



POLICY BRIEF

“How’s my Driving?”

How Corporate Social Responsibility can support Road Safety, and how Road Safety can improve the Transport Business

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CONTENT

1. Moving beyond blame-it-on-the-driver	3
2. Corporate Social Responsibility	5
<i>From responsible management to road safety</i>	6
<i>Increased perception, competitiveness & attractiveness</i>	7
<i>Leading in safety ... and sustainability</i>	8
3. A solution to many challenges	9
<i>Innovative and tailored monitoring</i>	10
<i>Gamification to support behavioural change</i>	12
<i>Solid research, and ready for market</i>	12
<i>Supporting, engaging ... and retaining drivers</i>	13
<i>Supporting Fleet Managers and Driving Coaches</i>	14
4. What are you going to do now?	16

1. MOVING BEYOND BLAME-IT-ON-THE-DRIVER

Over the past decades, sticking “How’s my driving?” in the back of the van (or truck), and providing a phone number for complaints about the driver has been the **default approach** to road safety by many companies.

It is true that drivers must behave responsibly, and that companies must foster responsible driving by the professionals operating their vehicles – but for that, this approach isn’t enough. Especially if we look at solid research and consider **reliable new solutions**.

Each road crash is a complex event with its own story. But all crashes have something in common: underlying **structural causes**. And if we act upon these structural factors, we can seriously reduce both the number and severity of crashes.

This means traffic deaths and serious injuries are not inevitable – which, naturally, creates an obligation to act – and to **do so proactively**. If things can be fixed, we must strive to fix them before damage is done.



Effective structural action must address two key elements: the roads and the vehicles that roll on them. While improving the road network is a core mission of the public sector, the private sector has a key role to play through its **corporate fleets**.

But this requires more than just sticking a phone number for complaints on the back of the van. First, because that is a reactive measure (it reacts to complaints), when companies need to be **proactive** (to avoid complaints in the first place). Second, because it threatens the worker, when companies need workers to be willing ambassadors for their brand. And finally,

because it centres the approach on random individual guilt, when companies must strive for systematic and collective responsibility.

Keep the sticker if you will, but make sure to bring in **fleet management**.

Fleet management (the many actions and processes that must occur for a fleet to run on time, within budget and at maximum efficiency) helps increase productivity and save money. In this Policy Brief we will show how, on top of that, it can also **save lives** and enhance the brand.



2. CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



Mobility must be safe to become sustainable. As a growing number of public authorities commit to reducing traffic fatalities and promoting walking and cycling, **public opinion is shifting** on the issue of road risk.

When a commercial vehicle kills or seriously injures a person walking or cycling, the event is no longer seen as a stroke of “bad luck” about which the **company involved** could do nothing. People understand that the company could and should have done something to prevent the fatality.

Attitudes of transport workers are also evolving. The emergent problem of driver shortage has an underlying demographic cause, but that is not the only factor. While salary remains an important part of any job, the young professionals of today also expect their work to have some level of **societal relevance** – and the attention placed by employers on that relevance matter.

Caring about the impact of fleet operations on the wider public, and on the workers, is a core part of **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)**, which has a growing relevance for the brand value of any company, and for its access to business opportunities.

2. CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

From responsible management to road safety

Corporate Social Responsibility translates into being held **socially and environmentally accountable**, both internally (e.g. by employees) and externally (e.g. general public and authorities) while pursuing a viable business model¹.

The significance of CSR lies in understanding its essence. Along with undoubtedly necessary legal standards, a broader comprehension of CSR's fundamental intents represents considerable opportunities for companies.

Beyond including social and environmental considerations in existing strategies, CSR calls for change management and responsible restructuring, and for the promotion of social dialogue and **quality of work life**².

For transport companies, **road safety fits well in CSR strategies**. While reducing road risks is a goal in itself, prioritising road safety in management strategies would positively affect the company's image, sustainability, and profitability.

The concern of private companies to be viable in their business model is legitimate, but road safety represents, rather than an obstacle, an **opportunity**.



¹ Aguinis, H., 2011. Organizational responsibility: Doing good and doing well. *APA handbook of industrial and organizational psychology*, Vol 3: Maintaining, expanding, and contracting the organization, 855-879.

Kunz, J., 2020. Corporate Social Responsibility and Employees Motivation—Broadening the Perspective. *Schmalenbach Business Review* 72(2), 159–191.

