



THIRD ROAD SAFETY WEEK
IN THE UN/ECE REGION

1 - 7 MAY 2000

NEWSLETTER No. 4

ENGLISH ONLY

GENEVA
APRIL 2000

UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

TRANSPORT DIVISION

The purpose of the Third Road Safety Week Newsletter, to be issued periodically by the ECE secretariat in the build-up to the Third Road Safety Week in the ECE Region, 1-7 May 2000, is to monitor the status of preparations and to inform members of the Working Party about planned and on-going activities undertaken in the framework of the Week by member Governments as well as international and non-governmental organizations. The newsletters will contain information on government and NGO programmes, listing national activities such as conferences, seminars, workshops, public events, TV debates, publications, exhibitions and competitions, giving the reader a cross-section of the Third Road Safety Week activities undertaken in the ECE region. The newsletters are also intended to provide materials for possible use by the mass media.

BELGIUM ROAD SAFETY INSTITUTE

In the context of present problems of mobility, the bicycle is increasingly regarded as an alternative for travelling short distances. However, travelling on foot or by bicycle must be possible in safe conditions, and this requires an effort on the part of "weaker" users and on the part of motorists who need to take into account the increasing number of "weaker" users in traffic.

This campaign is aimed mainly at motorists in order to draw their attention to the presence of cyclists and pedestrians. It will also lay stress on the importance of properly-equipped bicycles, especially for secondary school pupils cycling between home and school.

The campaign will be conducted jointly with the Walloon, Flemish and Brussels-Capital Regions. It forms part of the UN/ECE's Third Road Safety Week, the objective of which is to draw attention to "weaker" users during the first week of May 2000. Following consultations with colleagues in the traffic and infrastructure programme of the department of research, and colleagues in the education unit of the communications department, the following pre-briefing was established:

1. Timing

Contacts with the cabinet on 18 February 2000;
Advertising agency briefing on 22 February 2000;
Meeting with the Regions on 23 February 2000.
In the first week of April, our colleagues in the traffic and infrastructure programme will transmit to the communications department the information and "hot topics" for the text to the press;

At the beginning of April (or earlier, depending on the services of the advertising agency), presentation of the campaign concept to the cabinet;

Meanwhile: debriefing of the communication for the traffic and infrastructure programme; Launch of the campaign on 1 May 2000 and display until 4 June 2000.

2. Target group

The target group is the motorist, as presented in the budget text.

3. Problems

The problems of "soft" users, particularly pedestrians, which we are highlighting in this campaign, are wide-ranging. This is not simply a problem of behaviour and courtesy, or social interactions among different kinds of users; the infrastructure and even the nature of vehicles have a role to play.

3.1 Pedestrian crossings: regulations

The regulations which came into force in 1996 whereby: "Where traffic is not controlled by a traffic policeman or by traffic lights, a driver may only approach a pedestrian crossing at a moderate speed. She/he must give way to pedestrians already on the passage or on the point of stepping on to it, are certainly not observed by everyone. At a pedestrian crossing, where there are no traffic lights or police, a driver must not only give way (i.e. stop) for the pedestrian already crossing but also the pedestrian **about to cross**. The fact that these regulations were intended to develop the mobility of the pedestrian as a user on an equal footing has certainly not been clearly understood. Since 1996, more accidents have been registered at pedestrian crossings. The pedestrian crossing and priority for pedestrians must certainly be included in the TV commercial and preferably appear in some form on the poster, without focusing the entire campaign on these regulations.

3.2 Infrastructure

Many pedestrian crossings still leave much to be desired. In some places, it would be better not to have pedestrian crossings at all but a small tunnel or something similar (in Flanders this comes under street classification).

The subject of interventions as regards regulations and infrastructure could be raised at the press conference and included during some of the bilateral talks with road administrators, but they are not the main subject of this briefing.

3.3 Behaviour/social interaction

Not all pedestrians are the same or are equally mobile. People often have limitations, not only pedestrians but other users as well. This is the problem of the "new human standard" (the texts from the Netherlands): the person, the human standard which is taken into account in the design of streets and other structures is far too often the ideal person in full possession of his faculties, and this does not always reflect the real situation. A pedestrian crossing the street heavily laden, pushing a pram, with a whining child or on crutches does not match the human standard on the basis of which the green phase of the crossing light is regulated. Insufficient account is taken of this. This is true of motorists as well; we more often take the wheel when we are distracted, tired, unhappy or stressed than as rested model drivers in peak condition for driving in traffic.

