

## European Road Safety Charter Workshop in Budapest

The European Road Safety Charter workshop in Hungary took place on the 19<sup>th</sup> of March 2019. As an award winning Charter member, KTI Institute for Transport Sciences offered to have the workshop at their premises in Budapest. The Charter Team and KTI could count on the active participation of different Hungarian organisations committed to road safety. The aim of the workshop was to present the Charter and its objectives, to present the programs of organisations that carry out useful and prominent actions in the field of road safety, and to implement a professional discussion on the subject.



### Opening and welcome words

The workshop was opened by Berta Tamás, head of the Road Safety Research Centre of KTI, followed by the welcome notes of Dr. Szilvia Erb, managing director of KTI, and Vincent Leroy, project manager of the Charter Team. Their presentations stressed the importance of working for road safety, with the aim of minimizing road accidents in the future. The Charter team was pleased that many organisations from Hungary are already a member of the Charter, showing the European Union that Hungary is committed to road safety.

József Óberling, head of the Traffic Law General Department of the National Accident Prevention Committee, summarized Hungary's current road safety situation. He highlighted that there is still room for improvement, and also touched upon the importance of prevention, attention to each other and responsibility.

### Presentations

In the first part of the program, various Hungarian organisations and companies presented their road safety programs.

The 'Lifelong Journey Program' provides a comprehensive set of knowledge-based learning materials for each age group, and implements road safety education programs through the partnership of several organisations. The presented 'Bicycle School', 'Moped school' and 'Mobile Kids' programs targeting primary school children. One of the objectives of all three

programs is to integrate road safety education into the educational system, as it is the most effective way to prepare children for safe transport. In addition, it is crucial that the developed materials contain age-appropriate knowledge, teachers' aids and practical elements that are particularly important for children.

The 'Day of Transport Culture' and 'Week of Safety' programs are comprehensive and community-wide events that aim to draw the attention of all road users to the importance of road safety, reaching out to children, families and professionals with a series of programs. The Association for Transport Sciences promotes professional and civil co-operation between the theoretical and practical experts of transport, the scientific activities of the members, and aims to increase social welfare by developing the culture of transport.

In the District of Újbuda, road safety is considered important on a governmental level, improving it with infrastructural interventions and road safety education for children in kindergarten. In the field of public transportation, the Centre for Budapest Transport makes efforts for the road safety of the most vulnerable, disabled and elderly road users, organizing sensitizing trainings for those working in the transport sector and learning about the needs of road users in the framework of an obstacle-exploring campaign.

### Round table discussions

During the round table discussions following the presentations, the participating experts highlighted the compliance of road users and the role of speeding and distracting factors during driving, as the key issues of national transport. It is important to keep in mind the central role of the human factor in the interventions. Also the immediate environment and family have a great responsibility in preventing accidents of the elderly and children. Educating children for safely taking part in transport should be given particular emphasis. It is important to address the different age groups appropriately and to include this issue within the school framework, along with addressing their environment.



It is valuable to see good practices from abroad and to apply them in Hungary, adapted to their own circumstances. In this way, several programs have been successfully implemented, and international experiences are generally well utilized in Hungary. Exchange of experiences

at an EU or even broader international level is also crucial, and it is worthwhile to develop professionally synchronized solutions and internationally unified frameworks, for example on the requirements for driving licenses.

The help of the Charter is seen as a useful initiative for the transfer of theoretical knowledge to the practical level of implementation. Emphasised EU attention to road safety also stimulates to take actions and interventions on a national level. Publicizing the goals set by the EU and the good practices that have been implemented will encourage to accomplish the national tasks. Becoming a member of the Charter can sensitize organisations to take the next step, as the Charter makes information, practices and experiences available in English to other national and international oriented members.