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## Issues concerning the road safety concept

Ionela Adriana Tisca<sup>a</sup>, Nicolae Istrat<sup>a</sup>, Constantin Dan Dumitrescu<sup>b\*</sup>, Georgica Cornu<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>PhD students, University Politehnica, Timisoara 300054, Romania

<sup>b</sup>PhD, University Politehnica, Timisoara 300054, Romania

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### Abstract

The paper focuses on issues regarding the adaptation of specific elements related to the concept of road traffic in Romania, to the existing European / world provisions. The authors took into account the specific aspects of the factors that define this concept, including traffic legislation, environment conditions, road infrastructure, characteristics of equipment specific to road traffic, and aspects of drivers' education. The authors also took into account the provisions concerning the adopted vision and sustainable road safety. Last but not least, in developing the concept of road traffic safety, the authors considered road traffic statistics from Romania for the period 2013-2015. The authors of the concept of security is the integration front, with the quality of the road in Romania, considering the intensity of traffic and the environmental pollution. The statistical data covering a period of 10 years, the period 2001-2011; fleet during this period registered significant growth in Romania, mainly in 2006-2008.

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### 1. Introduction

Traffic safety and organization is an embodiment of the state policy in the field of protecting human life and health, by preventing road traffic accidents and reducing their consequences.

Particular attention should be paid to road safety, an issue that is becoming more acute and that is increasing its social significance with the increase in road traffic.

\* Constantin Dan Dumitrescu. Tel.: +40-0721291404

E-mail address: [danc.dumitrescu@yahoo.ro](mailto:danc.dumitrescu@yahoo.ro)

Increasing traffic safety on public roads is achieved by taking several concomitant measures. An important part of these measures is linked to the construction of vehicles, starting with the improvement of braking systems and ending with the endowment of cars and drivers with special devices.

Increasing road safety is also achieved by improving the methods of designing roads and by perfecting the execution technology of road construction works, in particular the methods of executing the road surface.

An important role is played by increasing the traffic discipline on public roads and by spreading the knowledge about traffic safety among drivers, among population and in schools.

Road traffic safety can be guaranteed only by the simultaneous fulfilment of the following conditions:

- a) strict compliance by drivers and pedestrians of traffic rules on the roads;
- b) good technical condition of vehicles;
- c) by allowing unhindered movement of vehicles, at a foreseen speed and according to the designed intensity under the conditions approved by the plan and road profile;
- d) by preserving adequate road conditions for transport and exploitation (flatness, adhesion coefficient) by maintenance and repair units as established during the execution phase, and by timely removal of the influence of external factors, primarily climate-related ones (fog, rain, ice, snow, etc.)
- e) by properly informing drivers of road conditions and traffic arrangements, by installing road signs, and in some cases, by directing traffic.

## 2. The concept of traffic safety

During the last decades, the European Union has recognized the growing importance of road infrastructure safety, formulating a response by Directive 2008/96/EC of the European Parliament and Council of 19 November 2008 regarding the management of this area. Also, the United Nations, by the resolution adopted on 2 March 2010, recognised the gravity of this problem and declared the decade 2011-2020, the Decade of action for road safety.<sup>1</sup>

One cannot establish a correct definition on road safety because this area involves multiple responsibilities.

Normally, road safety refers to a range of methods and measures aimed at reducing the risk of accidents.

The report "Global Status Report on Road Safety Time for Action" 2009 indicates a bleak prediction worldwide in terms of traffic accidents as a cause of death. So, if in 2004 road accidents produced about 2.2% of deaths (item 9), by 2030 they will be the cause of 3.6% of deaths (position 5).<sup>2</sup>

Traffic safety is an indicator of road transport system, as a consequence of the interaction of factors that determine its operation. This is all the more as traffic accidents which involve direct costs are supported by the health sector, by businesses and the families of those involved. In terms of costs and of the loss of human life, current statistics place road transportation first. This makes road safety a matter of individual, national, European and worldwide interest, and the approaches must consider the shared responsibility of all actors involved.

Over time, internationally, various ways of road safety management were discussed, as follows:<sup>3</sup>

Phase 1: thinking and practice in the 1950s focused on the role of driver and on the approach "the victim is to blame". The management of the road safety during this period can be characterized by dispersed, uncoordinated and insufficiently documented units, which fulfilled single isolated functions;

Phase 2: thinking and practice in the 1960s and 1970s focused on interventions at the infrastructure – driver – vehicle system, before, during and after the accident, without establishing the responsibilities of an institutional management;

Phase 3: thinking and practice in the 1980s and 1990s focused on interventions in the entire system, on clearly outlined objectives and on creating a base at the institutional level, so as to make plans and action programs which eventually had reduced considerably the road accidents during these decades;

<sup>1</sup> United Nations: A/RES/64/255, Improving global road safety Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 2 March 2010

<sup>2</sup> World Health Organisation: The report "Global Status Report on Road Safety Time for Action", 2009

<sup>3</sup> BurlacuFlorentina, 2014 – "Influence road characteristics on road safety", Bucuresti

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