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## NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS AS ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS IN ROAD SAFETY PROGRAMMES

### Abstract

Road safety is a very important problem undertaken by various actors of both an international and local level. An important role in this area play non-governmental organizations, whose activities result from social motives. The body of the article summarizes and presents the international non-governmental organizations of different scope and nature of the action and shows the extent of their efforts to road safety. Studies show that many new organizations start their activities in the field of safety and security. As regards to the transport issues very often it is road safety because almost everyone is a road user: a pedestrian, a cyclist, a bike rider, a car driver or a passenger of any vehicle. Therefore road safety concerns the vast majority of a society. Furthermore the non-governmental organizations are matched very closely to the actual needs in the field of road safety due to their scale and specialization and can respond to the social expectations faster than local, regional or national administration. As a result the non-governmental organizations play a significant role in the design and implementation of programmes to improve road safety.

**Key words:** non-governmental organizations, road safety programmes, transport issues, regional administration, national administration.

### Introduction

One of the risks which are likely to meet every human being are the risks of road traffic. Security in the transport system means a quality of working in certain environmental conditions, without incidents and adverse events [Integrated transport safety system [Krystek, 2009: 26]. In the common meaning is the set of rules for safe mobility on the road is safe, that is, one in which the probability of severe

injury or death of a road participant is reduced. It should be noted that road traffic participant shall be deemed to be walking, driving, as well as other people in the vehicle or on the vehicle on the road [*The Act of 20 June 1997 – The Law on Road Traffic*, article 2]. It is difficult to clearly express and measure safety. The most common is using statistical indicators depicting the number of accidents [Tomanek, 2004: 36]. In the international comparisons of the status of road safety, the most used is the number of people killed per million inhabitants. It shows the mortality associated with road traffic in the context of the population of the country what makes these figures comparable. According to European Transport Safety Council (ETSC) data in 2013 within the European Union 26 025 people died in road accidents and 198 680 was badly injured. The indicator of fatalities per million inhabitants in 2013 was 51 [*Ranking EU Progress on Road Safety, 8<sup>th</sup> Road Safety Performance Index Report*, 2014] what constitutes an improvement to 2012 about 7.8%. For comparison, in 2012, this indicator amounted to 55 in the European Union, in relation to the data for 2001 (54 352 victims, the number of deaths per million inhabitants at 113) it shows an improvement of about 51.3%. Rate of fatalities per million population in selected European countries are shown in table 1.

Table 1

Indicator of fatalities per million population in selected European countries in 2001 and 2013

No.	Country	Fatalities in 2001	Fatalities in 2013	Population	Indicator of fatalities per million population in 2001	Indicator of fatalities per million population in 2013
1.	Austria	958	455	8 451 860	119	53
2.	Belgium	1486	720	11 161 642	145	65
3.	Bulgaria	1011	600	7 284 552	124	82
4.	Croatia	647	368	4 262 140	152	86
5.	Cyprus	98	44	865 878	140	51
6.	Czech Republic	1334	650	10 516 125	130	62
7.	Danemark	431	192	5 602 628	81	34
8.	Estonia	199	81	1 320 174	146	61
9.	EU 28	55001	26025	505 665 739	113	51
10.	Finland	433	258	5 426 674	84	48
11.	France	8162	3250	65 578 819	138	50
12.	Germany	6977	3340	80 523 746	85	41
13.	Greece	1880	870	11 062 508	172	79
14.	Holland	1083	570	16 779 575	68	34
15.	Hungary	1239	591	9 908 798	121	60
16.	Ireland	411	190	4 591 087	107	41

