



Dr. Luis Montoro González
Full Professor of Road Safety. University of Valencia
Spanish Foundation for Road Safety (FESVIAL) President of Honor

EFA meets Professor Luis Montoro of the University of Valencia. EFA has recently signed a MoU with "Instituto Universitario de Tráfico y Seguridad Vial (INTRAS) of the Universitat de València". EFA and INTRAS are publishing their studies on European training

1.- Professor Montoro, can you tell us what are the areas of expertise of INTRAS?

INTRAS is, nowadays, the only University Institute of Traffic and Road Safety among all Spanish universities. Our labor comprises multidisciplinary research in many areas, such as: risk factors and groups in traffic, crash investigation, road training and education, campaigns, road signaling, vehicle ergonomics, police control systems, road safety plans, etc. All this research is carried out for many public bodies and private companies around the world. In addition, training activities such as specific master's and doctoral programs on road safety are being currently developed by us. In regard to its scientific production, INTRAS has published about 150 road safety books and 260 scientific articles. Also, about 70 doctoral theses have been developed, and 30 international awards have been conceded to the institute for all its scientific activity.

2.- How do you see driving training in the age of autonomous vehicles: is there still room for driving schools?

The human factor is (and will always be) the most important issue in road safety. Even having "smart" cars, roads, cities and traffic fines, drivers are still behind critical decisions causing traffic crashes... or avoiding them, when "smart drivers" are raised through an adequate training process. In a few years, the driver training model will be "updated", and -apart from contents on road safety- drivers will need to be trained on vehicle-related information and communication technologies, which will be increasingly complex. Although I do not perceive any future threat for driving schools, I believe they have to adapt to the new times, opening new markets, such as the prevention of occupational traffic risks. Only as a figure, in the European Union more than 35% of occupational accidents involving victims occur in the traffic environment, and this social, health and economic problem has to be solved with training, something that driving schools know how to do very well.

3.- EFA has always defended professional training and intends to get closer and closer to the academic world. Do you think that all road users will also have to be trained for a better coexistence with highly automated vehicles?

Evidently. Other users such as cyclists, e-scooter riders and pedestrians (who "drive" their own body) should have more training and information on road safety, in order to guarantee a minimum set of skills to avoid getting injured/dead in traffic. In addition, and same as with drivers, there should be permanent training throughout the entire life cycle, since key issues such as traffic norms, risk factors, technologies and others permanently change, training must be permanently updated. In other words, traffic safety is impossible if road training is not "up to date".

Finally, as researcher in road safety, I want to pay tribute to the thousands of professionals involved in driving schools all across Europe, whose work is essential for road safety, and over the years have trained millions of European drivers in one of the most important subjects for our welfare: knowing how to drive safely.