International Transport Forum | irtad Road Safety Data

SLOVENIA

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In 2020, 80 people lost their lives in traffic crashes in Slovenia, the country's lowest road mortality level and a 21.6 % decrease compared to 2019. The improvement in road safety in 2020 was partly a consequence of the measures in force in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. In 2020, the decrease in traffic volumes compared to 2019 was similar to the reduction of road fatalities. The National Road Safety Programme 2013-2022 set a target to halve the number of road deaths by 2022 compared to a baseline of 2011. The main measures to improve road safety focus on vulnerable road users.

Road safety management and strategy

Fatalities peaked in 1979 when 735 people died on the road. Since then, the number of road deaths has steadily decreased with relative stagnation between 2002 and 2007. Fatalities declined noticeably from 2007 to 2010, most likely due to a new motorway toll system, regular media campaigns promoting road safety and the Road Safety Act that came into force in 2008. From 2010 to 2014, road fatalities decreased by 22%, from 138 to 108. A negative trend emerged in 2015 and 2016, with an average 10% year-on-year increase in road deaths. After consecutive substantial decreases in 2017 and 2018 and another rise in road fatalities in 2019, the number of road deaths in 2020 has reached the lowest level since systematic record-keeping in Slovenia began.

Slovenia: Quick facts

Population: 2.1 million
GDP per capita: USD 25 231
Road network: 21 230 km
- urban roads: 32%
- rural roads: 67%
- motorways: 4%

Registered motor vehicles: 1.5 million
- cars: 79%
- goods vehicles: 8%
- motorcycles: 5%

Speed limits:
- urban roads: 50 km/h
- rural roads: 90 km/h
- expressways: 110 km/h
- motorways: 130 km/h

Limits on Blood Alcohol Content:
- general drivers: 0.5 g/l
- professional drivers: 0.0 g/l
- novice drivers: 0.0 g/l

Road fatalities: 80
- pedestrians: 9%
- cyclists: 10%
- car occupants: 48%
- motorcyclists: 31%
- other: 4%

Road fatalities per 100 000 population: 3.8
Road fatalities per 10 000 vehicles: 0.5
Cost of road crashes: 2% of GDP

All data 2020 unless otherwise stated.

Responsibility for the co-ordination of road safety in Slovenia lies with the Slovenian Traffic Safety Agency, created in 2010 as an independent agency financially linked to the Ministry of Infrastructure. The agency is the leading national traffic safety organisation, bringing together expertise in the road safety field. The agency's mission covers research and analysis, preventative and educational programmes

and programmes for national road safety, drivers, vehicles and driver rehabilitation. Since 2016, the agency has also been in charge of undertaking independent investigations of fatal crashes in co-operation with the police and road safety auditors. One of the focuses of these investigations is the condition of road infrastructure.

The government adopted the Slovenian National Road Safety Programme 2013-2022 in March 2013. The programme is based on Vision Zero, aiming for no fatalities or seriously injured people on Slovenian roads. The priorities addressed in the national road safety programme are: driver education and training, preventative action and media campaigns for vulnerable road users (such as pedestrians, children, the elderly and cyclists) and measures against the main killers on the roads (speed and alcohol).

Biennial action plans are described in the 2013-22 strategy framework.

The main target is to halve by 2022 (compared to 2011) the number of fatalities and those seriously injured and reach a fatality rate below 3.5 fatalities per 100 000 inhabitants and fewer than 230 seriously injured per million inhabitants. Based on the latest data, Slovenia is currently on track to reach its targets.

A board of directors regularly monitors the implementation of the National Road Safety Programme. It provides strategic guidelines towards the achievement of national road safety targets. In July 2021, the interministerial working group responsible for monitoring and executing the National Programme assessed the implementation of the national road safety programme for 2020. The main conclusions were to encourage road users to act more responsibly, respect regulations and raise awareness of the importance of road safety, emphasising the quality of the infrastructure and the market penetration of safer vehicles.

