

ROUTES/ROADS

PIARC - World Road Association

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FEATURES

**Review of the 17th World Congress
on Road Winter Service, Resilience and
Decarbonisation
Chambéry 2026 Honourable Mentions**



Update on the World Road Association's Actions

IN MEMORIAM MR. BELA SZALAI (1940-2026) A TRIBUTE FROM THE HUNGARIAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE

Mr. Bela Szalai spent his entire career in the Transport Ministry of Hungary. He served as Deputy Head of the Roads Department, later as Head, Acting Deputy State Secretary, and as Ministerial Commissioner for the construction of the M5 motorway in East-Hungary and then the reconstruction of the Mária Valéria Danube-Bridge between Slovakia and Hungary. He has outstanding achievements in the fields of road traffic engineering and traffic safety.

He has exemplary and internationally recognized merits in organizing Hungary's work within PIARC: he served Hungary and the road community as First Delegate from 1990, and then as Honorary Member of PIARC. The Hungarian National Committee was founded as a result of his persistent work and persuasiveness. He maintained excellent professional and personal relations with the presidents and leaders of PIARC, as well as with experts from other member states.

He has published numerous professional publications in various domestic and international journals. He was a founding member of the Hungarian Traffic Technicians Foundation, established in 2001.

In 1988-89, he was one of the founders of the re-established Benedictine Student Association. He was the main organizer of both of Pope St. John Paul II's visits to Hungary.

With his professional knowledge, humane attitude and charisma, he deservedly earned the respect of his colleagues and the entire public transport profession.

Hungary and the transport professional community have recognized his merits with numerous awards and distinctions. In 1991, he received the Knight's Cross of the



Hungarian Order of Merit, in 1996 the Gold Medal of the President of the Republic, in 2003 the Hungarian Heritage Award of the Hungarian Heritage and Europe Association, in 2004 the Officer's Cross of the Hungarian Order of Merit, in 2010 the Gábor Baross Award, the highest award that can be given by the Minister responsible for transport, in the same year he received the professional recognition of Traffic Manager of the Year, and in 2020 he received the Civilian Order of the Middle Cross of the Hungarian Order of Merit.

May God grant eternal rest to him!#

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