No.	Country	Fatalities in 2001	Fatalities in 2013	Population	Indicator of fatalities per million population in 2001	Indicator of fatalities per million population in 2013
17.	Italy	7096	3400	59 685 227	125	57
18.	Latvia	558	179	2 023 825	236	88
19.	Lithuania	706	258	2 971 905	202	86
20.	Luksemburg	70	45	537 039	159	84
21.	Malta	16	18	421 364	41	43
22.	Norway	275	190	5 051 275	61	38
23.	Poland	5534	3357	38 533 299	145	87
24.	Portugal	1670	650	10 487 289	163	62
25.	Romania	2450	1861	20 020 074	109	93
26.	Serbia	1275	650	7 181 505	170	91
27.	Slovakia	625	223	5 410 836	116	41
28.	Slovenia	278	125	2 058 821	140	61
29.	Spain	5517	1680	46 727 890	136	36
30.	Sweden	534	260	9 555 893	60	27
31.	Switzerland	544	269	8 039 060	76	33
32.	United Kingdom	3598	1790	63 896 071	61	28

Source: based on Ranking EU Progress on Road Safety, 8th Road Safety Performance Index Report, the ETSC, Brussels 2014, p. 30; Back on Track to Reach the EU 2020 Road Safety Target? 7th Road Safety PIN Report, Brussels, 2013, p. 80.

Table 1 presents the value index of deaths per million inhabitants in 2001 and 2013 in selected European countries. These data indicate a wide variety of road safety levels in the various member states. The best indicator of this is presented in Sweden, Great Britain, Switzerland, Denmark and the Netherlands indicating the highest level of road safety in these countries. The worst situation is in Lithuania, Latvia, Croatia, Poland and Romania.

The current level of safety is still not satisfactory, in accordance with the provisions of the United Nations document. Global Plan for a decade of action for road safety 2011–2020 and the IV European road safety action programme 2020 the number of people killed in road accidents should be decreased about 50% (this objective should be reached in relation to the year 2010 – which means no more than 2 000 deaths in 2020) and badly injured to at least 40% by 2020 (this objective should be achieved in relation to the year 2010 – which means no more than 6 900 severely injured in 2020). However, by 2050 the number of people killed in road accidents should get closer to 0 – Vision zero [*Narodowy Program Bezpieczeństwa Ruchu Drogowego 2013–2020*, 2013: 18].

The studies in different countries worldwide show that the non-governmental organizations can significantly influence the road safety performance by changing the behavior of road users. Members of the third sector organization are persons whose involvement in what they are doing is not due to financial reasons, but rather with the passion and the feasibility of the objective. Therefore, these organizations can achieve more than the institutions set up to carry out a specific task. The purpose of the article is an attempt to identify a part in the creation and implementation of the road safety programmes of non-governmental organizations on selected examples.

## Summary of the activities of non-governmental organizations

Non-governmental organizations in the literature of the subject are defined in different ways. The most common are treated them interchangeably with not-for-profit organizations. The term non-governmental organization means a relation to the public sector (state-owned)-putting it into opposition to the state. Not-for-profit organization stresses diversity in relation to the private sector [Schmidt, 2012: 16]. According to The United Nations, a non-governmental organization is:

any voluntary not-for-profit group of citizens, which is organized on a local, national or international level, oriented on executing tasks and carried out by people with similar interests. Non-governmental organizations provide a variety of services with a company's philanthropic nature, represent the Governments concern citizens, monitor policies and encourage to participate in political life at the level of society. Provide analysis and expertise, they serve as an early warning mechanism to help to monitor and implement international agreements. Some non-governmental organizations run specific issues such as human rights, environment or health [Yaziji, Doh, 2011: 27–28].

Another term for a non-governmental organization states: that this is an organization that does not have to acquire power, whether to participate in the political game, but first: to solve social problems, that the government cannot do it itself or does not take part in the resolution and second: to introduce to the public discussion of the interpretation of the social world that is close to all the members of a non-governmental organization [Leś, 2013: 18]. These organizations generally can be divided into acting in the public interest or mutual. Organizations operating in the public interest address their activities to citizens, while the latter only to members of own organizations.

In addition, having regard to the profile of the activities of non-governmental organizations may be mentioned:

- self-help organizations – their specificity comes down to act solely on behalf of their members;

- welfare organizations – providing services to all who need it, or only for certain categories of persons;
- representative organizations – generally represent the interests of some local community;
- minorities organizations representing the interests of minority groups;
- organizations formed on an ad hoc basis – they are formed for the purpose of carrying out the specified action;
- hobby and recreation organizations – a group of people interested in a specific sphere of activity;
- task-based organizations – often perform certain functions outsourced by the public sector;
- “traditional” organizations – a wide activity and people, for which they work [Filipiak, Ruszała, 2009: 117–118].