Latest road safety measures

Various legislation amendments have been prepared, such as changes in speeding, mobile phone use and e-scooter use. A new law on road traffic rules has been in force since August 2021. It includes the regulation of e-scooters, stricter penalties for the use of mobile phones while driving and the reduction of some speeding fines.

The action plan for 2019 and 2020 was prepared by the interdepartmental working group and is being implemented. An in-depth investigation of fatal crashes started in 2016. The investigations will help identify and implement the measures most likely to bring positive results. In 2019, 18 fatal traffic crashes were investigated. In 2013, the government established a board of directors to monitor, lead and supervise the implementation of the National Road Safety Programme and report to the National assembly. The board of

directors met once in 2019 to monitor the implementation of the National Road Safety Programme.

Road safety campaigns are regularly conducted focusing on the main road safety topics (speeding, drink driving, seat belt use, etc.). In 2019, two new campaigns were launched: safety in summer months and proper driving on the motorways.

Slovenia is co-operating with Italy and Austria towards safe motorcycling through the Alps. The road network is regularly audited, identifying and treating high-risk sections. The rules related to road traffic signs and equipment were updated in 2016 to harmonise with European standards.

Costs of road crashes

Traffic crashes represent a high cost for society, estimated in 2020 at around EUR 940 million (2% of GDP). The figure is based on the number of reported crashes and an estimate of non-reported crashes, using the Harmonised European Approaches for Transport Costing and Project Assessment (HEATCO) methodology, adapted to the specific conditions in Slovenia.

Safety performance indicators

Speed

Speeding is one of the leading causes of road crashes. In 2020, 27 road fatalities (34% of total road fatalities) were caused by excessive speed. Speed is the critical risk factor for the most vulnerable participants (pedestrians, cyclists, the elderly and children). It is a crucial factor in the severity of the consequences for drivers and passengers in vehicles.

Speeding is critical, particularly in urban areas, where the average speed is well above the 50 km/h speed limit.

Drink-driving

Driving under the influence of alcohol is another major cause of road crashes in Slovenia and is responsible for about one-third of fatal injury crashes. Recent data show that the number of alcohol-related crashes decreased by 12% in 2020 compared to 2019, with a decrease of 18% in the number of alcohol-related road fatalities. Since 2000, the number of deaths caused by drink driving has decreased by 76%, but the share of deaths remains the same at around one-third (with minor fluctuations).

The maximum permissible blood alcohol content (BAC) is 0.5 g/l for most drivers and 0.0 g/l for professional drivers and drivers who have had their licence for less than three years. A crash is defined as an alcohol-related crash when one of the active participants has a BAC above the limit.

Drugs and driving

Data on the role of drug use by road users in road crashes is probably underreported. In 2020, official data attributed around 0.4% of traffic crashes to drivers under the influence of drugs. However, the police rarely check if the driver is under the influence of drugs.

A crash is drug-related when the person responsible for the crash tests positive for drugs (via a blood test). A police officer has the right to administer an on-the-spot drug test in case of suspicion. If the driver refuses this test, the police may demand a more comprehensive medical examination.

In 2016, the Slovenian Traffic Safety Agency started to address the problem of driving under the influence of drugs and conducted an online questionnaire about the use of drugs while driving. More than 3 000 respondents completed the questionnaire. The responses showed that 8% of drivers occasionally drive under the influence of drugs (most commonly cannabis, followed by cocaine and amphetamines).

Use of mobile phones while driving

An increasing problem for traffic safety in Slovenia is the use of mobile phones while driving. The use of hand-held mobile phones while driving is not permitted in Slovenia. The use of hands-free devices is tolerated. According to the findings from recent research, 75% of drivers use a mobile phone while driving. Among those, 30% use it for social networking, 30% for writing notes, 5% for the internet, 3% for mobile applications, and 9% for listening to music and navigation.

A neuro-scientific experiment was carried out to determine how the use of mobile phones while driving influences the brain's functioning. It showed that the brain areas responsible for vision during a telephone conversation are less active. Texting while driving revealed an overload of the frontal cortex (influencing the effective focusing of the eyes), the motor cortex (responsible for executive functions) and the parietal cortex (which ensures co-ordination and orientation in the space).