² Benraïs-Noailles, L., Herrbach, O., Viot, C., The impact of CSR perceptions on employer attractiveness: an empirical study, *Question(s) de management*, 2021/2 (n° 32), 15-24.

Increased perception, competitiveness & attractivity

Implementing successful road safety strategies will improve the sector's perception, and safer work conditions serve as evidence³.

Transport largely depends on the **customer trust and brand image**⁴, while often suffering from negative stereotypes. These affect both companies and their drivers, notably through a lack of recognition of their work.

Therefore, being proactive in road safety management can fuel **steady relations** with other sectors that collaborate with the transport industry. Improved overall perception to the public eye will also translate into general industry attractivity.

And there's more. A consistent business attractivity can be a solution to modern concerns in Human Resources (HR), such as the lack of skilled personnel. Providing safer working conditions would **attract workers**, especially young workers, as new generations are particularly attentive to the values carried by their company.

Once hired, work conditions also determine motivation, job satisfaction and, as a consequence, commitment and

loyalty to the employer. These factors strengthen the sector's longevity through skilled workers and low turnover. On a competitive level, these particular prerequisites can determine their will to work for one employer or another.

An effective CSR strategy can also help **small companies** distinguish themselves from the competition. CSR is still mostly understood as an attribute of a large corporation⁵. However, small and medium-sized companies, by fostering economic growth, entrepreneurial ambitions and talent, innovation, healthy competition, and business vitality⁶ support and maintain healthy economies. The implementation of a thorough road safety management can highlight their responsible ambition to external partners. A long term vision for business cooperation implies reliability.

The implementation of thorough road safety management procedures by small- and medium-sized companies can highlight their responsible ambition to external partners, present and potential: a long-term vision for business cooperation implies **reliability**.

Furthermore, improving road safety can be directly **cost-beneficial for companies of any size**. Crashes

³ *ibid.*

⁴ Solovjova, J., Sivolapova, E., Corporate social responsibility in transport and logistics sector, *Transportation Research Procedia*, Volume 63, 2022, 2039-2046.

⁵ Perrini, F., Russo, A., Tencati, A., 2002. CSR Strategies of SMEs and large firms. Evidence from Italy. *Journal of Business Ethics* 74, 285–300.

⁶ Jamali, D., Zanhour, M., Keshishian, T., 2009. Peculiar strengths and relational attributes of SMEs in the context of CSR. *Journal of Business Ethics* 87, 355–377

generate significant costs (medical care, legal expenses, property damage, lost productivity), and require compensation (social security, insurance) that could be avoided.

In short: implementing an effective Road Safety policy at the fleet management

level can seriously improve a transport company's standing with its clients, its workers, and its present and potential business partners. It can reduce different types of losses and, as we will see next, increase efficiency and fleet life. Quite a **business case**, wouldn't you say?

Leading in safety... and sustainability

Private actors **lead by choosing where to focus attention**. Certainly, suitable infrastructures and public regulations do matter. Nonetheless, the vast majority of fleets operating are private, and private companies, instead of being reactive to problems, must adopt a proactive approach if they are looking for opportunities.

There is no universal answer to achieving road safety but adapted measures that truly answer the sector and each company's needs are essential.

Measures that answer today and tomorrow's challenges are crucial as well. Road safety responsibilities echo with **sustainability imperatives** – which are more intense than ever. Road safety commitment is closely linked with sustainable development as both aim for social responsibility and ultimately converge for the preservation of resources. Mobility has to be safe, to become sustainable.

While some companies already have systems monitoring eco-driving, these

do **not necessarily** lead to safe driving. Although some aspects overlap, there are still clear differences. Speeding is unsafe, but if at a constant speed, can be considered more sustainable.

Safe driving, on the other hand, is an adaptation to the conditions (whether rainy, or dark, regarding other road users, etc.), and the creation of space and time to avoid critical issues during driving. Usually, it translates by keeping a distance, and not making any abrupt manoeuvres, which is eco-driving because the speed remains relatively constant. Safer behaviours then simultaneously **save fuel and prevent the early wearing out of the vehicle**.

Through responsible road safety management, the private sector **can lead and benefit** from this shift toward sustainable development in transport. It is not too late. No sector goes unconcerned and structural management changes within companies are key to being able to face current and future evolutions.

Acting now more than ever can start a virtuous cycle that will set once and for all the transport sector on the right foot – or the right wheel.