These organizations can realize its objectives in a number of areas, such as: social activities, educational, cultural and professional integration, hobby activity or related to security. Safety is extremely important and increasingly popular. For many years new organizations are starting their activities whose primary purpose is the operation in the security issues [Kotnis-Górska, Wysocki, 2011, p. 11], including transport security and especially in road safety because the members of these organizations are its participants.

## Selected programmes and activities of non-governmental organizations for the benefit of road safety

In the world there are many organizations to promote wider rules of road safety. Their objectives are very broad: from the collection of statistics on road accidents and those affected, through the exchange of experiences and observations, activities to improve the quality of training and testing of future drivers, social campaigns, assistance to victims of road traffic accidents, to the education of pedestrians, cyclists and other groups in the road safety. These organizations differ from each other in both reach and impact area of operations.

The best-known organization dedicated to the problem of road safety is the United Nations, that together with the World Health Organization adopted a resolution in 2004 “Improving global road safety”. On this basis, the United Nations was set up for cooperation in the field of road safety (United Nations Road Safety Collaboration, UNRSC), which is an informal consultative body whose members are committed to activities in the field of road safety. Now full members of the UNRSC are about 70 different kinds of actors, including the UN agencies, governments, foundations, research institutes, non-governmental organizations and private companies, which meet every two years to discuss global issues on road safety road [[www.who.int/roadsafety/en/](http://www.who.int/roadsafety/en/), access: 1.09.2014]. In 2010 The United Nations General Assembly took the initiative Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011–2020, aimed at stabilising and reducing the global number of fatalities of

road accidents in the years 2011–2020 by about 5 million by strengthening the activities carried out at national, regional and global levels. In addition, it was assumed that the United Nations will affect every country in the establishment of its own road safety programs, appointed to be the objective of reducing the number of people killed, the establishment of the unit responsible for the management of road safety, improve the quality of the collection of data on the safety of road traffic, monitoring of tasks and action effects and increasing of financial resources allocated to road safety.

In the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011–2020 there are adopted 5 pillars for national strategies, i.e. lines of action: road traffic safety management system, safer road infrastructure and to ensure the mobility and accessibility for all participants in road traffic, more secure vehicles, shaping the behavior of road users and road rescue system and post-accident care [*Narodowy Program Bezpieczeństwa Ruchu Drogowego 2013–2020*, National Road Safety Council, a document adopted on 20.06.2013, p. 13]. Together with the European Action Programme for Road Safety it was the basis for many countries to create national programmes for the improvement of road safety.

The World Bank is taking action in the field of road safety, becoming one of the partners of the Global Road Safety Facility (GRSF) whose goal is to help low- and middle-income countries in solving the problem of the growing number of fatalities and persons injured in road accidents. The Fund was established in 2006 with the support of the FIA Foundation, the government of the Netherlands, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) and is now also supported by the British Department for International Development (DFID) and the Bloomberg Family Foundation (BFF). GRSF provides financial assistance in the form of knowledge, analysis, advice and technical assistance in the field of road safety and also is a part of the support for the Global Action for Road Safety 2011–2020 carried out by the UN and the WHO. GRSF supports countries in developing road safety programmes, and in its strategy draws particular attention to the implementation of the safe system approach of man-vehicle-road as a key factor for effective road safety system [[web.worldbank.org](http://web.worldbank.org), access: 1.09.2014].

The World Bank also appointed in 1999, the non-profit Global Road Safety Partnership (GRSP), whose objective is to find more effective and innovative ways to ensure road safety in developing countries and in transition. GRSP brings together the government and state institutions, companies, private individuals and other organizations active in the field of road safety. The partnership deals with the collection of information on road events, manages the road safety projects and also is the basis for the exchange of experience at national and international levels [[www.grsproadsafety.org](http://www.grsproadsafety.org), access: 2.09.2014].