Seat belt and helmet use

Seat belt wearing has been compulsory in Slovenia since 1977 in front seats and from 1988 in rear seats. Dedicated child restraints are mandatory for children under 150 cm. The seat belt wearing rate in 2018 was 94.8% for drivers and 95.6% for front-seat occupants.

For motorcyclists, helmet wearing is the most effective passive safety habit. There is no data on the helmet wearing rate for motorcycle and moped riders.

Bicycle helmets are compulsory for children up to 18 years of age. According to an observation of cyclists carried out in 2017, 15.6% of cyclists were wearing a helmet, but there were significant differences among age groups. For children, the wearing rate was 66%, for adults 15.6% and young people 6.3%.

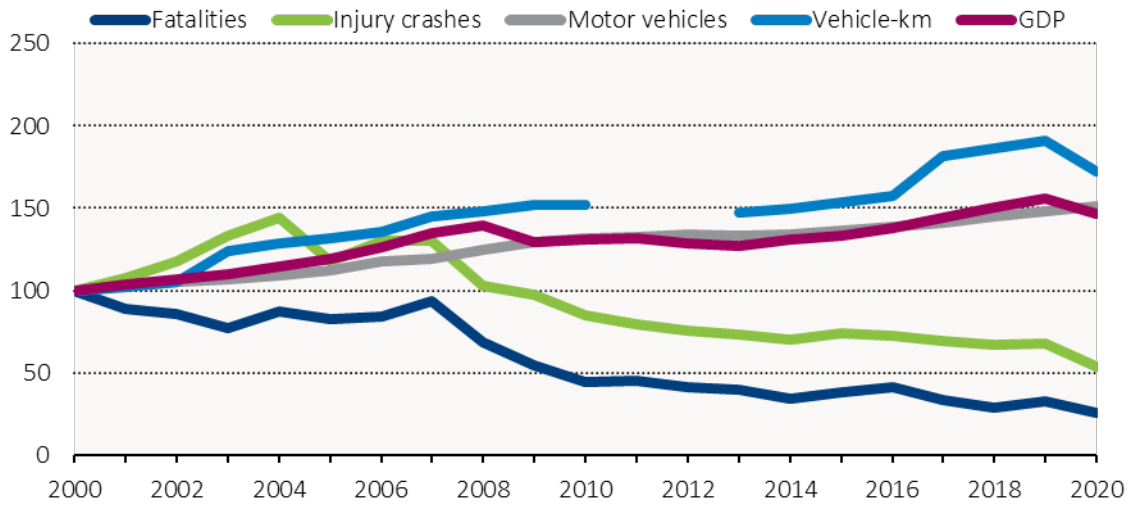
Road safety data for Slovenia at a glance