3.4 Miscellaneous

The mandatory nature of the red phase which does not yet exist in Belgium (in some countries like the Netherlands, an amber man appears immediately after the little green signal, indicating that pedestrians can cross on amber if it is safe). The Belgian Road Safety Institute (IBSR) is in favour of this, with some restrictions (depending on the situation and the problem of use of the ground area (where people can or cannot walk) are examples of subjects that could be discussed).

4. Objective/message

The leitmotiv or the main theme in all the media is: **respect pedestrians.**

Ideally, what do we want to change with this campaign? It is not a campaign involving knowledge of the regulations but a courtesy campaign, requiring people to be attentive to a specific group of "weaker" users who symbolize "soft/weaker" users as a whole.

Specifically: give pedestrians back their rights, and do not make abusive use of your superiority as a driver installed in your own little cocoon.

Respect for pedestrians may take the form of adapting one's speed, both in built-up areas and wherever else pedestrians may emerge. The message is not explicitly about speed, but it is implicit when it is a question of respect.

The notion of "space-sharing" re-emerges as an important aspect of the message; the motorist must realize that he or she is not alone, that the space is not just for him or her. A little more empathy would not be amiss here; motorists are regularly pedestrians in their turn and must be able to get inside a pedestrian's mind (i.e. idea for the TV commercial: scenario of an aggressive driver because she/he has a whining child in the car and is being rude to pedestrians; when she/he gets out of the car she/he is nearly run down as a pedestrian).

A fundamental question: "Do we share the road or do we share respect?" We must share a constantly diminishing space due to the increasing number of vehicles, but respect should also be mutual.

Ideally, the power struggle between motorists and pedestrians/"weaker users" should no longer exist. This difference in power is of course inherent in the car as a means of transport; in any case the car "wins" if it hits a pedestrian but it cannot abuse its power. To some extent "the strongest" in society should appoint themselves as defenders of "the weakest", but we are not going to stress the "weak" side of "soft" users here. The difference in prestige between the car-user and the pedestrian/cyclist should disappear in the long run. Cars are not as prestigious now anyway and they certainly have disadvantages: a cyclist/pedestrian/user of public transport will reach his destination more quickly than a motorist who has to find a parking space in town.

There is a need to come down to what is essential, to what is really important in society/in traffic. The idea of earlier campaigns - "Slowing down makes new friends" - is still valid, but is not only directed at children; it is nice to be considerate and a good thing to give pedestrians their rights.

The notion of "Stop for pedestrians" is too broad and is much too far along the lines of the 1997 campaigns where the message "We're making room for you" was also correct but too broad.

5. Approach

Preferably, it should not cause any fear. It should certainly not be moralizing; the message can quickly become over-sentimental. It may even be desirable to play on the emotions, but not to be sentimental. The message can certainly be witty and there can be humour in it.

6. Media

- Posters.
- TV commercial.
- If the budget permits: a radio commercial (minimalist formula: radio commercials for permanent awareness-raising).
- Advertisements in newspapers and magazines = contribution from the regions.
- Information on the Internet site and links with other sites.
- TV programmes: Contacts, Ca Roule, Kijk Uit, Veilig Thuis.
- Press conference.
- Support for local initiatives such as Komimo's "Soft User's Week".
- Reference to the project of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ask member States to launch a campaign about "soft" users from a very general point of view in May).
- The regions do not participate on the basis of financial sponsorship but by giving media coverage to the campaign by providing space for advertisements in newspapers and magazines. These cover the visual aspects with additional information on the problems of the campaign whenever possible.

REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

Since 1990, the number of persons killed in traffic accidents in Croatia has gradually decreased.

However, despite that fact, the increase in traffic safety is not satisfactory, especially when compared to other countries' achievements. On the other hand, the falling number of persons killed has been achieved under difficult war and post-war circumstances. The following Programme has been drawn up in support to UN/ECE initiative relating to the Third Road Safety Week and in accordance with Croatian road safety needs.