⁷ Mathieu, A., Soparnot, R., Les dimensions ontologiques, stratégiques et organisationnelles de l'appropriation du concept de développement durable en entreprise, *Management & Avenir*, 2009/3 (n° 23), 199-218.

3. A SOLUTION TO MANY CHALLENGES

i-DREAMS, a 4-year project funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme, has developed a **ready-to-use solution** to many challenges faced by businesses in the transport industry.

Rising fuel and insurance costs, taxes and wages rising... the overall increasing cost structure can quickly become a burden. To resist in this very competitive industry, resilience is a determinant factor. The **most secure asset** companies can rely on is their qualified and devoted workers.

However, the driver population is ageing and attracting new drivers gets more difficult. Long-term investments in drivers' skills are therefore more complicated as their longevity in the company is uncertain. By **coaching drivers towards safer behaviours**, i-DREAMS can help Vision Zero while creating a better work environment.

Companies have the opportunity to **support their drivers** in this process. This will fuel trust from existing drivers and is highly likely to draw in young professionals. To feed and sustain these changes is up to the companies. i-DREAMS promotes action over fatality.





Innovative and tailored monitoring

The i-DREAMS system, by monitoring driving style, coaches drivers towards safer driving behaviours. The existing monitoring systems, that most companies already possess, may be useful, but the feedback and training are too often **punctual or very time-consuming**.

The EU mandatory **Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC)** has to be renewed every five years for drivers to keep their driving licenses. That leaves several years between each training, a gap during which drivers might not be kept updated on new regulations and practices. Moreover, training on new systems and data can represent a strain on drivers, as they usually have very little time to follow up on.

For this reason, the continuous monitoring of i-DREAMS differentiates itself from existing systems, emphasizing the **added value** of providing instant recommendations and precise feedback. Let's detail this a bit more.

The i-DREAMS system includes **in-vehicle monitors and an intelligent camera** analysing the driving context (e.g., other road users, speed signs, distance with the vehicle in front).

The system also measures driving parameters (e.g., acceleration, deceleration, steering speed) and driver characteristics (e.g., sleepiness or distraction through mobile phone). Once such behaviour is detected, **the system warns the driver** of potential danger through an in-vehicle display.

i-DREAMS also works for **post-trip interventions**. The app is installed on the driver's smartphone, providing personalized feedback to the driver about his or her driving style. Through the icons displayed on the map, the driver can see all sorts of dangerous events that took place during the ride (e.g., over-speeding, harsh braking, insufficient distance with the car in front).

Replay videos of the most dangerous events that took place are made available to help the driver visualize the dangers. Other information units can help drivers increase their knowledge about certain risks and give practical tips on how to improve their driving style.

The app includes the possibility to follow **e-learning** through the survey component. This means that part of the CPC can be provided electronically, when the driver has time available (e.g., when parked, or loading or unloading).

Although relatively small, these learning components (called microlearning modules) can compose, all chained together, an electronic course part of the CPC. i-DREAMS thus provides the possibility of **continuous professionalization of safe driving**.



Gamification to support behavioural changes

To provide drivers with opportunities to **improve their behaviours**, i-DREAMS relies on gamification. On the “leader board”, the position of the rank of the driver within a company can be shown. Drivers can then compare their overall safety scores with each other.

Not only can they compare themselves to each other, but they can compare themselves to their past selves. The app **challenges drivers to pick up goals on specific behaviours** (e.g., speed, sufficient distance with others vehicles, not picking up the phone). When achieving a goal and improving safe trip performance, the driver obtains badges or digital rewards (from bronze to platinum), as well as safety credits.

When consistently performing well, those earned credits can be accumulated and exchanged in a **digital shop** functionality in the app. From a voucher for a restaurant to family cinema tickets, the rewards can be whatever the company wants to provide to their workers (if you're worried about the added costs of these 'prizes', think about the savings your company will be making with fuel efficiency, lower vehicle maintenance costs, etc.).

This acts as an external **incentive to motivate the drivers**. Safer behaviour will benefit them beyond their workplace, and safety statistics.

The stake is, through gamification and coaching, to install a new type of behaviour, to support it with knowledge and attitudinal changes, so that it becomes an inherent motivation rather than an extrinsic motivation to earn rewards.

Solid research, and ready for market

The i-DREAMS system is built on solid scientific foundations, uses state-of-the-art technology, and was tested and validated by different transport companies, with different types of drivers. Four years of intense research and development work enable us to confidently provide a **reliable and effective solution**.

i-DREAMS was developed in cooperation between **many partners**, including universities, companies, and representatives of key stakeholders, like the European Transport Safety Council and the POLIS Network of European cities and regions. Each partner specialized in different fields of expertise, from hardware and software to behavioural influence, and brought precious input into the project.