Long-term road safety trends for Slovenia

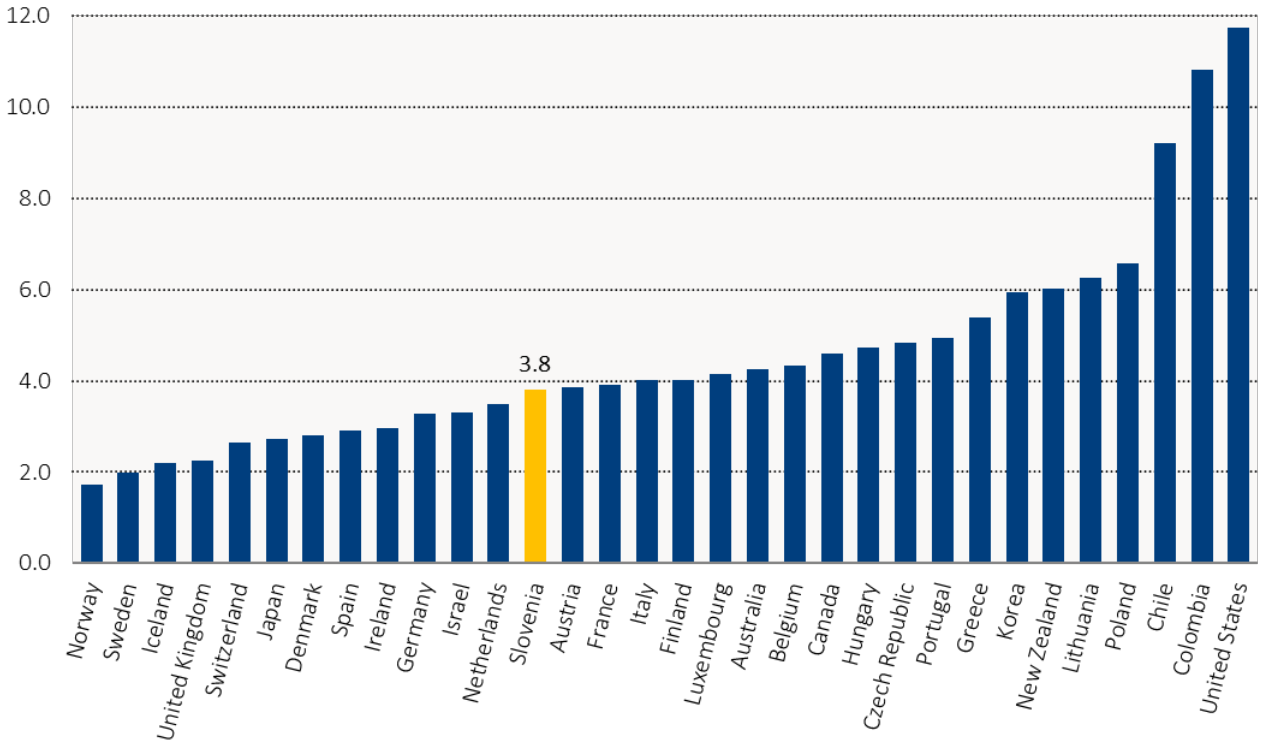
							2020 % change over			
	1990	2000	2010	2018	2019	2020	*2019*	*2010*	*2000*	*1990*
Reported safety data										
Fatalities	517	314	138	91	102	80	-21.6	-42.0	-74.5	-84.5
Injury crashes	..	8 951	7 596	6 014	6 025	4 777	-20.7	-37.1	-46.6	..
Deaths per 100 000 population	25.9	15.8	6.7	4.4	4.9	3.8	-22.1	-43.4	-75.8	-85.3
Deaths per 10 000 registered vehicles	6.9	3.2	1.1	0.6	0.7	0.5	-22.9	-49.4	-83.1	-92.2
Deaths per billion vehicle kilometres	65.1	26.7	7.7	4.2	4.5	4.0	-12.9	-48.9	-85.2	-93.9
Fatalities by road user										
Pedestrians	..	60	26	13	15	7	-53.3	-73.1	-88.3	..
Cyclists	..	26	16	8	9	8	-11.1	-50.0	-69.2	..
Moped riders	..	21	6	2	3	6	100.0	0.0	-71.4	..
Motorcyclists	..	19	17	16	22	18	-18.2	5.9	-5.3	..
Passenger car occupants	..	179	68	44	47	38	-19.1	-44.1	-78.8	..
Other road users	..	9	5	8	6	3	-50.0	-40.0	-66.7	..
Fatalities by age group										
0-14 years	..	8	2	0	1	3	200.0	50.0	-62.5	..
15-17 years	..	18	4	1	2	3	50.0	-25.0	-83.3	..
18-20 years	..	23	3	7	5	3	-40.0	0.0	-87.0	..
21-24 years	..	28	16	8	3	6	100.0	-62.5	-78.6	..
25-64 years	..	181	82	60	63	49	-22.2	-40.2	-72.9	..
65-74 years	..	34	13	7	14	10	-28.6	-23.1	-70.6	..
≥ 75 years	..	22	18	8	14	6	-57.1	-66.7	-72.7	..
Fatalities by road type										
Urban roads	..	101	60	26	27	29	7.4	-51.7	-71.3	..
Rural roads	..	185	57	47	61	45	-26.2	-21.1	-75.7	..
Motorways	..	28	21	15	14	6	-57.1	-71.4	-78.6	..
Traffic data										
Vehicle kilometres (millions)	7 945	11 759	17 826	21 886	22 477	20 242	-9.9	13.6	72.1	154.8
Registered vehicles (thousands)	749	979	1 290	1 416	1 452	1 478	1.8	14.6	51.0	97.4
Registered vehicles per 1 000 population	375.2	492.5	630.4	685.3	698.0	705.4	1.1	11.9	43.2	88.0

