

10 facts on global road safety



Every year, there are 1.24 million road traffic deaths worldwide

Young adults aged between 15 and 44 years account for 59% of global road traffic deaths.



92% of road traffic deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries

These countries have only 53% of the world's registered vehicles.



Vulnerable road users account for half of all road traffic deaths globally

Pedestrians, cyclists, and riders of motorized two-wheelers and their passengers are collectively known as "vulnerable road users". The proportion of road traffic deaths in vulnerable road users is greater in low-income countries than in high-income countries.



Controlling speed reduces road traffic injuries

Only 59 countries, covering 39% of the world's population (2.67 billion people), have implemented an urban speed limit of 50 km/h or less and allow local authorities to reduce these limits. A 5% cut in average speed can reduce the number of fatal crashes by as much as 30%.



Drinking alcohol and driving increases the risk of a crash

Above a blood-alcohol concentration (BAC) of 0.05 g/dl, the risk of road traffic crash increases dramatically. 89 countries, covering 66% of the world's population (4.55 billion people), have a comprehensive drink-driving law enforcing the WHO-recommended blood alcohol concentration limit of 0.05 g/dl or less.



Wearing a good-quality helmet can reduce the risk of death from a road crash by 40%

Wearing a good-quality helmet can also reduce the risk of severe injury by over 70%. 90 countries, representing 77% of the world's population, have a comprehensive helmet law covering all riders, all roads and all engine types, and apply a helmet standard.



Wearing a seat-belt reduces the risk of death among front-seat passengers by 40–65%

Wearing a seat-belt can also reduce deaths among rear-seat car occupants by 25–75%. 111 countries, representing 69% of the world's population, have comprehensive seat-belt laws covering all occupants in a car.



Infant seats, child seats and booster seats can reduce child deaths by 54–80% in the event of a crash

More than half of all countries have implemented a law on child-restraint use in cars.



Prompt, good-quality pre-hospital care can save the lives of many people injured in road traffic crashes

111 countries have a universal national access emergency number, but only 59 countries have ambulance services available to transport over 75% of injured patients to hospital.



Since 2007, 88 countries have reduced the number of road traffic deaths

This suggests that progress can be made if there is sufficient political commitment. However, in 87 countries the number of road traffic deaths has increased, while at the global level the number of deaths has remained stable. The pace of legislative change and enforcement need to be hastened and more attention paid to vulnerable road users to reduce the number of road traffic deaths.