



ROAD SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT 2019

COLOMBIA

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In Colombia, 6 850 persons lost their lives in road crashes in 2018, according to data from the National Road Safety Agency. This represents a 2% increase on 2017. The number of road deaths has increased almost every year since 1998. It reached a peak in 2016 with 7 159 reported road deaths. Users of powered two-wheelers are the main victims of road crashes, and represent half of all persons killed in road traffic. Elderly people have the highest mortality rate and are particularly vulnerable as pedestrians. The current road safety strategy covers the period 2011-21 and includes the target to reduce road deaths by 26% by 2021. A new road safety strategy is under development and will be published in 2020.

Trends

Colombia registered an **increase in the number of road deaths in 2018**. According to latest available data, 6 850 persons lost their lives in traffic crashes in Colombia in 2018, representing a 2% increase on 2017. In 2017, 6 718 road deaths were reported, a 6.2% decrease on 2016.

Between 2010 and 2018 the **longer-term trend for road deaths** has been upward. The number of annual road fatalities increased by nearly 30%. A peak was reached in 2016 with 7 159 road deaths.

The number of **traffic deaths per 100 000 inhabitants** in Colombia has increased by 19.8% between 2010 and 2017. In 2017, 13.6 traffic deaths per 100 000 inhabitants were recorded, compared to 11.4 in 2010.

Colombia recorded 4.7 **road fatalities per 10 000 registered vehicles** in 2017. This represents a decrease of nearly 30% compared to 2010. This significant decrease occurred during the same period that the number of road deaths increased. This is explained by a very strong rise of motorisation, in particular a strong increase in the number of motorcycles in the fleet. Between 2010 and 2017, the number of powered two-wheelers has more than doubled from 3.7 million to 8 million units.

Country Profile

Population in 2018: 49.8 million

GDP per capita in 2017: USD 6 600

Cost of road crashes: 0.2% of GDP (2016)

Road network: 206 374 km

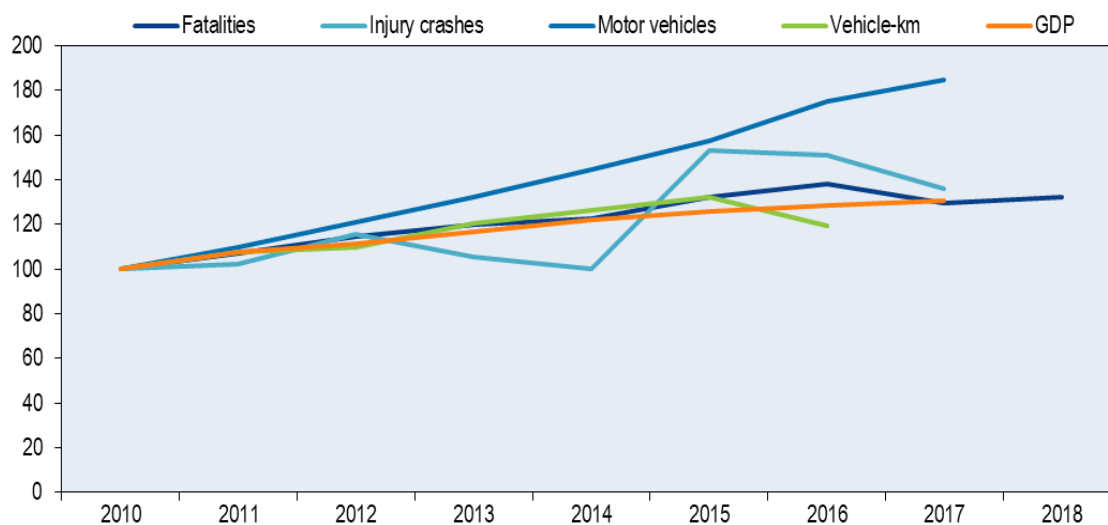
Registered motor vehicles in 2017: 14.2 million (cars 39%, goods vehicles 2%, motorcycles 56%, buses 3%)

General speed limits: 60 km/h on urban roads, 80 km/h on rural roads, 120 km/h on motorways

Limits on Blood Alcohol Content: 0.2 g/l

¹ The data in this report, unless otherwise noted, were provided by the National Road Safety Agency (ANSV) and have not been validated by IRTAD.