The project gathered guidance and feedback from its user and expert advisory boards. Field trials were conducted in different EU countries and with different types of vehicles and drivers. The results of these tests point to a **decrease in the number of risky events**. This decrease serves as an indicator of improvement in the driving style and field efficiency of the system.

i-DREAMS brings solutions to Road Safety – and beyond. The project is currently collaborating with an insurance broker and with training centres involved with professional drivers who are adopting the technology. More safety means less risk, and less risk can **reduce insurance costs**. What if companies using i-DREAMS can enjoy a discount on the high insurance premiums that they pay today?

Driver Training Centres also use the system to understand the specific needs of the drivers. Training can then be focused on the components in need of improvement and there is also a possibility to measure how effective the training was. The app is well connected to the real world, and although independent, can very well integrate with other training methods and complement each other.

Compared to the significant challenges like high costs, wages or insurance, i-DREAMS, by improving safe and **eco-driving**, results in increased profitability and competitiveness.

Supporting, engaging ... and retaining drivers

i-DREAMS also supports the implementation of a more modern HR policy. The sector's difficulty to find new drivers is paired with a need to keep them motivated. This can be achieved by **personalized coaching**, working on the strengths and weaknesses of individual drivers, and rewarding them for good behaviour, contributing to more human and responsible management.

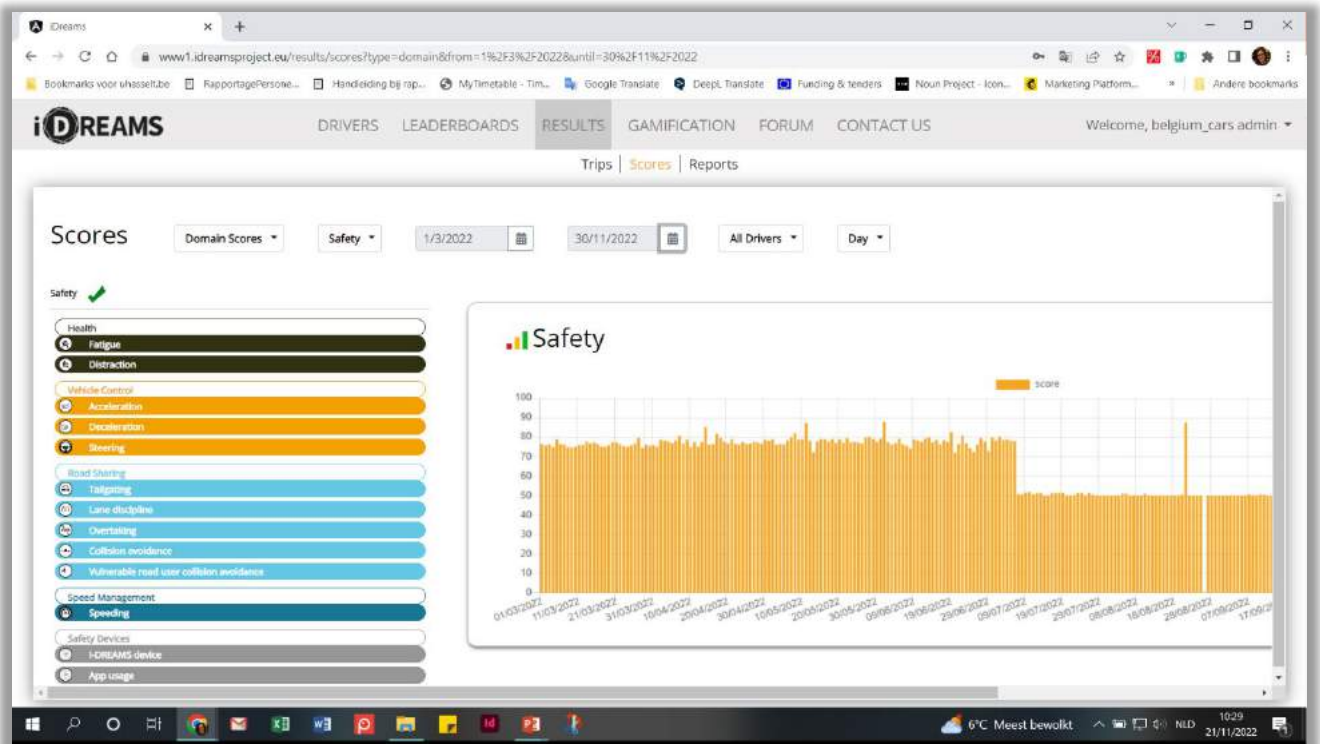
i-DREAMS will enable companies to demonstrate that they are really acting to improve safety. **Solid facts and concrete actions** also protect the brand image of transport companies.

i-DREAMS is not subjecting drivers to another layer of control and blaming. During the testing period and discussions with the **drivers**, they were able to express their main concerns, which were the fear of being monitored and punished.

