so on. Other films make you think. And there is a great deal of divergence in philosophy. Some try to scare you. All fatal accidents are terrible. Just to show these accidents or their effects is enough to scare people. And it doesn’t make any difference whether it’s in Denmark or in Oman. Some films have an effect on some people. There is no one universal method.

Does it depend on the country?

There are some countries where you would tend to use humour to put a point across. There are countries where it is important to show how gloomy traffic and lack of safety is. Many European countries are willing to use humour, which would be sacrilegious in other countries. In my country we found out that it is not sufficient to say be careful, drive carefully. You have to say something very specific, like always wear your safety belt. Always give a hand to a little child trying to cross the street, ↓



show the film in the commercials of one of our national broadcasting companies, they refused because they said that they were not allowed to show dead people in a commercial. We had a long discussion with the legal department of this broadcasting company to try to explain to them

that we were not showing a dead person, but a symbol of guilt. Nevertheless they wouldn't let us show the film. So we had to show it in the movie theatres or in other commercial stations abroad which were broadcasting in Denmark. There was a lot of discussion on Danish television about this ban. Because of that all the youngsters were very much involved in the discussion. We have never had so many downloads from our website – because the youngsters wanted to see the movie. On national television where they don't have any commercials they showed it during the news, which was far better than any other publicity. Furthermore the film did win a prize in Denmark.

Can you measure the impact of such a film?

Yes, we can! One important thing was that youngsters were talking about this film. Another thing was asking them whether they had seen it. Lots of them had seen it and lots of them liked it. That is very important, but what is even more important is that they discussed it with others, because it was a forbidden commercial. When they start discussing it with other people, it gains extra value.

Did you see any impact in real life?

Yes, we did. But you have to realise that the number of young people aged between 18 and 24 is currently very limited. However in the coming years, between 2007 and 2012, a major group will enter this age range. In fact there will be 25% more youngsters between the ages of 18 and 24 then.

Are you making films for younger children?

Yes, we have kids' programmes for schools and television.

And for the elderly?

Yes, we have also a major programme for the elderly, mainly to encourage them to use helmets when riding a bicycle. If we look at statistics of people killed while cycling, every second one is over 65. All of them died from head damage. This is exactly the same for kids under 12 years old. From 12 to 65 they die from internal bleeding. Head damage is very important for the elderly because when they were young helmets were not used. We are trying a programme to make it fashionable to use these helmets. Then we have another programme to make the elderly think about whether they are still fit to drive. If they don't feel so they can give back their driving licence and ride free on public transportation. ✨



drive on the proper side of the road. Generalisations don't help. We found out that children in the back seat have a very big impact on their parents. For example, we have a clip where the children say to their parents "Why are you wearing safety belts but you don't ask us to wear one? Aren't we important?" And they add "In the car, we set the rules". We organised a competition entitled "Who clicks first?" Children were standing outside a car and the aim of the competition was to know who would click his or her safety belt first. It was very successful. Some people are influenced by such an approach. But of course not all of them. The idea is that people should remember the message.

The best investment is in children?

I'm not sure, because the human element is very difficult to work with. Changing infrastructures may have a bigger impact. In some cases the infrastructure must be changed, for example making an intersection into a roundabout is in itself an excellent investment – it is very difficult to have a fatal accident on a roundabout while at intersections it is much easier.

It seems that there are many accidents involving 18 to 25 year-olds. What can be done about it?

It is a very difficult age and it is very hard to do something about it. The capabilities of these young adults are very big and it is difficult to persuade them that something is beyond their power. You can tell small children what to do and what not to do, but for this age range it is very hard, especially in our country where they are already in the military at that age. It is a very tough group but we limit their ability to drive. For example, for the first 3 months new drivers can't drive without an adult, and for the first two years and under 21 they may not carry more than two passengers. This is because we have noticed that the social pressure when you have more than two people in a car is 10 times higher than when you have fewer. This is probably the group of people over which we have the least control. On the other hand they have other capabilities – for example quicker reactions on the road than their parents.

Speaking about older people, would you agree with asking elderly drivers to give back their driving licence?

Age is certainly a problem for driving. But older people drive less than younger ones. They know their limitations. For example they don't drive at night. But I still think that nothing mandatory should be done. ✨

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