Figure 1. Road safety, vehicle stock, traffic and GDP trends
Index 2010 = 100



The picture for **fatalities by road user groups** is characterised by an overwhelming share of vulnerable road users among road deaths. They account for more than 80% of the total. In 2017, users of powered two-wheelers represented half of road deaths. They were followed by pedestrians (27%). Car occupants represented a relatively small share of total deaths (8%). Cyclists accounted for 6% of road deaths.

The reduction of 6.2% in the number of road deaths in 2017 compared to 2016 benefitted all road users. The largest decrease in 2017 was registered among motorised two-wheelers and car occupants with 10% fewer deaths compared to 2016. The number of pedestrians and cyclists killed decreased respectively by 3.6% and 1.1%.

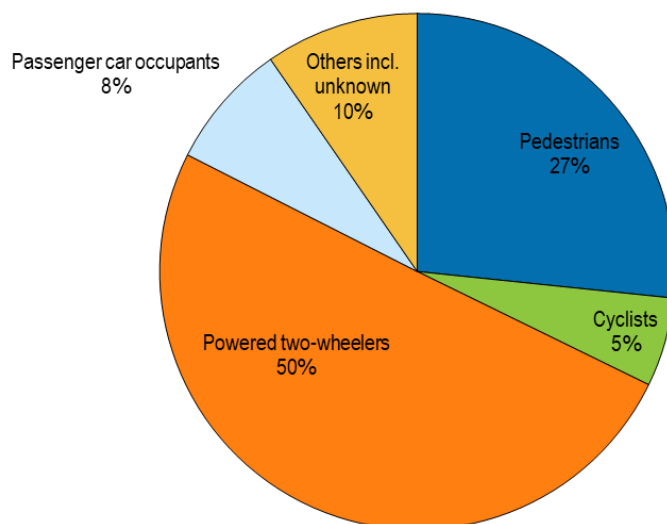
According to 2018 provisional data, the number of pedestrians killed further decreased by 10.5% compared with 2017, and the number of motorcyclists killed by 3.4%. However, both categories continue to be overrepresented in road deaths. In 2018, motorcyclists and pedestrians respectively accounted for 48.8% and 23.8% of all road fatalities.

The long-term trend shows a massive increase in the number of motorcyclists killed. This has continued to increase year after year from 2 092 deaths in 2010 to 3 375 deaths in 2016, representing an increase of 80% in just six years. During the same period the number of motorised two-wheelers in traffic more than doubled. In 2017, the number of fatalities among users of motorised two-wheelers finally decreased by 10%, while the number of motorcycles in traffic continues to grow strongly (+6.6% in 2017 compared to 2016). Based on provisional data this trend seems to be confirmed in 2018.

Between 2010 and 2017, the number of pedestrians killed increased by 10.1% from 1 626 to 1 790, and the number of cyclists by 14.7% from 327 to 375. Car occupants are the only road users whose number of road deaths decreased. This can be partly

explained by an increase in the use of seatbelts and more enforcement in the main cities through cameras.

Figure 2. Road fatalities by road user group in percentage of total, 2017



Road deaths by age group show an increase in the number of road deaths for all groups except children. Between 2010 and 2017, the number of road deaths increased by 72% for the 15-17 age group from 173 deaths to 298 deaths, by 54% for the 75+, by 44% for the 18-24, by 41% for the 65-74 and by 22% for the 25-64. During the same period the number of children aged 14 and below killed in traffic decreased by 4%.

In 2017, while the overall number of deaths decreased by 6.2%, the number of deaths increased for the 75+. It decreased for all other age groups.

With regard to the mortality rate, people aged 65+ are the most at risk in road traffic with a mortality rate of 29.1 road deaths per 100 000, more than twice the rate of the total population, which is a rate of 13.6. People aged 65+ are particularly vulnerable as pedestrians. In 2017, they represented 42% of all pedestrians killed in traffic.