From field trial experiences, **drivers could explain** to their company why they were not at fault in certain events. Indeed, the blame is not always to be on the drivers, as there also are instances where they have to react to a situation created by somebody or something else. As objective means, the data and video images recorded can prove that.

Professional drivers have an added responsibility to drive safely. It's fair to assume most of them are aware of that responsibility and committed to meeting it. The default approach of just threatening the driver by sticking a phone number for complaints in the back of the vehicle is hardly compatible, much less enough.

Companies must go beyond a merely reactive approach (i.e., we let problems happen, and then we deal with them), and adopt a proactive approach. This means **adopting effective solutions**, engaging the goodwill and professional commitment of the drivers, and being systematic and consistent, instead of ad hoc actions in response to single events and complaints from drivers of other vehicles (which may, or may not, be legitimate).



Supporting Fleet Managers and Driving Coaches

i-DREAMS will support the work of the fleet manager and of the driving coach. The gamification experience in the app can be configured by means of a **web dashboard**, for the company's coach or mentor to follow up with their drivers.

This dashboard **summarizes all sorts of safety scores and statistics** about the group of drivers that are adopting the i-DREAMS technology. This can secure responsible management through reliable data collection and therefore contribute to integrating it into a longer-term, and collective, strategy.

This will make interacting with drivers **easier, and enable a more individualized approach**. To help drivers with the problems they are facing, whether stress or mental conditions and help them in determining which aspects need extra coaching or training, to, in the end, make their work more comfortable.

Professional drivers make up a diverse population but are often older and ageing. They might be less familiar with **digital technologies**. Field trials showed that some extra time may be necessary to explain how the app works, but, after that, adoption is feasible.

The gamification dimension makes **picking up goals** simple and **realising them** possible through continuous feedback. Managers can discern with more ease where the drivers need individual coaching, or where their company has room for improvement. Responsible management is a huge step in solving behavioural concerns, which are obstacles to road safety.

Moreover, behavioural changes are sustained by the way driving conditions improve. The focus on road safety and social goals, allows consequently for drivers to have better work environments.

Paired with awareness of their responsibility when driving, drivers can apprehend safer behaviour in a less conflictual way – less conflict enables more openness, which in turn **favours learning and behaviour change**.

i-DREAMS provides objective criteria and solutions, not aimlessly blaming drivers for events that may depend on external causes. The concrete progress, emphasized with data, contributes to improving the sector's image and **clearing the burden of bad public perception**.



4. WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO NOW?

i-DREAMS enables corporate fleet managers to adopt a new approach to Road Safety – a more efficient approach, based on solid scientific foundations, state-of-the-art technology, and practical field trials.

Above all, it enables companies to move beyond a reactive approach that places individual blame on the driver, to a proactive approach, that leverages the potential of fleet management and driver engagement.

Only this proactive approach can produce substantive and sustained safety improvements, and, at the same time, other benefits across the business operation, from reduced insurance costs to increased fuel efficiency, from reduced management attrition to increased driver retention.

Road safety initiatives highlight responsible management strategies, which are favourable to the companies. It is not merely a question of reducing figures anymore. This social focus safer roads and reflects positively on business, fuelling trust with its partners, society, and public authorities.

Action today is determinant for tomorrow. Transport's transition is essential to enable more sustainable societies. Its prominence – from the way we live, move, or consume – induces responsibility. Sustainable imperatives will intensify, and the sector must improve. It all starts with road safety.

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Project identity

Project name	i-DREAMS Safety tolerance zone calculation and interventions for driver-vehicle-environment interactions under challenging conditions
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A large white logo on a black background. The logo consists of a lowercase 'i' followed by a circle containing a stylized 'D' with a network of lines, and the word 'DREAMS' in a bold, uppercase sans-serif font.

iDREAMS