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) is to coordinate economic and social policies of member countries. A part of its works is to lay down common rules for the different areas of activity, including road safety. The OECD provides a platform for the exchange of information, experiences, views and good practices among its members. In 1988 the Organization set

up the International Road Traffic and Accident Database (IRTAD) in order to collect and provide the stakeholders the data on road accidents and people injured, as well as other indicators of road safety from 29 countries. IRTAD is also a working group, composed of experts from renowned research institutes, universities, governments, non-profit organizations, the automotive industry, etc. The objective of the group is international cooperation in the field of the analysis of data concerning the safety of traffic and the provision of information on this topic, among others. through the publication of the annual road safety report [[www.oecd.org](http://www.oecd.org), access: 1.09.2014].

An important organization in Europe is the European Transport Safety Council (ETSC) – an independent non-profit organization established in 1993, based in Brussels. The ETSC shall take steps to reduce the number of fatalities and injured persons in road transport. The Council is a source of knowledge to more than 150 experts in matters of transport safety advising the European Commission, the European Parliament and the member states. The activities of the Council is funded by the European Commission, as well as contributions from public and private sources. ETSC has 45 members – organizations operating on the ground local and international transport safety. The main objective of the ETSC is to identify and promote effective measures on the basis of international research and best practices, offering the greatest potential for reducing the number of accidents in transport and their victims. The Council regularly organizes conferences, meetings, lectures and publishes scientific dedicated to safety in transport, mainly road. It also runs a number of programs to promote the idea of improving the safety of transport, among others. Road Safety PIN, Bike Pal, PRAISE, Drink Driving, STARS, ShLOW, VOICE [[www.etsc.eu](http://www.etsc.eu), access: 1.09.2014].

Among others there are also organizations that deal with specific problems of road safety. The worth mentioning is the International Commission for Driver Testing (fr. Commission Internationale des Examens de Conduite Automobile, CIECA), founded in 1956, which handles issues related to the training and testing of drivers. The main purpose of its activities is to standardize ways to evaluate and conduct examinations for candidates on the drivers in order to raise the level of road safety, environmental protection and improvement of the road transport of people and goods carried out privately and commercially. The organization counts 56 members from 36 countries around the world. Within the framework of its activity organizes seminars, workshops, congresses, leading international research projects, publishes studies dedicated to problems of road safety and also supports the development of the high common standards for training and testing of drivers in the member states. CIECA organizes and promotes cooperation and exchange between its members, collects, analyzes and provides information and documents regarding the principles of training and testing of future drivers. Conducts research in the field of driving tests, training for drivers and examiners, supports the creation and use of quality assurance systems in the field of training of candidates for the drivers and also works with institutions of the European Union and other national and international organizations [[www.cieca.be](http://www.cieca.be), access: 2.09.2014].

German Road Safety Council (ger. Kuratorium für Verkehrssicherheit, KFV) is an independent non-profit organization working in the field of road safety. The headquarter of the established in 1959 organization is located in Vienna. KFV deals mainly with the support of traffic engineering, education, psychology, and new technical solutions in the field of safety. The Council conducts research projects and implementation within the European Union, and has the potential of experts acting as advisory body in the field of road safety. KFV is a member of several other organizations operating in the safety sector, not only by road. Within the framework of its activities the Council publishes materials dedicated to the idea of safety and thematic programmes related to road safety [www.kfv.at, access: 1.09.2014].

International Federation of Pedestrians (IFP) is a Zurich based organization founded in 1963. Its activities are focused mainly on the safety of pedestrians: the prevention of collisions on the road, reducing the number of injuries and disability resulting therefrom, the protection of children, the elderly and other groups most vulnerable to road traffic accidents. In addition, the IFP is engaged in planning and design residential sites safe from threats on the road, specially designed for pedestrians. The organization represents the interests of the pedestrian environment and promotes pedestrian traffic, cooperates with the UN, the EU and other non-profit organizations [www.pedestrians-int.org, access: 1.09.2014].