The second age group the most at risk is 21-24 with a mortality rate of 22.2 road deaths per 100 000 inhabitants. This age group is particularly vulnerable as motorcyclists, which accounts for 75% of the fatalities for this age group. The 18-20 group have a mortality rate of 17.9 and are also mainly affected in motorcycle crashes. The adult population aged 25 to 64 have a mortality rate of 15.9. Among people killed in this age group, 56% are motorcyclists, 20% are pedestrians and 9% are car occupants.

Figure 3. Road fatality rates by age group, 2000-17
Deaths per 100 000 inhabitants in a given age group

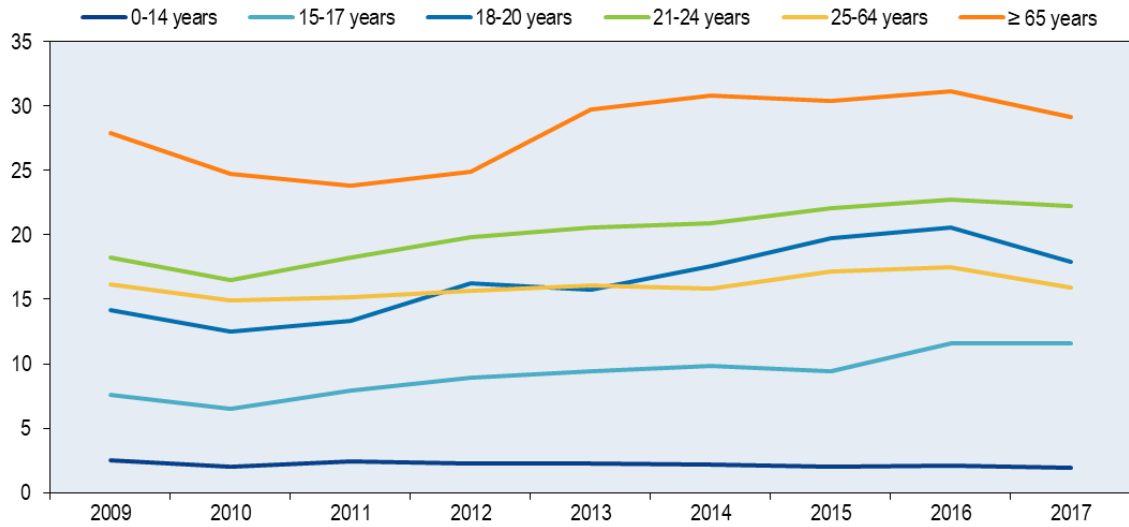
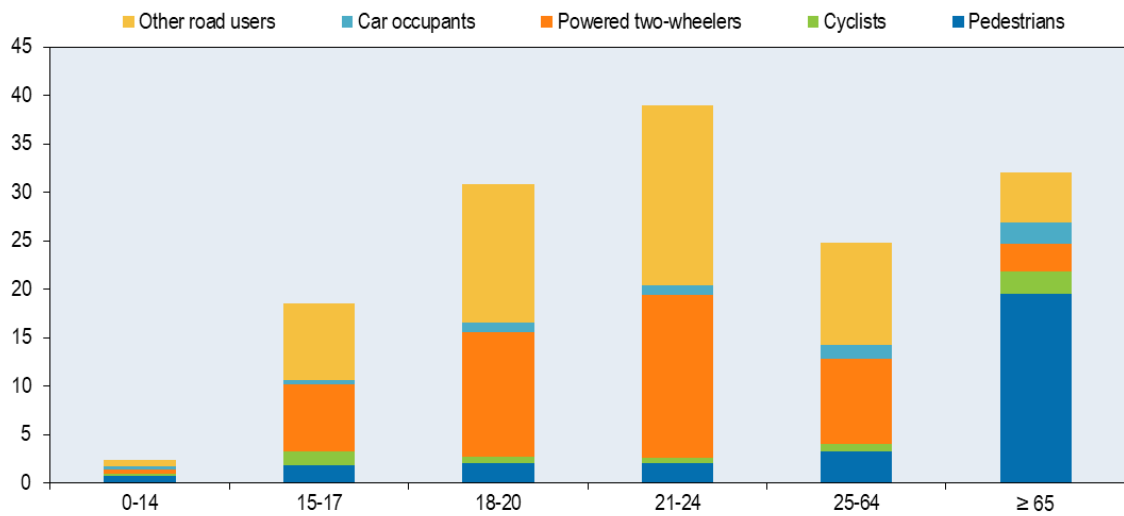
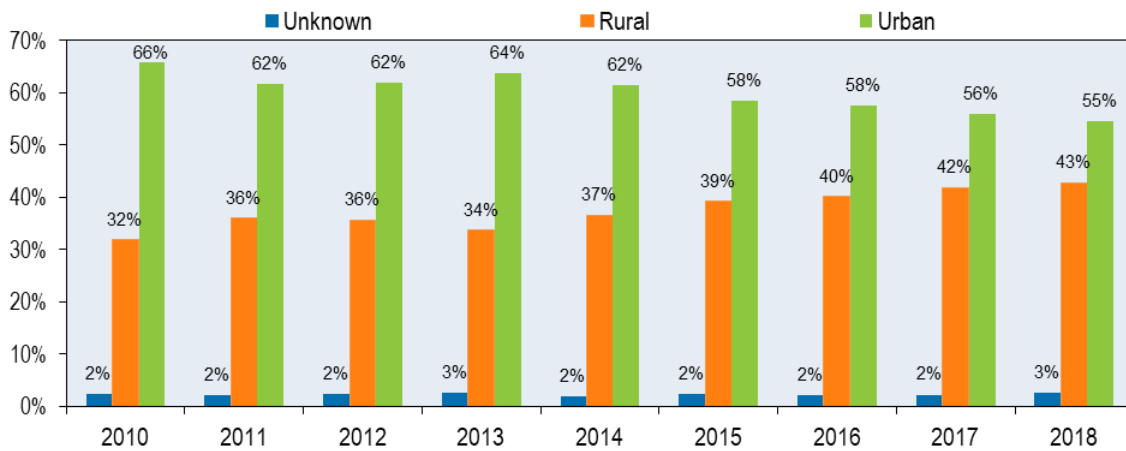
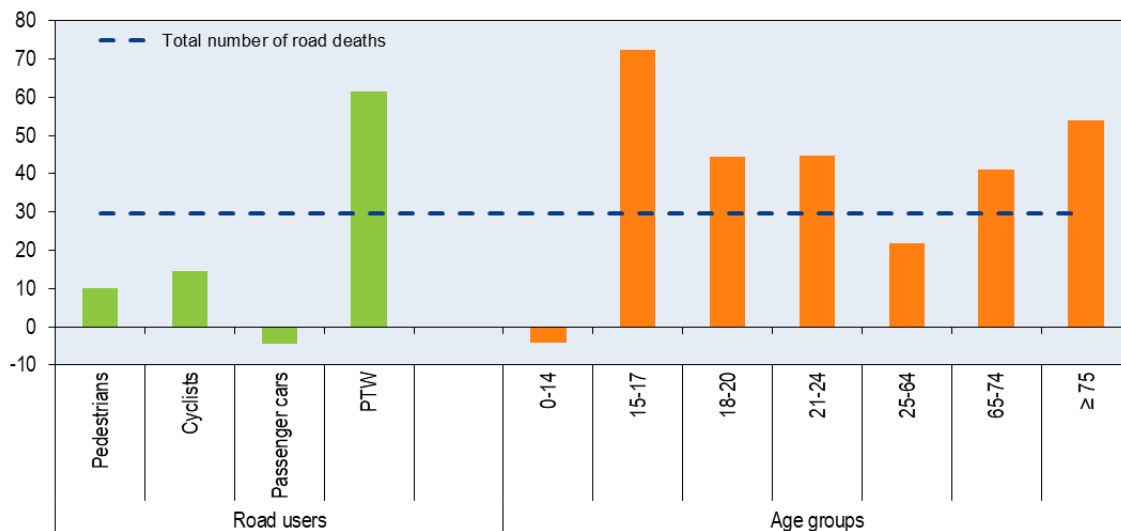


Figure 4. Road fatality rate by age and road user group, 2017
Fatalities per 100 000 inhabitants



In Colombia the road network is divided into two main categories: urban roads and rural roads. Motorways are included in the rural road category. Analysis of **fatalities by road type** shows that the majority of road deaths (54% in 2018) occur on urban roads.