Evolution of road fatalities, injury crashes, motorisation, traffic and GDP in Slovenia, 2000-20

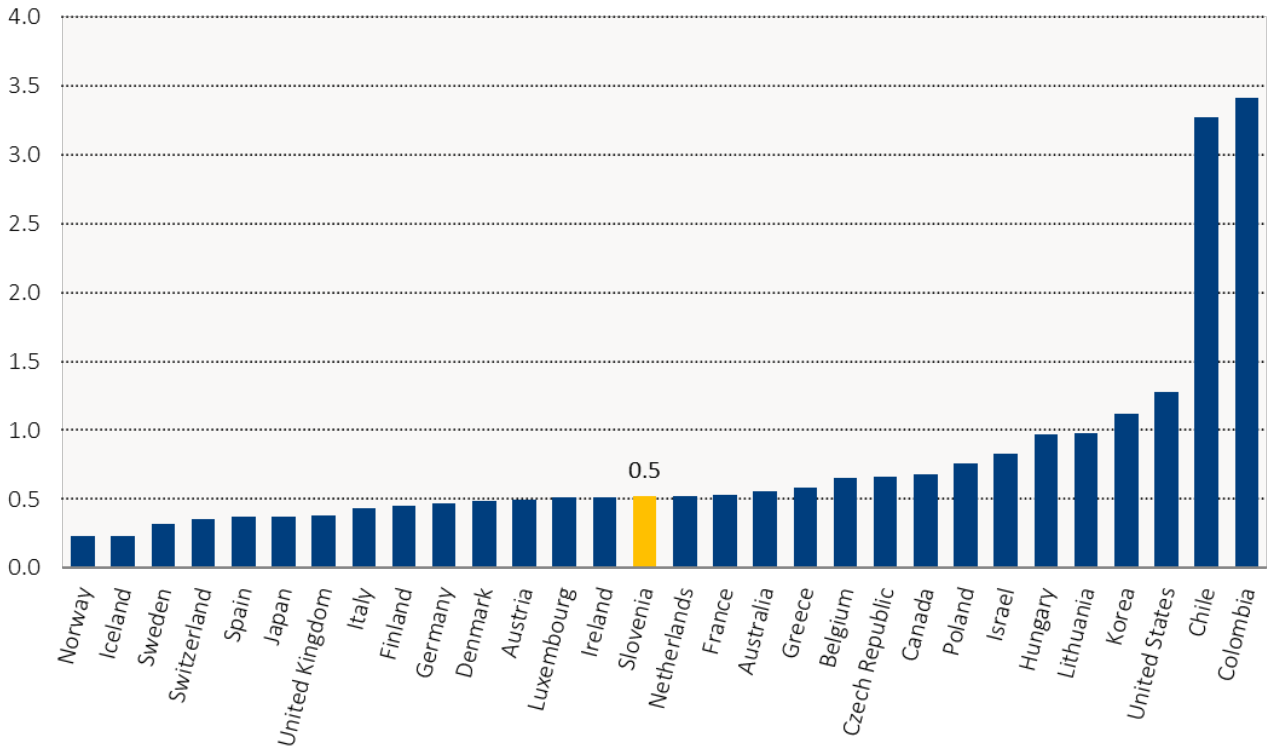
Index 2000 = 100



