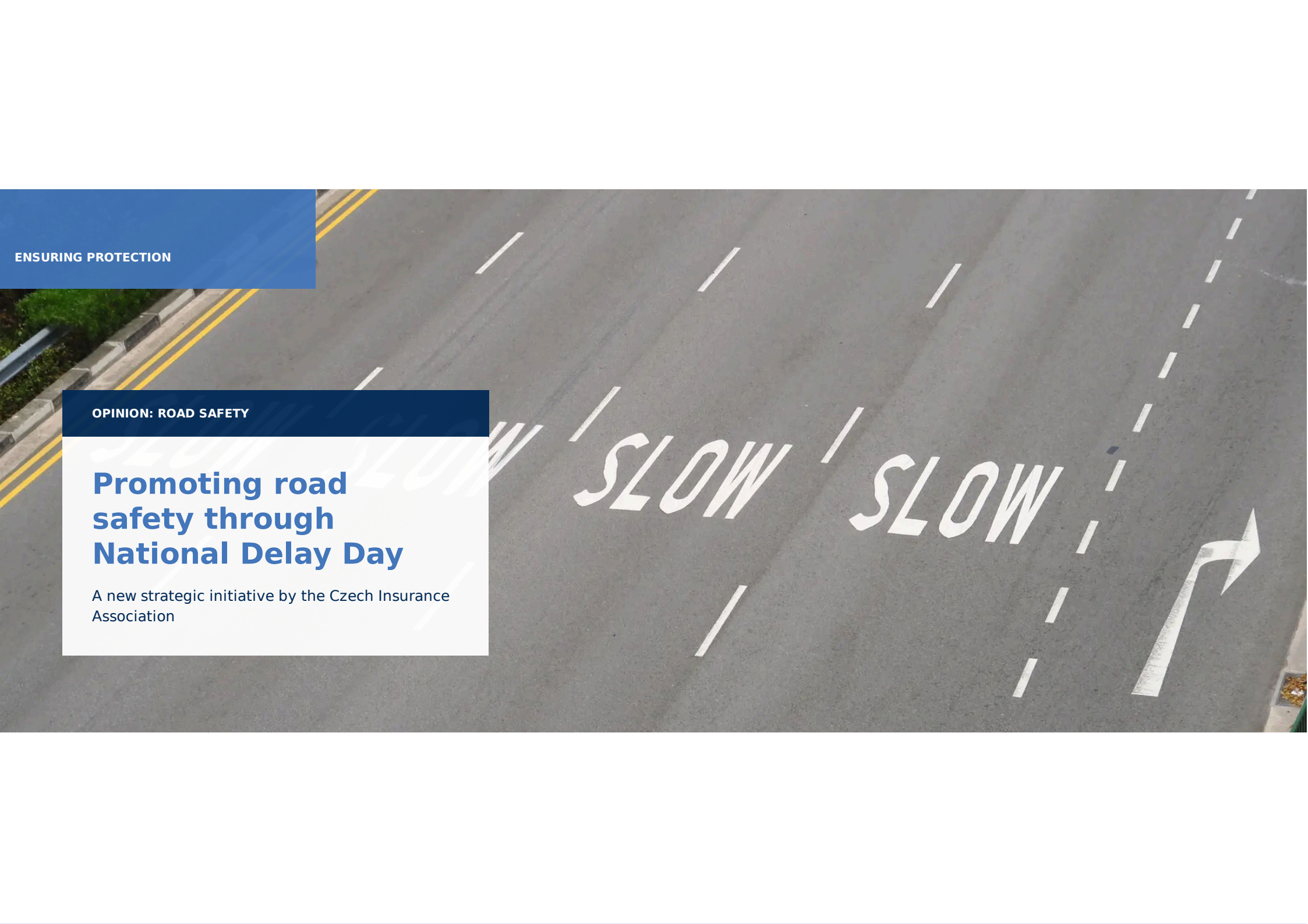




ENSURING PROTECTION

OPINION: ROAD SAFETY

## Promoting road safety through National Delay Day

A new strategic initiative by the Czech Insurance Association



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In a world where being busy and highly efficient often takes precedence over safety, the Czech Insurance Association (ČAP) orchestrated a strategic event in 2023, known as National Delay Day (NDD). By strategically delaying a number of key cultural, educational, and sports events just before the Easter holiday – a period historically marred by tragic road accidents – the NDD campaign successfully spotlighted the risks related to being in a hurry and speeding on Czech roads. The campaign is capturing nationwide attention and raising public awareness.

