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Morocco recorded 3 005 road fatalities in 2020, representing a 17% decrease compared to 2019. This drop is mainly due to the impact of the restrictions on mobility due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Compared to the average in 2017-19, the fatalities decreased by 35% in March 2020, 62% in April, 43% in May and 40% in June. Vulnerable road users account for two-thirds of all road deaths. The increase in the number of motorcyclists killed is a growing concern. The elderly population is the most at risk in traffic and has a mortality rate twice as high as the average population. In 2018, the government of Morocco announced the creation of the National Road Safety Agency (NARSA), which became operational in January 2020. The current road safety strategy covers the period 2017-26. Its main target is to reduce the number of road deaths by 50% between 2015 and 2026. Note: The data in this report were provided by NARSA and, unless stated otherwise, have not been validated by IRTAD. Some data could be underreported.

Road safety management and strategy

The number of police-reported road fatalities peaked in 2011, with 4 222 people killed. There was a continuous decrease in road fatalities from 2012 to 2014, followed by an increase in 2015 and 2016. Encouraging results were achieved in 2017, 2018 and 2019.

Morocco has experienced substantial growth in its vehicle fleet, with an estimated increase from 2 million vehicles in 2004 to 4.7 million in 2020. Over the same period, the traffic volume, measured as vehicle-kilometres travelled, grew by more than 107%.

The first national road safety strategy was implemented between 2004 and 2013 and led to some progress, but this was not homogeneous over the entire period. During 2006-08, there was an increase in fatalities, with growth rates comparable to those of the pre-strategy period. In addition, a significant increase was recorded in 2011 (12% more road fatalities compared to 2010). However, a decrease in road fatalities was recorded in 2005, 2010 and 2012-13. The drop in 2005 was explained by the implementation of a memorandum from the minister of justice ordering the withdrawal of driving licences for traffic violations. The

Morocco: Quick facts

Population: 35.9 million

GDP per capita: USD 3 139

Registered motor vehicles: 4.7 million (without mopeds)

- cars: 68%
- goods vehicles: 24%
- motorcycles: 6%

Speed limits:

- urban roads: 60 km/h
- rural roads: 100 km/h
- motorways: 120 km/h

Limits on Blood Alcohol Content: 0.2 g/l

Road fatalities: 3 005

- pedestrians: 24%
- cyclists: 6%
- car occupants: 26%
- moped riders and motorcyclists: 36%
- other: 7%

Road fatalities per 100 000 population: 8.4

Road fatalities per 10 000 vehicles: 6.4

Cost of road crashes: 2% of GDP (2019)

All data 2020 unless otherwise stated.

cancellation of this memorandum during the first half of 2006 led to an increase in road crashes. The decline in 2010 was explained by the launch of the new highway code. However, lack of enforcement led to the rise in road fatalities recorded in 2011.

From 2006 until 2019, the responsibility for road safety in Morocco was delegated to the Directorate of Road Transport and Road Safety in the Ministry of Transport, Infrastructure, Logistics and Water. In 2006, several committees dedicated to road safety were created:

- The Interministerial Committee for Road Safety, chaired by the head of government, is responsible for the validation of national road strategies and the co-ordination, monitoring, and evaluation of the implementation of action plans.
- The Permanent Committee for Road Safety, chaired by the minister of transport, infrastructure and logistics, acts as the technical secretariat for the Interministerial Committee.
- Regional committees for road safety.

In February 2018, the government adopted a law to create a national road safety agency. The agency became operational in January 2020 and is in charge of implementing and managing all road safety actions. The agency is an independent public body, administered by a board of directors and operated by a director. The head of government chairs the agency.

The current road safety strategy covers the period 2017-26 and is based on five pillars: pedestrians, motorcycles, single vehicle crashes, children and professional transport. It includes the following targets: reducing the number of deaths to less than 2 800 by 2021 (a decrease of 20% from 2015 to 2021) and reducing the number of deaths to less than 1 900 fatalities by 2026 (a reduction of 50% from 2015 to 2026).