Figure 5. Road fatalities by road type, 2010-18**Figure 6. Evolution of road deaths by user category, age group and road type, 2010-17**

Economic costs of road crashes

Traffic crashes represent a significant cost for Colombia, estimated in 2016 at about USD 767 million, or 0.2% of GDP, according to a study by the insurance sector. Colombia is currently working on an updated estimate of the costs of road crashes.

Behaviour

The behaviour of road users is an important determinant of a country's road safety performance. **Inappropriate speed** in particular is one of the main causes of road crashes. In Colombia, inappropriate speed was reported as a contributing factor in 8.3%

of all road fatalities in 2018. However it should be noted that for 78% of road fatalities, the cause of the crash is not identified.

Discussions are underway to reduce the speed limit in urban areas from 60 km/h to 50 km/h. Some cities are considering reducing the speed limit even before a decision is taken at national level. In September 2019, Bogotá D.C. was the only city which had reduced speed limit to 50 km/h.

The table below summarises the main speed limits in Colombia.

Table 1. Passenger car speed limits by road type, 2019

| | General speed limit | Comments |
|-------------------------|---------------------|--|
| Urban roads | 60 km/h | 30km/h in residential and school areas |
| Rural roads | 80 km/h | |
| Motorways or equivalent | 80 km/h | Limit of 100km/h when road condition is adequate |

Driving under the influence of alcohol is another major cause of road crashes in Colombia, as in most IRTAD countries. According to police reports, 129 persons were killed in an alcohol-related crash, representing 2% of all road deaths in 2018. This figure is probably largely underreported. In a recent report of the IRTAD Group, it was found that on average, in IRTAD countries, 21.6% of road deaths were alcohol related (ITF, 2018).

The general maximum authorised blood alcohol content (BAC) in Colombia is 0.2 g/l for all drivers.

The most recent measure to combat impaired driving was the introduction of a new Law in 2013. The main purpose of this law was to increase the fine for drinking and driving. In practical terms, before 2013, the maximum amount of the fine was approximately USD 740. Today, the fine can be as high as USD 11 800.

Drugs and driving is a worrying concern in Colombia. However, there is not yet data available on the prevalence of drugs in road crashes.

An increasing problem for traffic safety in Colombia is **distraction**, for instance through mobile phone use while driving or crossing a street. However, there is no official statistics on the prevalence of distraction in crashes.

It is forbidden to drive with a hand-held mobile phone, but the use of hands-free mobile phones is tolerated.

There is no yet data available on the prevalence of **sleepiness and fatigue** as a causal factor in crashes. But it is recognised as an important issue.

Wearing a seat-belt has been compulsory in Colombia since 2002 in both front and rear seats. Regarding rear seats, the law stipulates that the use of seat-belt is only mandatory for vehicles manufactured after 2004. The wearing rate in rear seats is very low, estimated at 2% in 2016. Children under 10 years of age must be seated in the back and properly restrained, taking into account their weight and height.

Table 2. Seatbelt and helmet wearing rates
Percentages

| | 2012 | 2016 |
|--------------------------|-----------|------|
| Front seats | | |
| Driver | 60 | 75 |
| Passenger | 41 | 64 |
| Rear seats | | |
| General | .. | 2 |
| Helmet | | |
| Riders of motorcycle | 92 (2013) | 96 |
| Passengers of motorcycle | 79 (2013) | 80 |

For motorcyclists, **helmet wearing** is the most effective passive safety habit. In Colombia, helmets have been compulsory on all powered two-wheelers since 2004.

Bicycle helmets have been compulsory for children and adults since 2004. However, it is not enforced.

Road safety management and strategies

There are several **factors of influence on Colombia's road safety performance** as captured by the above indicators.

The number of road deaths has been recorded systematically since 1998. Since then, the number of road deaths has increased almost every year. It reached a peak in 2016 with 7 159 reported road deaths, then decreased in 2017 and increased again in 2018.

One of the main challenges facing Colombia is the explosion of the motor vehicle fleet, which concerns the passenger car fleet and even more so the motorcycle fleet. Between 2010 and 2017, the number of motorcycles has more than doubled and the number of cars has increased by 58%. In urban areas, this is partly due to the lack of adequate and accessible public transport systems, which tend to encourage the use of private motorcycles, which are considered cheaper and faster. This raises huge challenges in terms of traffic management, infrastructure maintenance and road safety.

