



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

PRESS RELEASE

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Road safety: EU reports lowest ever number of road deaths and takes first step towards an injuries strategy

Road fatalities across the EU have decreased by 9% in 2012. According to new figures published by the European Commission today, 2012 saw the lowest number of people killed in road traffic in EU countries since the first data were collected.

Vice-President Siim Kallas, Commissioner for transport, said, *"2012 was a landmark year for European road safety, with the lowest ever number of road deaths recorded. A 9% decrease means that 3,000 lives were saved last year. It is hugely encouraging to see these kinds of results. Still 75 people die on Europe's roads every day, so there is no room for complacency. We have ambitious goals to cut EU road deaths in half by 2020 and we need to keep up this momentum to get there."*

"Road deaths are only the tip of the iceberg. For every death on Europe's roads there are 10 serious injuries such as damage to the brain or spinal cord. We need a strategy to bring down the number of serious road injuries everywhere in the EU."

Country by country statistics (see table below) show that the number of road deaths still varies greatly across the EU. The countries with the lowest number of road fatalities remain the UK, Sweden, the Netherlands and Denmark, reporting around 30 deaths per million inhabitants.

Compared to the disappointing figures of 2011, when progress in cutting road deaths fell to 2%, the reduction of 9% in 2012 mean that Member States are back on track towards the objective of halving road deaths between 2010 and 2020. In order to reach this goal, an average reduction of around 7% is needed.

The most worrying feature of the road safety statistics for 2011 was a high *increase* in the number of killed vulnerable users such as pedestrians, motorcyclists and elderly people – in spite of an overall reduction of road fatalities. Based on the provisional data for 2012, the number of vulnerable user fatalities has decreased substantially in 2012.

EU Road safety action programme 2011–2020

The European Road Safety Action Programme 2011-2020 (See [MEMO/10/343](#)) sets out challenging plans to reduce the number of road deaths on Europe's roads by half in the next 10 years. It contains ambitious proposals focussing on making improvements to vehicles, infrastructure and road users' behaviour. For example, key recent initiatives include:

A new EU Driving Licence, since January 2013, with tighter rules for the access of young people to powerful motorbikes;

National enforcement plans- submitted by Member States providing a rich source of best practices;

Cross border enforcement rules to crackdown on traffic offences committed abroad (drink driving, speeding etc) in force since November 2012;

Work towards the development of an injuries strategy (see below).

Towards an Injuries strategy: the current situation

It is estimated that for every death on Europe's roads there are 10 serious injuries and 40 more slightly injured.

A key factor contributing to success in tackling road fatalities has been the results-based approach adopted in two consecutive ten-year EU road safety strategies. Much could be gained by applying a similar focus to serious but non-fatal road injuries. The problem is that current figures on serious injuries are general and they are estimates. There are problems with misreporting and underreporting of serious injuries and the figures are not comparable across the EU.

For these reasons, the European Commission has today published a document on *serious road traffic injuries* outlining the next steps towards a comprehensive EU strategy on serious road injuries, notably: a common definition of serious road traffic injury (applicable from 2013); a way forward for Member States to improve data collection on serious road accidents, (first reporting using comparable EU wide data collection methods and using new definition, 2014); the principle of adopting an EU-level target for the reduction of serious road traffic injuries (for example for the period 2015-2020).

A key step forwards was already taken in 2012 with the agreement on an EU wide system for the definition of serious road injuries. The European Commission has worked extensively with Member States in the High Level Road Safety Group to agree on the use of the MAIS trauma scale (Maximum Abbreviated Injury Score), for the definition of serious road traffic injuries. For more information on the injuries strategy, see [MEMO/13/232](#)

5 key facts: What do we already know about serious injuries?

Current estimates indicate:

Every year, about 250 000 people are seriously injured in road accidents in the EU – compared to the 28 000 road fatalities in 2012.

While the number of road deaths decreased by 43% during the last decade, the number of seriously injured people decreased by only 36%.

The most common serious road injuries are head and brain injuries, followed by injuries to the legs and spine.

Vulnerable road users, for example pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists or users in certain age groups – notably the elderly – are especially affected by serious road injuries. Serious road traffic injuries more often occur in urban areas than on rural roads.

Commission Staff Working Document "First milestones towards an injury strategy" see http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/topics/serious_injuries/index_en.htm

Country by country statistics on road deaths for 2012¹

Member State	Fatalities per million inhabitants				Evolution of fatalities		
	1965	2010	2011	2012	Average annual decrease 2000-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
Belgique/België	147	77	78	73	-6%	2%	-12%
България (Bulgaria)	91	103	89	82	-3%	-15%	-8%
Česká republika	150	76	74	71	-5%	-4%	-4%
Danmark	212	46	40	32	-6%	-14%	-18%
Deutschland	234	45	49	44	-7%	10%	-10%
Eesti	178	58	75	65	-10%	29%	-14%
Éire/Ireland	124	47	41	36	-7%	-12%	-12%
Ελλάδα (Elláda)	89	111	101	92	-4%	-9%	-10%
España	114	54	45	41	-9%	-17%	-9%
France	249	62	61	56	-8%	-1%	-8%
Italia	186	68	64	62	-6%	-6%	-2%
Κύπρος (Kypros)/Kibris	162	73	85	59	-5%	18%	-28%
Latvija	290	97	86	86	-10%	-18%	-2%
Lietuva	250	90	97	100	-9%	-1%	2%
Luxembourg	250	64	64	65	-8%	3%	3%
Magyarország	86	74	64	60	-6%	-14%	-5%
Malta	36	36	51	26	-1%	40%	-48%
Nederland	202	32	33	32	-7%	2%	-1%
Österreich	252	66	62	64	-6%	-5%	4%
Polska	79	102	109	93	-4%	7%	-15%
Portugal	117	79	84	71	-6%	-7%	-16%

¹ The 2012 figures are based on provisional data; there might be minor changes in the final data for individual countries. The 1965 figures are based on data from the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). For the following countries, the first data available are: Slovakia, Czech Republic and Slovenia (1970), Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania (1980).

România	98	111	94	96	0%	-15%	1%
Slovenija	327	67	69	59	-7%	2%	-13%
Slovensko	128	68	60	55	-5%	-13%	-9%
Suomi/Finland	230	51	54	48	-5%	7%	-11%
Sverige	170	28	34	31	-8%	20%	-7%
United Kingdom	146	31	31	28	-7%	3%	-12%
EU	171	62	60	55	-6%	-2%	-9%

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