



SOFIA CAR Motorsport

BULGARIAN RACING TEAM



Project for long-term solution of the issues with safety and road traffic habits in the EU and in Bulgaria as EU member state

The number of road victims in Europe per year exceeds the number of war victims in the world, which is a fact that speaks for itself that it is time to take immediate measures. In 2015 26.000 people lost their lives along EU roads, with Bulgaria being the member state with the highest death toll in Europe per million population. Last year an average of 99 people per million Bulgarians died in road accidents. Investments in young people and their education is a guaranteed means of changing these statistics if we now start to work on improving knowledge, skills and technical background of future drivers and pedestrians.

1. The international automobile federation (FIA) with its Road & Safety programme:
 - FIA's approach is based on programmes for road safety, projects and initiatives aiming to influence present and future drivers. FIA is a leading global road safety philanthropy, which fosters innovative pilot projects and injury-prevention programmes. The federation encourages governments, institutions, the private sector and international donors to do more and to work with partners from all over the world – in order to make roads safe for all.

In 2017 FIA's chairman Jean Todt made a visit to Bulgaria, which was marked by his bitter words: "You are a small country, 7 million people, and more than 600 of you die on the road each year, with thousands left injured". He confirmed that it is working with the young and their education that can contribute to the solution of the problem. Jean Todt supported the idea to establish a system for educating students in road safety.

- Motor sports have the power to excite and entertain millions of people all over the world. Furthermore, they bear a responsibility towards their pilots, spectators and the general

S O F I A R

Bulgaria, Sofia 1000, Vitinya street 2g

Bulgaria, Ruse 7000, blvd. Treti Mart 56

Germany, Ludwigstrasse 80, 86669 Königsmoos-Ludwigsmoos

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public to demonstrate the highest safety standards and to convey the vital message that high speed belongs to the racing track and not to the roads. FIA finances projects which promote the quick development of new and improved safety technologies and higher standards for education, training and post-accident care. FIA's foundation is a leading supporter of research and development of motor sports' safety, work with young pilots and their development. FIA encourages the development of new and improved safety technologies and of higher standards for education and training of young people.

2. How does the road traffic control system in Europe function right now?

In today's fast-paced society, we often observe an overwhelming desire of road traffic participants to travel the distance from point A to point B as quickly as possible. On the other hand, we have various laws for regulating and controlling road traffic, which are pretty much the same all over Europe, with very few exceptions. Levying big fines, seizing driver's licences, in some countries even seizing ownership of the vehicle in cases of drastic speeding. Are those measures effective? The answer is "no" because it is impossible for law enforcing authorities or control means to cover all the roads. Even if drivers were strict and followed all the rules and restrictions, when they encounter an emergency situation, in most cases they are unprepared to react adequately. The lack of adequate training for driving an automobile in such situation leads to a huge number of road accidents and victims.

3. Proposal for long-term solution of the problem by introducing a compulsory school subject for students from 1st till 12th grade called "Road traffic safety and driving an automobile"

3.1 What will this subject be about?

- Targeted work with every child once per month teaching road traffic rules, establishing safety habits in riding a bicycle, go-kart, moped and, at the final stage of the training – an automobile. Studying road traffic rules and their application in practice in special

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designated places called “Road safety centers”. Developing a syllabus for the school subject and a model for constructing the above-mentioned centers.

This is the safe way in which we can prepare the new generation for easy integration into road traffic.

4. To protect our children.

Going out on the street, every child becomes a participant in road traffic. Therefore, teaching the rules in theory and in practice is the way to prepare children to behave adequately outside.

4.1 Syllabus of the school subject “Road traffic safety and driving an automobile”

- Studying road traffic rules from early age;
- Safely riding a bicycle in an urban environment;
- Driving a go-kart in a specialized environment in order to develop basic reflexes in future vehicle drivers. Sitting behind the wheel of a go-kart for a few hours, children’s basic reflexes are trained which helps them at a later stage to master the driving of an automobile in extreme and critical conditions;
- Driving an automobile after age 14 – starting to learn how to drive an automobile in a specialized environment at this early age, young people will get the final touch of the knowledge they acquired in the process of education and will be prepared to enter the real road environment as vehicle drivers;

5. Where will the extra-curricular activities of the above-mentioned subjects be held?

5.1 Description and content of future road safety centers

- Using existing and convenient driving practice polygons, terrains, kart tracks in or near cities as basis for establishing the centers;
- Developing a model for constructing the centers and rules for controlling them

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5.2 What the centers will include

- Mini polygons simulating an urban environment including streets, walkways, traffic lights where children can practice road traffic rules as pedestrians, cyclists or drivers;
- Kart track – mini driving polygon;
- Providing an opportunity to private initiatives to develop additional attractions for the children’s free time making it possible for the centers to sustain themselves;
- Creating mobile centers with opportunities for out-of-school training using simulators and even movable mini driving practice polygons for smaller towns;

6. Interaction between the state, private initiatives and civil society is the guaranteed means of realizing the project of introducing the school subject “Road safety and driving an automobile”

- Establishing an association called “Road safety and motor sports in education” aiming to change the system of education and realizing the centers described above;

6.1 Goals

- Changing the legislature and the school curriculum in order to create the subject and introduce it into the school system;
- Creating the subject syllabus;
- Selecting a legal form (public-private partnership, renting sports facilities, etc.) for obtaining the old, existing or obsolete driving practice polygons described above, as well as tracks and association airports;
- Establishing rules for managing and operating the centers;

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- In order not to engage the state and local authorities with the financial duties of these centers, providing an opportunity to private initiatives to govern them through the association as entertainment facilities when school is out;
 - The association shall establish a system and rules for training of personnel for the centers which will conduct the practical training of children – using the existing local structures of the Bulgarian Automobile Sport Federation and the Bulgarian Automobile Union to additionally train existing cadres;
 - Establishing a controlling authority attached to the association in order to control the construction of the centers, the following of the rules and the student training syllabus;
 - Creating a public register of centers, their personnel and activities performed in real time in order to enable state control;
7. Affirming the role of existing driver training centers as the last stage of education and of obtaining a driver's licence.

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