

RADAR Press Release

RADAR is implementing learning and transnational cooperation activities to help the responsible road safety organisations in the Danube area identify risk on their road networks and help them reduce risk systematically by improving infrastructure and road layout.

At the 1st Danube Road Safety Conference for the project RADAR (Risk Assessment on Danube Area Roads) experts and distinguished speakers from leading institutions discussed the importance of improvement of road networks in the Danube area.

(Dubrovnik, October 24, 2018) – Representatives of the road infrastructure safety sector from the Danube region attended the 1st Danube Road Safety Conference of the Danube Transnational Programme project RADAR (Risk Assessment on Danube Area Roads) on October 24 in Dubrovnik. The goal was to raise awareness about the vision, purpose, objectives and organisational structure of RADAR project, create an understanding of the work by providing explanations on specific aspects of the implementation and establish an open communication channel with target groups and beneficiaries by fostering discussion and feedback. The event was organised within the cooperation with the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR). The conference was organised during the European Road Conference, where 500 transport stakeholders participated.

Michael Dreznes, *Executive Vice President at International Road Federation*, explained in his opening speech, how cooperation that goes beyond national could save many lives on roads, starting with sharing the common understanding about where the risky roads are. Delivering Danube Infrastructure Road Safety Strategy and Action Plan are the main focuses of the project RADAR, which contributes to identifying and reducing risk on roads. The goal is to raise awareness in public, implement learning and transnational cooperation activities to help the responsible safety organizations in the Danube area realise the need to improve the road infrastructure.

The first part of the conference addressed the problematic statistics on road safety in the Danube area. 3.827 people died on roads in the Danube area, and 160.777 people got seriously injured in 2017 annually costing up to 2 % of countries' GDP¹. **Franc Žepič**, *European Union Strategy for Danube Region PAC 1b, Road, Rail*, explained these numbers are worrisome. Not only do we need to improve the EU legislation, adopt regulations and provide better guidelines, but we also need to build safe and forgiving roads with better road infrastructure. Further, we “need to apply information and communication technologies in the field of road transport, including infrastructure, vehicles and users, and in traffic management and mobility management, as well as for the interfaces with other modes of transport,” stated Dr. **Panagiotis Lytrivis**, *Senior Researcher, Institute of Communication & Computer Systems*, and explained how

¹ RADAR raw data including Hr, Hu, Si, Md, Bg, Srb, BiH, A and Cz.

Intelligent Transportation Systems can contribute to improving the road safety for all users, including the vulnerable road users (VRUs).

Klaus Machata, Senior Researcher, KfV; Vice-President of FERSI, discussed how things went wrong for vulnerable road users in the past, starting with non-compatible speed and no secure crossing facilities. One of the many vulnerable road users are children, and the vulnerable road areas are schools. *“Every day over 3,000 children and adolescents are killed or seriously injured on the worlds’ roads,”* stated **Nikola Galović**, Road Safety Director of Rotonda, when presenting the novelty app Star Rating for Schools, which will contribute to safer areas around schools for pedestrians, cyclists and other VRUs.

Not only do we need to raise awareness about bringing down the speed levels, but we also need to educate all the road users and stakeholders, as well. As explained by **Steve Lawson**, Regional Director of EuroRAP, we need to define cost-effective solutions to reduce risk by improving road infrastructure.

The roundtable discussion between all the participants on the thematic areas on **how to plan investments for safer roads, what can we do to make vulnerable road users safer, how to build safety into intelligent transportation systems and how can the proactive approach of star ratings around schools make a difference**, followed. The discussion, short but very inspiring, emphasised some important conclusions to each of the thematic areas. Participants of the thematic area that focused on plan investments for safer roads concluded that road investments must be perceived as a preventive safety measure rather than curative measure with much higher costs. This compiled with the conclusions of participants of the second thematic area roundtable discussion. They explained that facilities for pedestrians and cyclists must be upgraded to the highest possible standard to ensure better road safety for vulnerable road users. *“School areas must be given special attention regarding speed reduction, crossings, parking and drop-off locations,”* explained and underlined participants of the thematic area Star Ratings for Schools. The conference participants who focused on the building road safety into intelligent transportations systems underlined that introduction of different ITS systems will ensure better traffic management, traffic information, safer and more fluent traffic floats.

The 1st Danube Road Safety conference addressed partners countries’ national public authorities and all projects’ Associated Strategic Partners. The altogether 50 participants of the conference were the representatives from non-governmental organisations, universities and national public authorities including representatives from relevant Ministries and Road Authorities from partners’ countries.

After the event, participants of the 1st Danube Road Safety Conference attended the tour around the Walls of Dubrovnik related to provisions for pedestrians and relevant vulnerable road users.

1st Danube Road Safety conference was held during a three-day European Road Conference where the inspiring representatives from the leading institutions from all over Europe attended the talks as a first step to implement the transnational networking, dedicated to improving the road safety in Danube area. During the conference in Dubrovnik the information about project RADAR was well disseminated, as well.

About the project RADAR

The 36-month long project (June 2018 – May 2021) with the financial support of 2,15 million EUR for cooperation on the improvement of the road infrastructure safety in the Danube region was approved by the Interreg Danube Transnational Programme 2nd call. The Programme is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund, the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance and European Neighborhood Instrument. The project is led by the European Institute for Road Assessment – EuroRAP from Slovenia. Altogether ten project partners and twelve associated strategic partners from 13 European countries are part of the project and committed themselves to contribute to identifying and reducing risk on road networks, enhancing transnational cooperation between stakeholders to build strategy and defining cost-effective solutions to reduce risk by improving road infrastructure.

Until May 2021, each Project Partner with the support of Associated Strategic Partner will develop Road Safety Procedures Training Concept, deliver Road Safety Training Courses, perform Best Practices Study Visits. A Road Safety Expert Group that will contribute to the work on the Road Safety Thematic Areas, such as Safer Road Investment Plans, Provision for Vulnerable Road Users, Intelligent Transportation System for Road Safety and Star Ratings for Safety around School will be established. Finally, the RADAR partnership will provide the Danube Infrastructure Road Safety Improvement Strategy and Action Plan.

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