Latest road safety measures

The year 2020 was marked by the establishment of the National Road Safety Agency in charge of the co-ordination, implementation and management of all actions related to road safety. These included piloting the national road safety strategy, issuing motorcycle and motor vehicle registration cards, driving licence examination, demerit point system management, technical inspections and inspections of all motor vehicles, issuing authorisations for driving schools and their instructors, communication campaigns and acquiring enforcement equipment.

In 2020, a set of road safety measures were implemented, including, in particular, the following:

- 280 mobile radars were acquired for speed enforcement.

- Communication campaigns were implemented on specific topics: speed, helmets, use of mobile phones while driving, respect for crosswalks and driving under the influence.
- The procedure of conformity control of imported helmets to Moroccan standards started.
- The authorities enhanced the enforcement of speed limits, controlling the use of mobile phones while driving and drink-driving.
- Two pedestrian bridges were built in urban areas and six pedestrian bridges were constructed over motorways.
- 72 bridges were secured against stone-throwing.
- 26 km of bicycle and motorcycle paths were built within road development projects outside urban areas.
- 389 km of stabilisation devices were completed.
- Road signalling enhancement operations on 6 508 km of roads were completed.
- Fences along 29 km on motorways were installed.
- Some black spots on motorways were treated.
- Urgent medical assistance was created in four regions.
- 50 medical ambulances were acquired.
- Nine civil protection emergency units were built on motorways.
- Five training sessions were organised for civil protection staff.

Costs of road crashes

Traffic crashes represent a high cost for Morocco and in 2019 were estimated at EUR 2 billion (2% of GDP).

Safety performance indicators

Speed

Inappropriate speed is one of the leading causes of road crashes. In Morocco, about 19% of all road fatalities in 2020 were caused by speeding.

Drink-driving

In 2010, Morocco enacted a law prohibiting driving under the influence of alcohol. The law fixed the maximum permissible BAC at 0.2 g/l when measured by a blood sample and 0.1 mg/l when measured by breath. In 2020, based on police data, about 2% of road fatalities were alcohol related.

Drugs and driving

According to the highway code, it is forbidden to drive under the influence of illicit drugs.

Use of mobile phones while driving

An increasing problem for traffic safety in Morocco is distraction, for instance, through the use of mobile phones while driving. The use of hand-held phones while driving is forbidden. The use of hands-free devices while driving is authorised. A survey conducted in 2017 among 3 031 car drivers revealed that 75% of drivers admitted to having used a mobile phone while driving in the last 12 months.

The share of sleepiness and fatigue as a causal factor in crashes is especially challenging to detect. Based on police data, it was estimated that about 1% of fatalities in 2020 were due to sleepiness and fatigue.

Seat belt and helmet use

Seat belt use has been compulsory for front seats in rural areas since 1977 and since 2005 for front seats in urban areas and rear seats in rural areas. There is a law prohibiting children under ten from sitting in the front seat, but there is no law concerning the compulsory use of a child restraint system. According to an observational study conducted in September 2018, the wearing rate in urban areas was 59% for drivers and 55% for front-seat passengers. In rural areas, the wearing rate was 73% for drivers, 65% for front-seat passengers and 36% for rear-seat passengers. Despite recent progress, these use rates are too low. Many lives could be saved if the seat belt wearing rate was closer to the average in IRTAD countries.