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

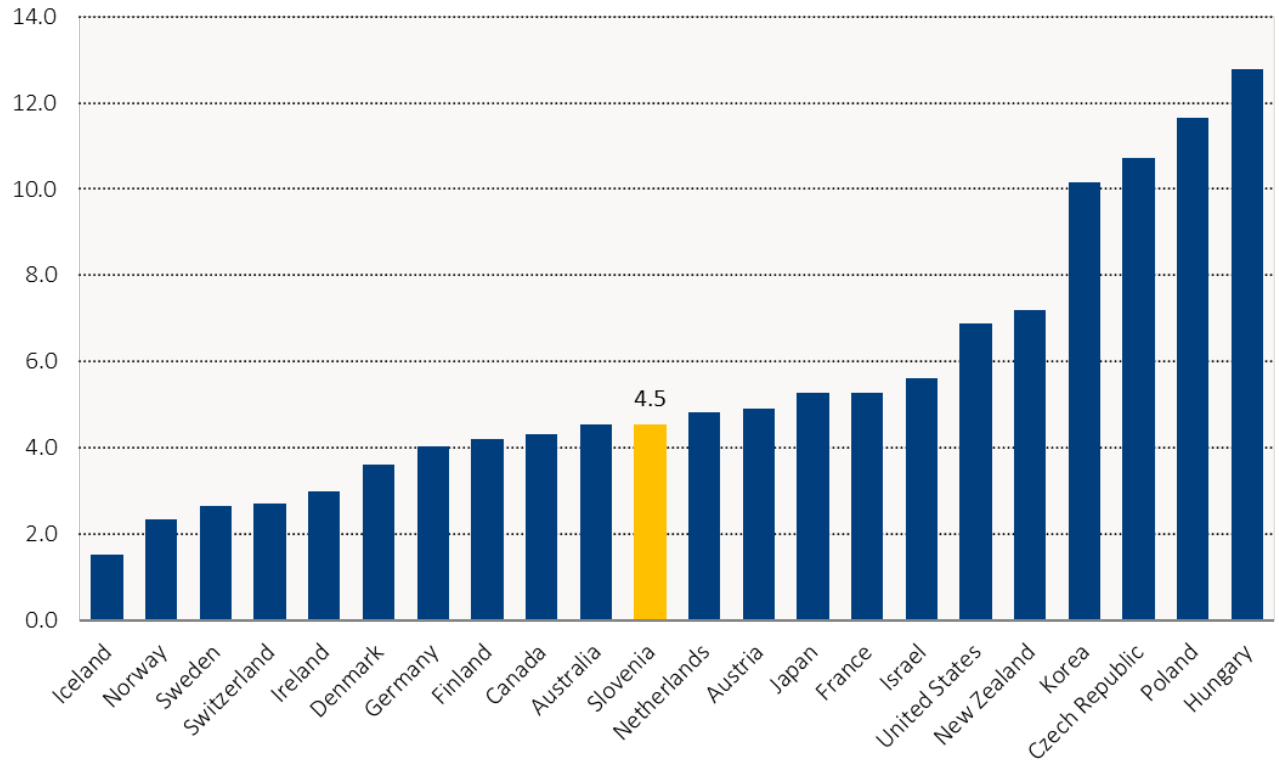


Road fatalities per 10 000 vehicles in Slovenia in comparison with IRTAD countries, 2020