Speeding is a big concern in the Czech Republic with research among a representative sample (1000 people) of the Czech Republic's driving licence holders indicating that a staggering 86% of Czech drivers regularly exceed speed limits and that speeding is linked to 40% of fatal car accidents<sup>1</sup>. Furthermore, an alarming 43% of drivers confessed they tend to speed when faced with haste or time pressure<sup>2</sup>. Against the backdrop of these figures, the rationale behind NDD has been to confront drivers with the effects of speeding and to demonstrate the positive impact on road safety of not being in a hurry because there is a bit of extra time to reach key events.

The success of NDD was striking and, for the first time in years, the number of road accidents around the Easter break dropped. The success was due to several key factors.

### **Impactful messaging**

In order to meet its objective of enhancing road safety, the ADAS technology typically offers a range of features, including lane departure warnings, adaptive cruise control and automatic emergency braking. These features take over some of the driver's responsibilities and anticipate potential hazards, preventing accidents.

### **Quantifying the impact**

A critical aspect of understanding the impact of speeding is quantifying the perceived time savings associated with exceeding speed limits. Research indicates that drivers who exceed speed limits by an average of 20 km/h on a typical route may save approximately 13 minutes. However, looking at an overall travel time of two hours, this marginal time-saving pales in comparison to the potential risks and consequences posed by speeding.



Czech campaign page

**“At the core of National Delay Day 2023 was a powerful message urging the public to 'slow down'.”**



## Real impact of the campaign

The pilot edition of NDD took place in April 2023 in the Czech Republic. Over the course of one particular day before the Easter holiday, the following events were delayed: the National Cup football semi-final match, a theatre production by a popular Prague-based company, Cirk La Putyka, university classes at the Charles University, national radio and television programmes on Czech Television, and TV Nova. The campaign's impact was evident in the annual decline in the number of speeding victims, which was 180 in 2022 and 138 in 2023. Easter 2023 became the Czech Republic's least "tragic holiday" of the 21st century in terms of road traffic victims.

## Vision for the future

The ambition is to establish NDD as a recurring international event, taking place every year and ideally across the European Union. After the successful 2023 pilot, the first "official" NDD took place shortly after Easter 2024, involving even more partners and having an even greater impact. The Czech Football Association was the main partner and delayed its main event during the National Football Cup. The public Czech Television was the main media partner and participated by not only including the event in the news all over its main channels but also by delaying its most watched TV programmes. Other companies, including delivery company DPD, online grocery store Rohlík.cz, and the National Theatre participated. Universities and high schools from all over the country delayed their classes. BMW, Vodafone and the gas station chain MOL also participated. Even the Prague astronomical clock was delayed for a few minutes. The aim is to "go bigger" and raise more awareness throughout the country. The results will be a benchmark for the future editions of the initiative.

In conclusion, National Delay Day confirms road safety initiatives can be highly effective. By engaging different stakeholders and using innovative communication strategies, NDD successfully raised awareness of the risks related to speeding and encouraged individuals to prioritise safety over speed. As we reflect on the impact of this transformative event, let us heed its key message – slowing down saves lives, both on the road and beyond.

*If you are interested in becoming involved and organising a similar event in your country, please do not hesitate to contact us at [jan.matousek@cap.cz](mailto:jan.matousek@cap.cz).*

1. "Research among Czech Republic's driving license holders", Behavio, April 2021
2. Ibidem