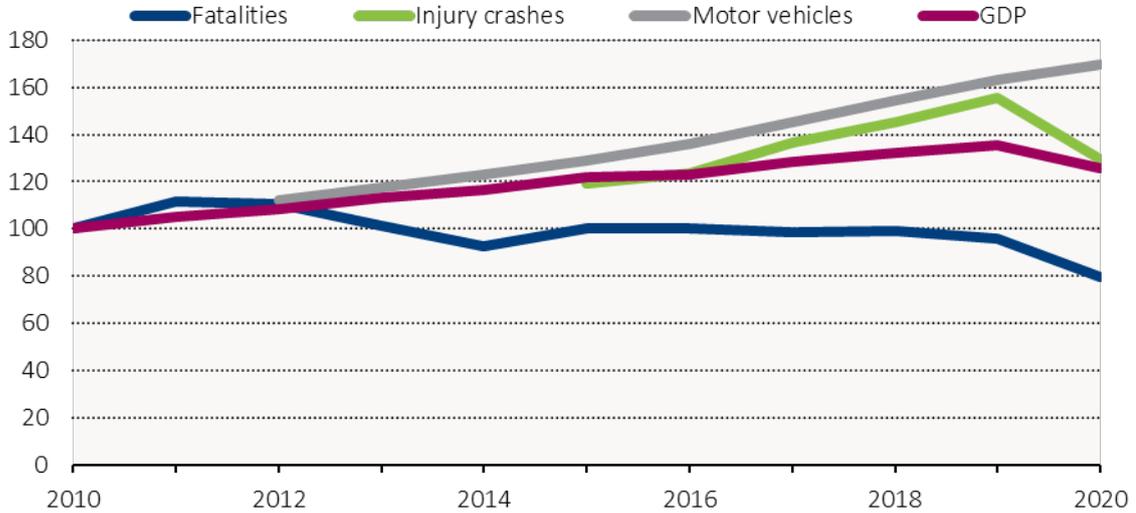
Road safety data for Morocco at a glance

Long-term road safety trends for Morocco

	1990	2000	2010	2018	2019	2020	2020 % change over			
							2019	2010	2000	1990
Reported safety data										
Fatalities	2 777	3 627	3 778	3 736	3 622	3 005	-17.0	-20.5	-17.1	8.2
Injury crashes	32 992	48 350	65 461	94 944	101 644	84 585	-16.8	29.2	74.9	156.4
Injured persons hospitalised	..	..	..	127 900	139 339	112 122	-19.5	..	..	..
Deaths per 100 000 population	11.5	12.7	11.8	10.6	10.2	8.4	-17.9	-29.4	-34.4	-27.3
Deaths per 10 000 registered vehicles	29.0	21.7	13.5	8.7	8.0	6.4	-20.2	-53.1	-70.7	-78.1
Fatalities by road user										
Pedestrians	..	..	..	1 026	989	730	-26.2	..	..	..
Cyclists	..	..	..	224	191	188	-1.6	..	..	..
Moped riders	..	..	..	1 105	1 116	1 095	-1.9	..	..	..
Motorcyclists	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Passenger car occupants	..	..	..	1 138	1 077	782	-27.4	..	..	..
Other road users	..	..	..	243	249	210	-15.7	..	..	..
Fatalities by age group										
0-14 years	..	..	..	288	314	199	-36.6	..	..	..
15-17 years	..	..	..	114	86	79	-8.1	..	..	..
18-20 years	..	..	..	209	146	172	17.8	..	..	..
21-24 years	..	..	..	306	354	272	-23.2	..	..	..
25-64 years	..	..	..	2 255	2 228	1 898	-14.8	..	..	..
65-74 years	..	265	249	310	267	198	-25.8	-20.5	-25.3	..
≥ 75 years	..	272	271	172	152	157	3.3	-42.1	-42.3	..
Fatalities by road type										
Urban roads	..	..	..	1 323	1 550	1 281	-17.4	..	..	..
Rural roads	..	..	..	2 180	1 827	1 550	-15.2	..	..	..
Motorways	..	..	..	233	245	174	-29.0	..	..	..
Traffic data										
Registered vehicles (thousands)	956	1 675	2 791	4 312	4 552	4 732	3.9	69.5	182.5	395.0
Registered vehicles per 1 000 population	39.6	58.8	87.5	122.4	127.9	131.6	2.9	50.4	123.7	232.7