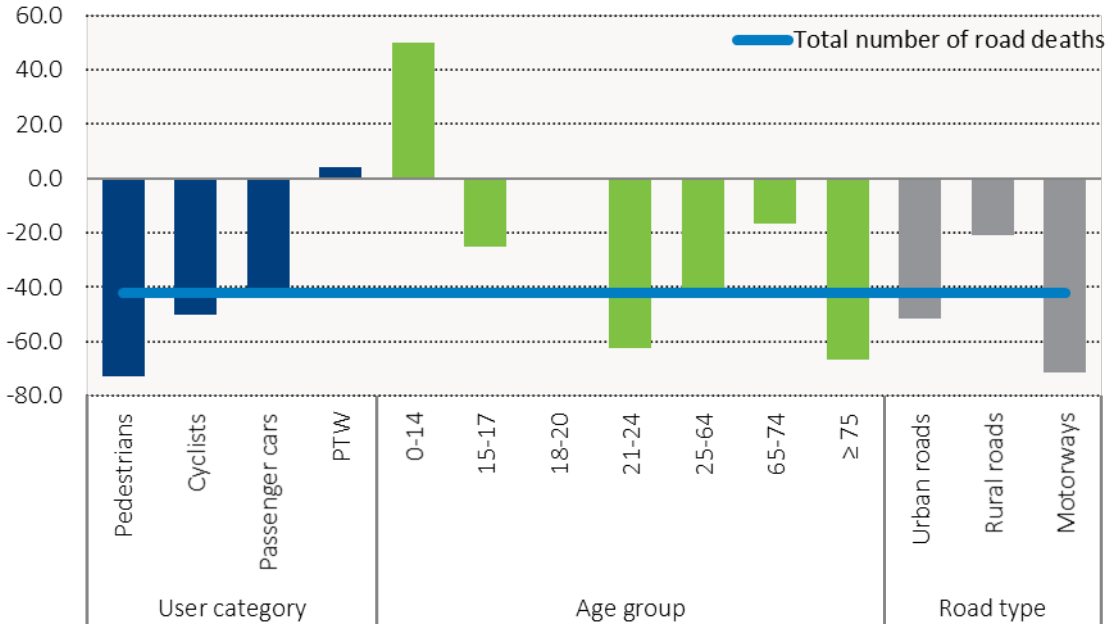


Note: in Belgium, Denmark, Germany and Hungary registered vehicles do not include mopeds.

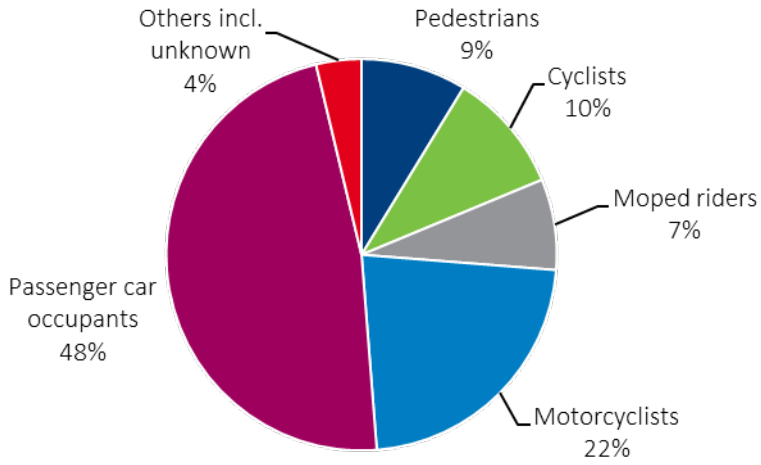
Road fatalities per billion vehicle-kilometres in Slovenia in comparison with IRTAD countries, 2019



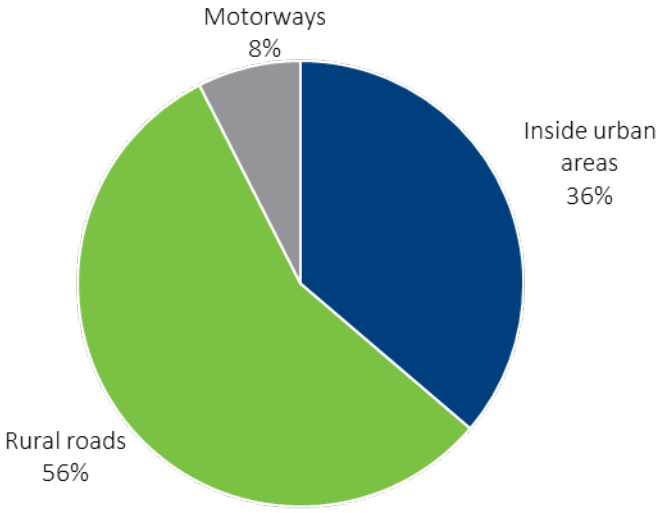
Evolution of road fatalities in Slovenia by user category, age group and road type, 2010-20