The first road safety national plan was adopted in 2012 and covered the period 2011-16. A second version of the plan was adopted in 2013 and covers the period 2011-21.

Key road safety measures include:

- 1993: Creation of the “Fondo de Prevención Vial” or Road Prevention Fund, the first governmental body dedicated to road safety.
- 1993: creation of the Seguro Obligatorio de Accidentes de Transito (SOAT) or Mandatory Traffic Accident Insurance, the main source of funding for road safety;
- 2002: adoption of the National Transit Code (769 Law of 2002).
- 2012: adoption of the first national road safety plan, 2011-16 (PNSV).
- 2013: adoption of the second version of the national road safety plan 2011-21.
- 2013: creation of the National Road Safety Agency (ANSV); which replaced the Road Prevention Fund.
- 2013: adoption of the Drink Driving Law 1696.

Responsibility for the organisation of road safety in Colombia lies with the National Road Safety Agency (ANSV). The agency was officially created in 2013, but it became operational only in December 2016 due to the difficulty of providing the administrative, legal and fiscal procedures required for the full operation of the Agency.

The Agency is attached to the Ministry of Transport, but is financially autonomous. Its main mission is to prevent and reduce traffic crashes (1702 Law of 2013, Article 2). The Agency co-ordinates public and private organisations committed to road safety and implements the road safety action plan of the government.

Colombia’s **current national road safety strategy** is laid down in the Road Safety Strategy 2011-21. It is based on five strategic pillars:

- road safety management
- road user behaviour
- post-crash care
- road infrastructure
- vehicles.

The strategy is based on a main **target to reduce by 26%** the number of road deaths between 2011 and 2021. It also includes a number of intermediate road safety indicators, such as:

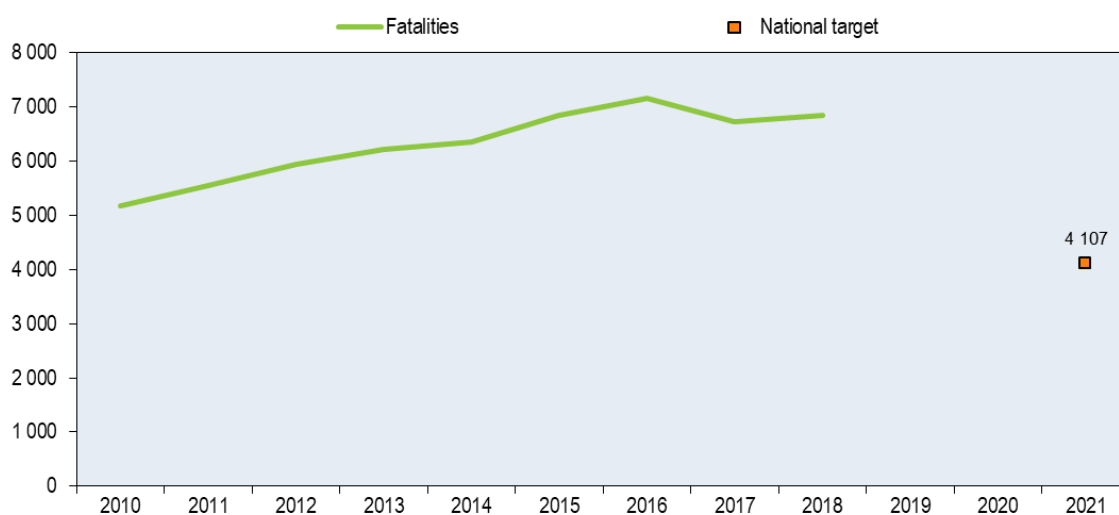
- A reduction by 18% in the number of pedestrians killed.
- A reduction by 27% in the number of motorcyclists killed.

- The elimination of the number of alcohol related fatal crashes.

It is unlikely that any of these targets will be met; but it is hoped that the encouraging results in 2017 will continue and that efforts developed in recent years will be fruitful.

The government of Colombia is working on the next road safety strategy, which will cover the period 2022-2030 and it will be focused on the Safe System Approach.