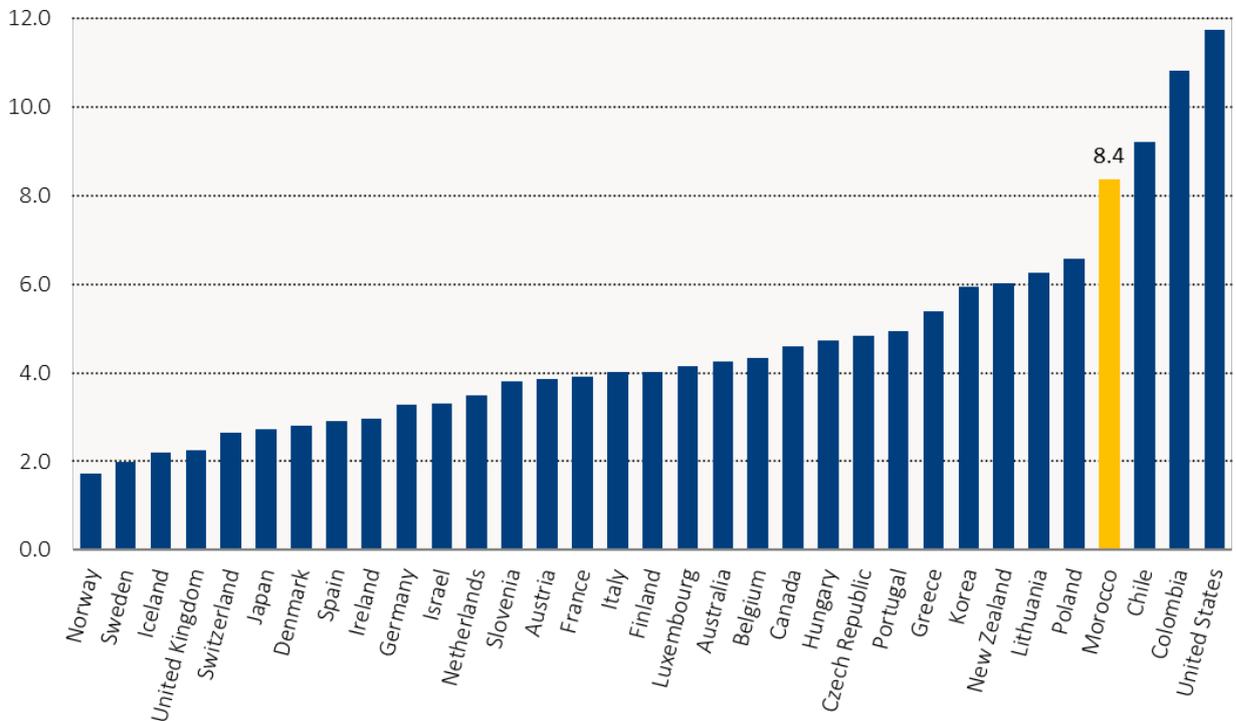
Evolution of road fatalities, injury crashes, motorisation and GDP in Morocco, 2010-20