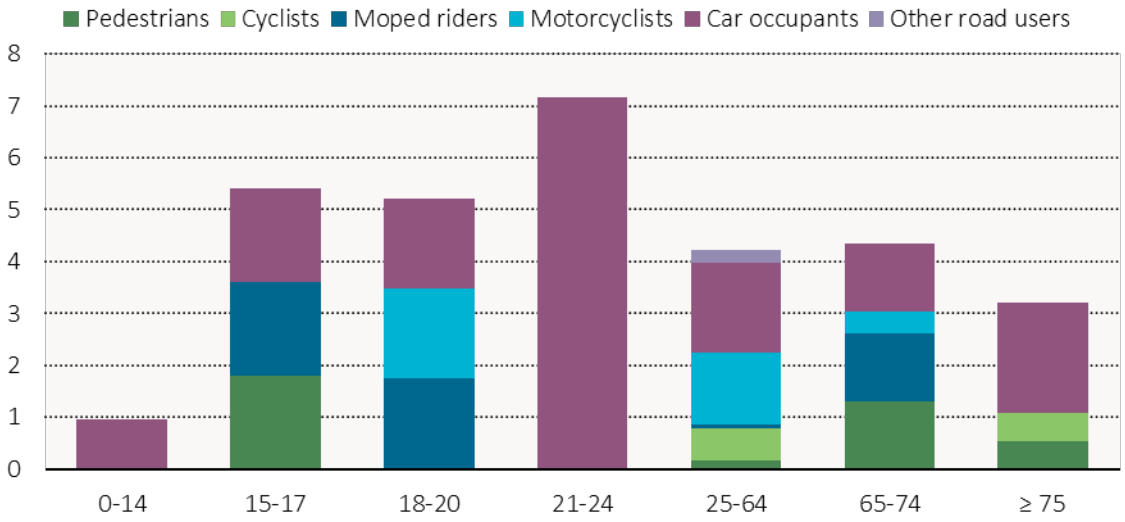
Road fatalities in Slovenia by user category, 2020



Road fatalities in Slovenia by road type, 2020



Road fatality rate in Slovenia by user category and age group, 2020
Rate per 100 000 population in the same age group



Cost of road crashes in Slovenia, 2020

	Unit Cost (EUR)	Total (EUR)
Fatalities	1 998 467	165.9 million
Severe injuries	232 139	208.4 million
Slight injuries	22 892	331.7 million
Property damage costs		238.8 million
Total		**0.94 billion**
Total as % of GDP		**2.0**

Note: total includes estimates for non-reported crashes.

Seat belt wearing rates
Percentages

	2010	2016	2018
Front seats			
Driver	92	90	94.8
Passenger	93	92	95.6
Rear seats			
General	69	69	78.1
Children 0-7 (use of child restraint)	..	93	94.3
Children 8-14	..	88	90.1

Research and resources

Websites

Slovenian Traffic Safety Agency: https://www.avp-rs.si/.

Slovenian Infrastructure Agency: http://www.di.gov.si/en/.

Slovenian Traffic Statistics: https://www.policija.si/eng/about-the-police/statistical-data/annual-reports-on-the-work-of-the-police.

Definition, methodology, data collection

- Road fatality: any person killed immediately or who died within 30 days due to a road crash.
- Seriously injured person: any person who sustains injuries from a road traffic crash entailing temporary or permanent health damage or temporary or permanent reduced ability to work.
- Slightly injured person: any person injured excluding persons seriously injured.

In Slovenia, the police, who are the primary source of information for road fatalities and injuries, collect crash data. The police confirm the information on the severity of injuries with hospitals. However, there is no procedure in place for linking data.

With support from the Institute of Public Health, the Traffic Safety Agency has started estimating the number of persons injured with a Maximum Abbreviated Injury Scale of 3 or more (MAIS3+). This estimation will use the conversion tables provided by the European Commission to convert injury information based on the tenth revision of the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems (ICD-10) into MAIS3+ data. Further work is still needed before Slovenia can publish official MAIS3+ data. The converter had many shortcomings, so additional work on this must be done.