The European New Car Assessment Programme (EuroNCAP) was established in 1997 and is an independent non-profit organization based in Brussels. The main purpose of its activities is to evaluate the safety of new vehicles. EuroNCAP, created by the UK Transport Research Laboratory and the British Department for transport, is financed mainly by other independent automotive organizations and consumers. The actions taken by the organization are also supported by the governments of the seven European countries (France, Germany, Sweden, the Netherlands, Great Britain, Luxembourg), the government of the Spanish autonomous region of Catalonia and the European Commission. EuroNCAP has created a voluntary vehicle safety rating system. The Program is modeled on the American New Car Assessment Program (USNCAP), introduced in 1979 by the US National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Similar programs are carried out in Australia and New Zealand (ANCAP), South Korea (KNCAP), Japan (JNCAP), Latin (Latin NCAP) and China (C-NCAP). The organization publishes reports on the safety of new cars and the results of different crash test, for example front, side, with a pedestrian, specifying the number of stars assigned. In the near future, the organization intends to introduce a new test procedures, focusing on technologies for preventing collisions and speed management systems. Activities contributes greatly to improve the passive safety of vehicles placed on the European market [www.euroncap.com, access: 2.09.2014]. In addition to the EuroNCAP there is also the Global NCAP, that is a non-profit organization based in London, established in order to support by the UN Decade of action for road safety 2011–2020 as a platform to promote the development of initiative, evaluation of new vehicles (NCAP) and the dissemination of best practices in the use of consumer information in order to promote road safety.

Global NCAP in particular offers support for NCAP in the developing countries, through technical assistance and quality assurance [www.globalncap.org, access: 2.09.2014].

Forum of European National Highway Research Laboratories (FEHRL) is an international non-profit organization formed in 1989, consisting of more than 30 national research institutes from all over Europe. FEHRL headquarter is located in Brussels. The organization focuses on activities associated with the provision of a safe road network and infrastructure, including: innovation and energy efficiency in road engineering, environmental protection, improving the quality of life. Also deals with the transfer of knowledge and the promotion of good practices on safe road infrastructure by means of conferences, seminars and publications [www.fehrl.org, access: 1.09.2014].

International non-profit organizations working in the field of road safety also undertake activities in Poland. Most often this is done through cooperation with local partners. A good example is the association Partnership for Road Safety (PBD), acting for the improvement of road safety on Polish roads and reducing the number of road accident victims in Poland. The organization carries out all Poland projects and road safety awareness campaigns. The Partnership is a member of the Global Road Safety Partnership (GRSP) in Geneva, and is being patroned by the National Road Safety Council and the World Bank.

## Conclusions

As stated in article content considerations, NGOs in the field of road safety, take a lot of action, and with the central government authorities participate in the creation of many projects and programmes, often as their starters. The significant role of non-governmental organizations in the design and implementation of programmes for the improvement of road safety is due to their scale and specialization, which are matched to the actual needs in the field of road safety. Both organizations operating at local level, as well as those operating on a global scale tend to be closer to society and respond faster to its expectations in terms of improvement of the road safety than local, regional or national administration. First of all this is connected with the lack of administrative constraints and with a wider understanding of local needs, what is the basis for determining the objectives of the organization and the effectiveness of the actions taken.

Non-governmental organizations operating on a global scale can spread faster solution proven in other regions, taking into account the specific local circumstances and expectations of these communities. Through their actions they contribute to spreading among societies the rules of safe participation in traffic and also to better match of road policy to social expectations.

The non-governmental organizations seem to be very important players in making of the road safety policies in both local and national levels. Furthermore the global NGOs are very often the key players in making the long term plans and

setting the road safety targets for countries and the communities, e.g. European Union. The role of NGOs tends to rise within the last years. In many countries new organizations advocating for road safety are being set up, while those existing are getting stronger and more influential. The outcome is visible in the statistical data (table 1) – the roads are more safe. The studies show that the greater number of the non-governmental organizations operating in the road safety the better road safety performance in the country. The aim of its efforts is incontestable – a human life.

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