Index 2010 = 100

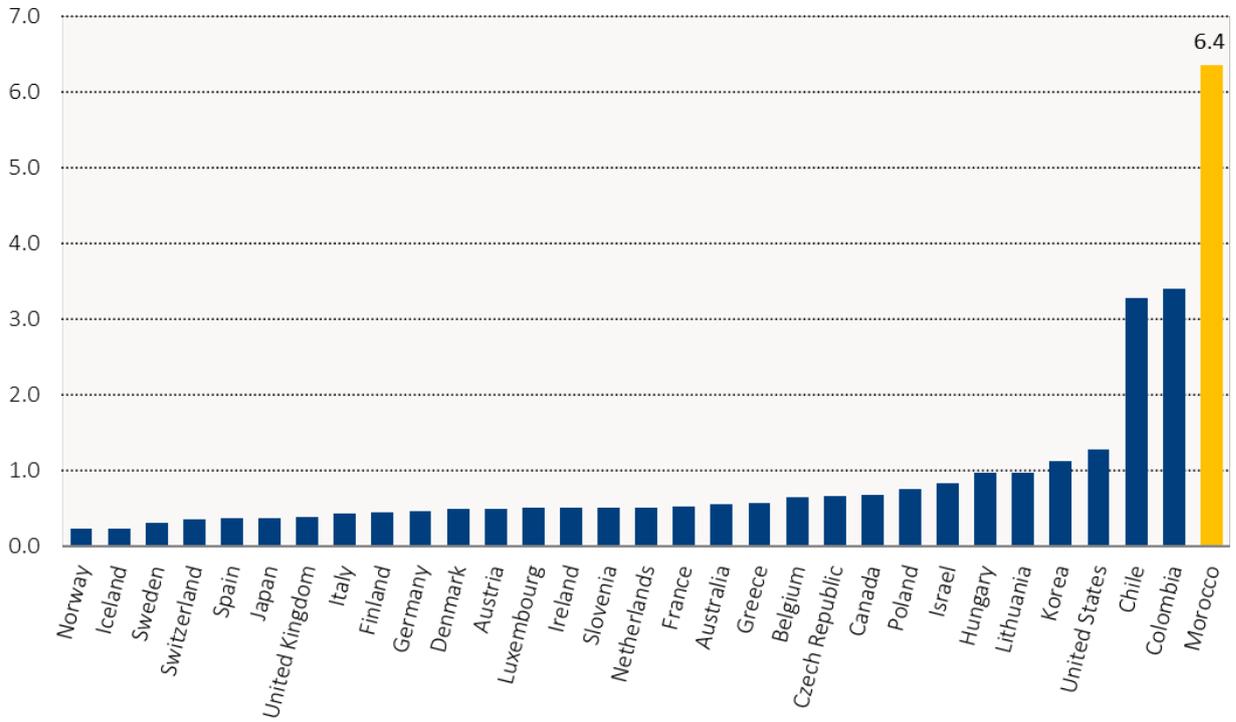


Note: registered vehicles do not include mopeds.

Road fatalities per 100 000 inhabitants in Morocco in comparison with IRTAD countries, 2020

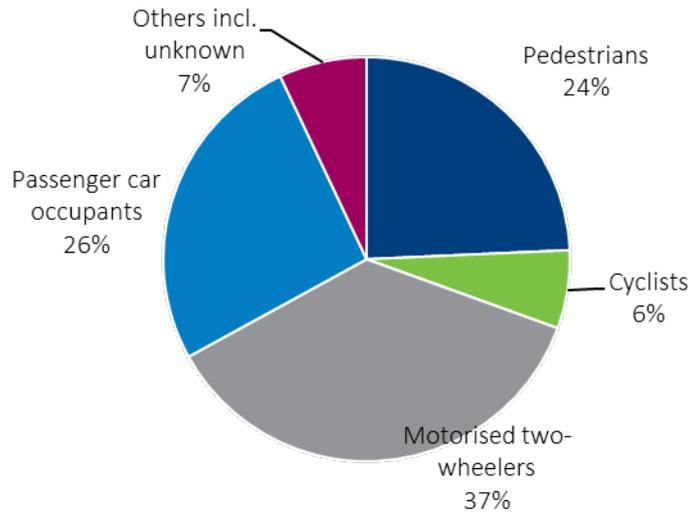


Road fatalities per 10 000 vehicles in Morocco in comparison with IRTAD countries, 2020

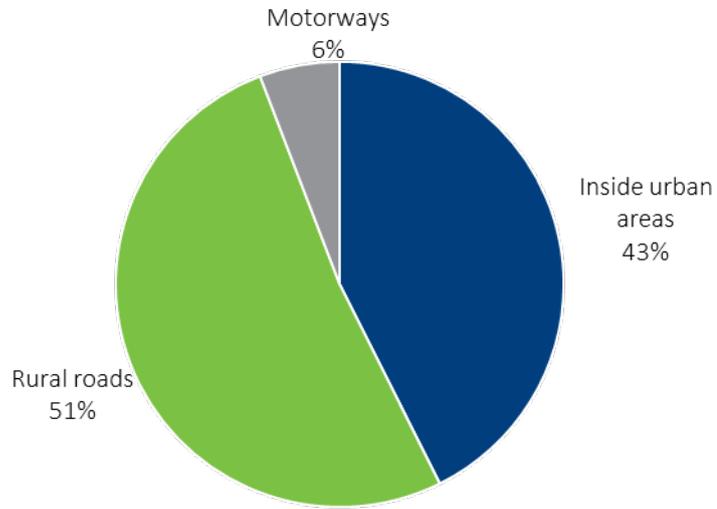


Note: in Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Hungary and Morocco registered vehicles do not include mopeds.

Road fatalities in Morocco by user category, 2020

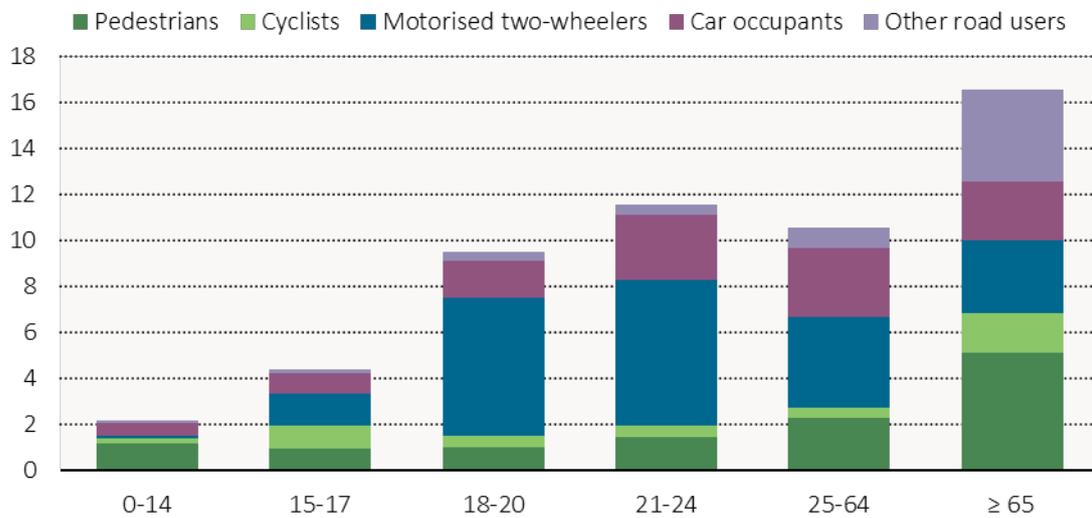


Road fatalities in Morocco by road type, 2020



Road fatality rate in Morocco by user category and age group, 2020

Rate per 100 000 population in the same age group



Seat belt and helmet wearing rates

Percentages

	2018
Front seats	
Urban roads (driver)	59
Urban roads (passenger)	55
Rural roads (driver)	73
Rural roads (passenger)	65
Motorways (driver)	69
Rear seats	
Adults	36
Helmet	
Riders of mopeds	60
Riders of motorcycles	63
Riders of motorised two-wheelers	60
Passengers of mopeds	37
Passengers of motorcycles	38
Passengers of motorised two-wheelers	35

Research and resources

Publications

A road user behaviour study through roadside surveys was conducted in 2018, including on the use of seat belts and helmets, running a red light or a stop sign, etc.: <http://aujourd'hui.ma/societe/etude-2018-du-cnpac-seulement-58-des-automobilistesportent-la-ceinture-de-securite>.

A population-based study on the prevalence and use of mobile phones while driving was carried out in July 2017.

Websites

National Road Safety Agency (NARSA): <http://narsa.ma/fr/accueil>.

Ministry of Transport: <http://www.equipement.gov.ma/AR/Pages/Accueil.aspx>.

Definition, methodology, data collection

A road fatality is defined as any person killed immediately or who dies within 30 days due to a road crash.

A seriously injured person is any person injured in a road crash requiring hospitalisation for six days or more.

A slightly injured person is any person injured in a road crash requiring medical treatment or hospitalisation of fewer than six days.

Crash data in Morocco are collected at the crash scene by the gendarmerie in rural areas and the national police in urban areas. Police are expected to attend to all crashes with fatalities or injuries. Data related to accidents involving material damage only are not recorded.

Crash information is filled in on a form like the one used in France. This form contains information on the circumstances of the crash, the location, the casualties, etc. The government plans to progressively introduce Global Information System (GIS) information into police reports.

Data are consolidated at the national level by the Roads Directorate, part of the Ministry of Equipment, Transport and Logistics, and are entered into a database that the same entity has administered since the 1970s.

Police liaise with hospitals to complete their reports in case of injuries. The International Classification of Diseases 10 (ICD-10) system began in pilot hospitals in 2019 before being extended nationally in 2020.

The level of underreporting is not known. In its 2018 global status report, the WHO estimated that in 2016 the total number of road fatalities was between 6 100 and 7 700, whereas the reported number was 3 785.