Figure 7. Trends in road fatalities towards national target



Measures

Several measures to improve road safety management have recently been put into place.

Road safety management

- Local committees and territorial councils for road safety have been established through the National Road Safety Agency, in order to implement the concept of shared responsibility and involve the local authorities.

Speed management and infrastructure

- Since 2018, the National Road Safety Agency has been working on Pequeñas Grandes Obras (PGO) (*Small Great Works*), a programme to make improvements to local infrastructure. The main objectives are to implement efficient interventions at critical points to reduce the number of crashes and to calm traffic down.

Road users

- A wide range of communications campaigns has been conducted with a particular focus on drinking and driving, speeding and the use of helmets.

- A national standard for motorcycle helmets was introduced to improve the quality of the helmet.

Vehicles

- A regulation on advertisement for vehicle sales was introduced to include icons concerning the safety features of the vehicles.

Definition, methodology, data collection

- Road fatality: a person who dies following injuries caused by a road crash.

In Colombia, the national statistics regarding road crashes are published by the National Road Safety Agency through its National Road Safety Observatory.

The statistics from the Agency come from three administrative records:

- the violent death registry
- the injured person registry
- the traffic crash registry.

The first two registries are administered by the National Institute of Legal Medicine and Forensic Sciences and the third is administered separately by the Ministry of Transport.

The information contained in the violent death registry and the injured person registry is collected by the medical forensic personnel. Information in the traffic crash registry is collected by the national and local traffic police throughout the country. All these data are sent to the National Road Safety Observatory for processing, analysis and publication.

Resources

Websites

National Road Safety Agency: <https://ansv.gov.co/>

National Road Safety observatory: <https://ansv.gov.co/observatorio/?op=Home>

Ministry of Transport: <https://www.mintransporte.gov.co/>

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ITF (2018), *Alcohol related casualties in official crash statistics*, <https://www.itf-oecd.org/alcohol-related-road-casualties-official-crash-statistics>

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| | 2010 | 2016 | 2017 | 2017 % change | |
|--|--------|---------|---------|---------------|--------|
| | | | | 2016 | 2010 |
| Reported safety data | | | | | |
| Fatalities | 5 177 | 7 159 | 6 718 | -6.2% | 29.8% |
| Injury crashes | 78 066 | 117 816 | 106 308 | -9.8% | 36.2% |
| Deaths per 100,000 population | 11.4 | 14.7 | 13.6 | -7.2% | 19.8% |
| Deaths per 10,000 registered vehicles | 6.7 | 5.3 | 4.7 | -11.0% | -29.8% |
| Deaths per billion vehicle kilometres | 287.8 | 333.2 | .. | .. | .. |
| Fatalities by road user | | | | | |
| Pedestrians | 1 626 | 1 857 | 1 790 | -3.6% | 10.1% |
| Cyclists | 327 | 379 | 375 | -1.1% | 14.7% |
| Motorcyclists | 2 092 | 3 758 | 3 375 | -10.2% | 61.3% |
| Passenger car occupants | 554 | 591 | 530 | -10.3% | -4.3% |
| Other road users | 578 | 574 | 648 | 12.9% | 12.1% |
| Fatalities by age group | | | | | |
| 0-14 years | 257 | 264 | 246 | -6.8% | -4.3% |
| 15-17 years | 173 | 299 | 298 | -0.3% | 72.3% |
| 18-20 years | 322 | 535 | 465 | -13.1% | 44.4% |
| 21-24 years | 528 | 781 | 764 | -2.2% | 44.7% |
| 25-64 years | 3 126 | 4 115 | 3 816 | -7.3% | 22.1% |
| 65-74 years | 376 | 611 | 530 | -13.3% | 41.0% |
| ≥ 75 years | 388 | 554 | 597 | 7.8% | 53.9% |
| Traffic data | | | | | |
| Registered vehicles (thousands) | 7 694 | 13 478 | 14 212 | 5.4% | 84.7% |
| Vehicle kilometres (millions) | 17 987 | 21 485 | .. | .. | .. |
| Registered vehicles per 1,000 population | 169.1 | 276.5 | 288.3 | 4.3% | 70.5% |