Programme of Activities

Pursuant to the recommendation of the UN/ECE, Croatia will proceed with the activities related to the Third Road Safety Week.

Croatian Road Safety Week will be targeted at vulnerable road users in accordance with the Third Road Safety Week in the UN/ECE region initiative, and will be held under the common slogan "Partnership on the Road Increases Safety."

Pursuant to their own decision on participation in the Road Safety Week, participants will be the following:

- a) Governmental organizations:
 - Ministry of Interior
 - Ministry of Maritime Affairs, Transport and Communications
 - Ministry of Education and Sports
 - Croatian Council for Road Traffic Safety
- b) Non-governmental organizations:
 - Croatian Auto Club and its member clubs
 - Centre for Vehicles of Croatia and technical checking stations

The overall Coordinator of the Third Road Safety Week will be the Croatian Council for Road Traffic Safety. Activities in Croatia will be especially focused on the protection of children and young participants in traffic.

As part of the activities covered by the Third Road Safety Week, the following brochures will be issued by the Ministry of Maritime Affairs, Transport and Communications, and Croatian Council for Road Traffic Safety.

- CHILDREN IN TRAFFIC: FOR YOUR CHILD'S SAFETY, which will be distributed to children in the first four school classes and their parents.
- YOUNG PARTICIPANTS IN TRAFFIC - LIFE IS IN YOUR OWN HANDS, to be distributed to young drivers through Croatian Auto Club examination centres, technical checking stations, and also as part of the activities of police units.

Activities of the Ministry of Interior will be targeted at the protection of children and young participants in traffic, including prevention activities near

schools, nurseries, discotheques and other places frequented by children and teenagers, TV-clips on protection of children, i.e., "Observe our signs", and young drivers.

The Ministry of Education and Sports will coordinate distribution of the brochure CHILDREN IN TRAFFIC: FOR YOUR CHILD'S SAFETY in elementary schools in big cities and instruct principals to discuss the contents of the brochure with pupils and their parents.

The Croatian Auto Club will organize cycling competitions with the participation of 13,000 children.

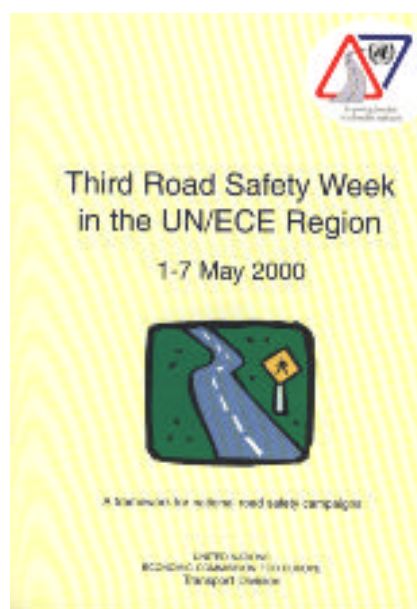
The Croatian Auto Club and its member organizations, the Centre for Vehicles and technical checking stations will participate in the distribution of the brochure YOUNG PARTICIPANTS IN TRAFFIC - LIFE IN YOUR OWN HANDS, as well as in financing of car warning labels.

During the scientific symposium "TRANSPORTATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT", which will be organized in Opatija, 27 - 28 April 2000, by the Croatian Scientific Society for Transportation, a round table on road safety of vulnerable users will be held.

Proper coverage of activities by the press and other media will be arranged by the Croatian Council for Road Traffic Safety and the Ministry of Interior, within the scope of their competence

Mr. José Capel Ferrer, Director
Transport Division
United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
Palais des Nations
CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
Tel: (+4122) 917 2400
Fax: (+4122) 917 0039
E-mail: jose.capel.ferrer@unece.org

The secretariat also takes this opportunity to request member Governments and organizations to send information on their Third Road Safety Week activities to the secretariat so that it can be issued in next editions of this newsletter.



FROM THE SECRETARIAT

The secretariat has issued a brochure entitled "Third Road Safety Week in the ECE Region, 1-7 May 2000 - a framework for national road safety campaigns" in English, French and Russian, which has been distributed directly to ECE member Governments as well as international and non-governmental organizations. There are also posters and postcards available in English, French and Russian. Those interested in receiving copies of the brochure and other promotional materials may direct their requests to: