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20,400 LIVES LOST IN EU ROAD CRASHES LAST YEAR

In 2023, 20,400 people lost their lives in road crashes across the EU, marking a 1% decrease from the previous year, with 46 road deaths per million inhabitants. While the long-term trend shows a 10% reduction compared to 2019, the current pace of decline falls short of the required 4.5% annual reduction needed to achieve the EU's goal of halving road deaths by 2030.

Progress continues to be very uneven between Member States: in 2023, Czechia, Cyprus, Poland, Romania and Finland registered their lowest figures since modern records began. Poland reported a 35% drop in the number of fatalities between 2019 and 2023 while Ireland reported an increase of 31%.

However, the overall road fatality rate per capita in Poland remains above the EU average while Ireland's is below; and the overall ranking of countries' fatality rates has not changed significantly, with the safest roads in Sweden (22 deaths per million inhabitants) and Denmark (26/million), while Bulgaria (82/million) and Romania (81/million) reported the highest fatality rates in 2023.

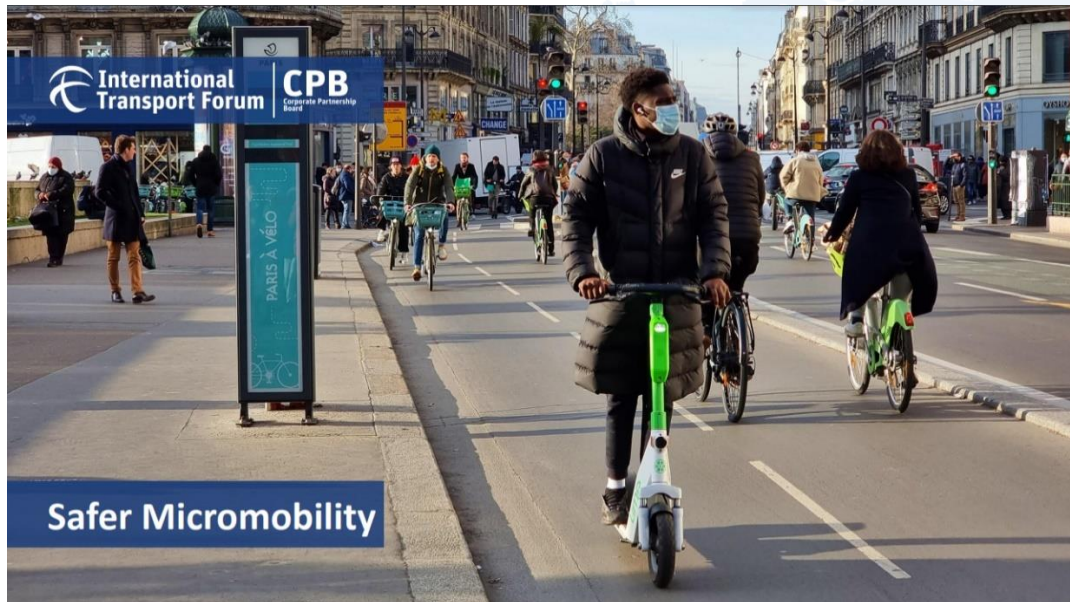
Estimates for the first semester of 2024

Preliminary figures for the first six months of 2024 indicate the number of deaths on EU roads has remained the same, compared with the same period in 2023. Some Member States, including Austria, Lithuania and Slovenia have recorded notable falls of more than 25%. Other countries have seen a significant increase to date. Monthly fluctuations however make accurately predicting the entire year difficult.

[More information](#)



SAFER MICROMOBILITY



The International Transport Forum (ITF) has recently published a new Report titled “Safer Micromobility” co-authored by George Yannis, Virginia Petraki and Philippe Crist.

Micromobility provides viable options for car-free travel and improves connectivity to public transport, but it must be safe. The uptake of micromobility, boosted by the arrival of privately owned and shared e-scooters and e-bikes, benefits people and cities, but also raises challenges for safety within busy city spaces.

Micromobility is becoming safer, but an increase in severe injuries from e-scooter crashes is cause for concern. Overall, shared e-scooter casualty risk is on the decline in Europe, with usage increasing faster than reported injuries.

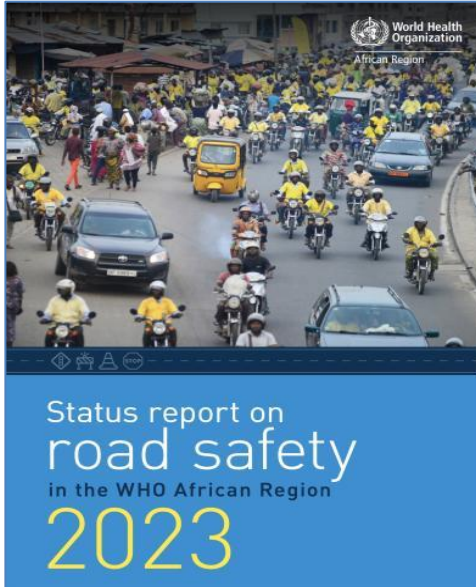
While incident data provides valuable insights into the frequency and severity of crashes, understanding micromobility safety requires an understanding of crash or injury risk. This means understanding how many crashes occur and relating this number to how much travel occurs. Outside of shared micromobility, we generally have fewer data on the overall number of bicycle, e-bike, and e-scooter trips taking place just as we see a significant under-reporting of crashes and injuries – especially non-severe injuries.

Assessing crash risk will require better data collection on trip numbers and crashes, as well as their severity for privately owned micromobility vehicles

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ROAD TRAFFIC DEATHS RISE IN AFRICA CONTRARY TO THE GLOBAL TREND



The World Health Organization (WHO) has recently published the 2023 Status Report on Road Safety for the Africa Region. According to this Report, road traffic death rates during the period 2010-2021 have increased significantly in the African region, with 17% increase in road-related fatalities, despite being home to only 15% of the world's population, and 3% of its vehicles. Conversely, global rates fell by 5% during the same period. WHO recommends concerted efforts to implement a range of interventions, in order to strengthen national road safety strategies in Africa.

According to the report, males aged between 15 and 64 years are the main victims of road traffic crashes.

Vulnerable road users such as motorcyclists, cyclists and pedestrians are worst affected, with road-related deaths of motorcyclists doubling in the past 10 year

To achieve the United Nations General Assembly target of halving the global number of deaths and injuries from road traffic crashes by 2030, WHO recommends concerted efforts to implement a range of interventions to strengthen national road safety strategies in Africa.

[More information](#)



EUROPEAN CITY LEADERS UNITE IN CALL FOR THE RIGHT TO SET SAFER SPEED LIMITS

Mayors and deputy mayors from cities across Europe have defended the right of local authorities to set appropriate speed limits in a letter published today in the Financial Times newspaper.

The letter follows central government initiatives in England and Italy that could hamper the power of cities and towns to implement road safety measures such as lower speed limits and traffic enforcement cameras. Meanwhile in Germany, more than 1000 cities are calling for the right to set local speed limits, a policy that is currently heavily restricted by national rules and only permitted on a case-by-case basis for individual roads.

A similar initiative in Austria was successful, with cities able to set their own speed limits and run enforcement operations from later this year.



Antonio Avenoso, Executive Director of the European Transport Safety Council, commented: “Lower speed limits in our cities and towns are a low-cost, no-regret move to improve safety, reduce noise, and encourage walking and cycling. There is absolutely no good reason to restrict the freedom of local authorities to take such measures.”

[More information](#)



FINLAND WINS EUROPEAN TRANSPORT SAFETY COUNCIL'S ROAD SAFETY PRIZE FOR 2024

Finland is the recipient of the 2024 European Transport Safety Council prize for outstanding progress in road safety. The country reduced road deaths by a substantial 29% over the decade



to 2023, while the average decline in the EU was just 16%.

Finland's current Traffic Safety Strategy is guided by Vision Zero, i.e. that by 2050, no one should die or be seriously injured on the road, regardless of the mode of transport.

Since 2000, Finland has implemented several important measures to improve road safety. These include lower speed limits in most urban areas, construction of pedestrian and bicycle paths, construction of 400 km of motorways, installation of automatic speed cameras on nearly 3,000 km of main roads.

Finland's National Traffic Safety Strategy 2022–2026 aims to improve the traffic skills of different road users and different age groups comprehensively. The strategy includes two indicators aimed at the road safety of children: the proportion of schools that have traffic education as part of their year plan; and the number of collisions involving a child or young person.

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NEW REPORT FROM THE EUROPEAN ROAD SAFETY OBSERVATORY: FOCUS ON HELMETS, SEATBELTS AND CHILD RESTRAINT SYSTEMS

Protective equipment such as helmets, seatbelts and child restraint systems have been shown to be very effective in protecting road users from death or serious injury. If used correctly, motorcycle helmets can reduce fatal crashes by around 40% and the chance of severe head injury by almost 70%. Similarly, bicycle helmets can reduce fatal injury to the head or brain by 71% on average. Seatbelts are shown to reduce the risk of fatal incidents by 60% for occupants in the front of a vehicle and 44% for those in the rear. For child restraint systems, research shows that children who are correctly restrained are around 60% less likely to be killed or injured compared to unrestrained children.

While compliance with legislation on drivers and passengers wearing a seatbelt is relatively high, some countries still face problems, particularly with passengers in rear seats. Compliance with rules on the wearing of motorcycle helmets is also relatively high, though again with exceptions in some countries. In contrast, bicycle helmets and child restraint systems have a high prevalence of incorrect or non-use.

Education programmes can help to promote the use of protective equipment but it is also important that legislation is enforced. The perceived chance of being checked or fined for incorrect or non-use of protective equipment is relatively low in most EU countries.

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DEATH BY DANGEROUS CYCLING SET TO BECOME OFFENCE

Causing death or serious injury by dangerous or careless cycling is set to become an offence, after the Government agreed to a change in the law. Under the change, dangerous cyclists could face up to 14 years in prison.

Mr Duncan Smith had proposed an amendment to the Criminal Justice Bill, which is currently going through Parliament. Speaking in the House of Commons, he said his proposal was not “anti-cycling”. “Quite the opposite, it’s about making sure this takes place in a safe and reasonable manner,” he said.

Mr Duncan Smith raised the case of Matthew Briggs, whose wife died from head injuries following a collision with a cyclist in London in 2016. Sir Iain told MPs that Mr Briggs' attempt to



get a cyclist prosecuted "involved a legal process that was so convoluted and difficult" even the presiding judge raised concerns and said the laws "needed to be addressed".

He said it would "achieve equal accountability" adding: "Just as drivers are held accountable for dangerous driving that results in death, cyclists I think should face similar consequences for

reckless behaviour that leads to fatalities."

Backing the change, transport secretary, Mark Harper, said: "Most cyclists, like most drivers, are responsible and considerate. "But it's only right that the tiny minority who recklessly disregard others face the full weight of the law for doing so."

[More information](#)



THREE OUT OF FOUR DRIVERS 'CANNOT IDENTIFY BASIC ROAD SIGNS'



Millions of drivers cannot identify basic road signs, and young people are the worst culprits, a survey has found.

According to the survey, three quarters of drivers do not know the meanings of all the road signs in the Highway Code, and particularly struggle with signs involving bridges, loading zones and no motor vehicles.

Young people are the worst at identifying road signs, with only 14 per cent of under 24s fully confident in naming all signs, despite having taken their test in recent years.

Three quarters of the younger age group were unable to correctly identify the sign which warns a hump bridge is ahead, compared to 95 per cent of over 24s, the Accident Advice Helpline survey found. Most adults were not aware that there are three different types of road signs as indicated by different shapes: giving orders (in a circle); warnings (a triangle) and informing (a rectangle).

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SOUTH KOREA'S INNOVATIVE TRAFFIC CULTURE INDEX SPOTLIGHTED AT OECD TRANSPORT MINISTERS' GATHERING

In terms of traffic safety, South Korea has seen a remarkable improvement over the past decade across various metrics. According to the International Transport Forum, the country has seen a 49.2 percent decrease in road deaths between 2012 and 2022. The number of passenger car occupants killed in road crashes dropped by 63.8 percent, while that of pedestrians killed in traffic accidents fell by 54 percent.

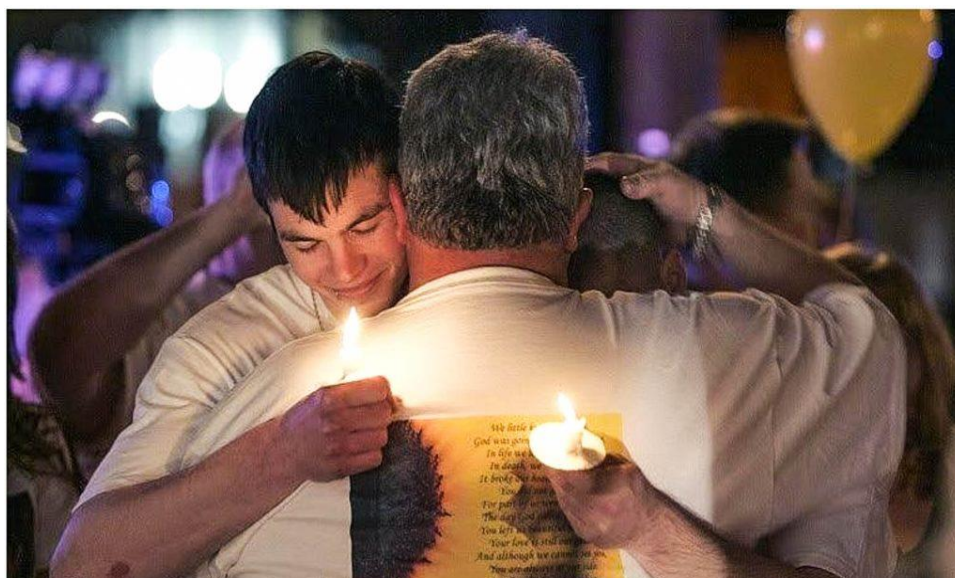
Industry experts attribute such improvements to an overall enhancement of public awareness and attitudes involving traffic safety, led by various campaigns and traffic-related programs by national and local traffic authorities throughout the years.

For South Korea, a major tool used in drastically advancing the country's overall traffic safety culture has been the Traffic Culture Index (TCI), which was spotlighted at the 2024 ITF Summit in Leipzig, Germany.

[More information](#)



WHAT IS WORLD DAY OF REMEMBRANCE FOR ROAD TRAFFIC VICTIMS?



The World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims is a global event held every third Sunday of November to honour those who have lost their lives or been impacted by roadway crashes. This year on November 17, communities across the globe will gather together to

demand actions towards improving roadway safety and to uplift proven strategies, including redesigning dangerous roads, reducing speed limits, and improving vehicle design.

This day also serves as a crucial opportunity for governments and those working in road safety to demonstrate the scale and impact of road-related deaths and injuries and advocate for immediate and concerted action to end this public health crisis.

[More information](#)



SAFER ROADS PLEDGE CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED



The International Road Assessment Programme (iRAP), the International Road Federation (IRF) and the FIA Foundation have launched a SaferRoadsPledge campaign calling on organisations involved in designing and financing roads to pledge their commitment to safer roads ahead of the 4th Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety. The Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety recommends using Road Safety Audits and Star Ratings to lift the safety of roads and designs. Road designers and financing institutions from the government and private sector are called on to commit their support for safer roads that enable more sustainable mobility.

[More information](#)