

Road safety: we must do more

The European Commission has today published figures showing the efforts made in the European Union since 2001 on road safety. Considerable progress has been made, especially in some Member States. In 2005, there were 8000 fewer road deaths than in 2001. But not enough progress has been made and more effort will be needed, at national and European level, to achieve the objective of halving the number of road deaths by 2010.

"The progress we have seen must be an incentive for everyone to do more still", said Jacques Barrot, the European Commission Vice-President responsible for transport.

Since 2001 and with the European Road Safety Action Programme adopted in 2003, the European Union has helped to put road safety at the top of the agenda of the Member States' political concerns. Several Member States which had not yet done so have now adopted national road safety plans, often taking over the common target of halving the number of road accident victims.

The principal figures in the mid-term review are the following:

- In 2001, 50 000 people were killed on the roads in the countries which today make up the European Union. The joint target proposed in 2001 and updated after enlargement in 2004 is that by 2010 there should be no more than 25 000 fatalities a year. The figures for 2005 show there were about 41 600 road deaths, a fall (albeit too small) of 17.5% over 4 years. At the present rate, there are likely to be 32 500 road deaths in the European Union in 2010, not a maximum of 25 000.
- There are big differences between Member States: the gap between the best and the worst performers is within a range of 1 to 3 (in terms of the number of road deaths per million inhabitants) and 1 to 5 (in terms of the number of road deaths per million private cars).
- In terms of the annual number of victims per million inhabitants and per million private cars, the countries which come out best compared with the European average are Malta, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Sweden, Germany and Finland. The countries with most problems as regards the two indicators are Poland, Portugal, Greece, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Cyprus and the Czech Republic.
- Between 2001 and 2004, the number of road deaths fell by more than 14% (EU-25 average) in nine Member States (Germany, Estonia, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal and Sweden). In eight others (Belgium, Denmark, Greece, Spain, Ireland, Austria, Finland and the United Kingdom) there was some progress (a fall of at least 5% but equal to or less than the average). In another eight (Czech Republic, Latvia, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia, Cyprus and Lithuania), there was slow progress or even a backward trend. These figures must nevertheless be treated with caution, especially in the very small Member States where a small number of serious accidents greatly affect the national result.

Considerable work has been done at European level on different aspects of road safety, such as the recent adoption of legislation on driving and rest times for professional drivers ([IP/06/110](#)), measures on vehicle safety, and education and awareness campaigns. Moving forward on the proposal on driving licences to combat driving licence fraud and to improve the skills and hence the safety of motorcyclists is now a matter of urgency. In absolute terms, the number of motorcyclists killed rose between 2000 and 2003, while the total number of road deaths fell. The proposal on driving licences ([IP/03/1435](#)) provides for gradual access to driving licences for the most powerful motorcycles and introduces a driving licence for mopeds. On this issue, Vice-President Jacques Barrot said: *"I hope the Council will deal with the driving licence issue soon. We must do more to protect motorcyclists"*.

The Commission currently has plans to launch new initiatives once the revised Transport White Paper has been adopted, this being expected at the end of April. The informal Council of Transport Ministers will discuss road safety in Bregenz (Austria) on 2 and 3 March.

Today's Communication from the Commission is accompanied, among other things, by several annexes containing statistical data and country files:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/transport/road/roadsafety/index_en.htm

European Union Road Safety Action Programme:

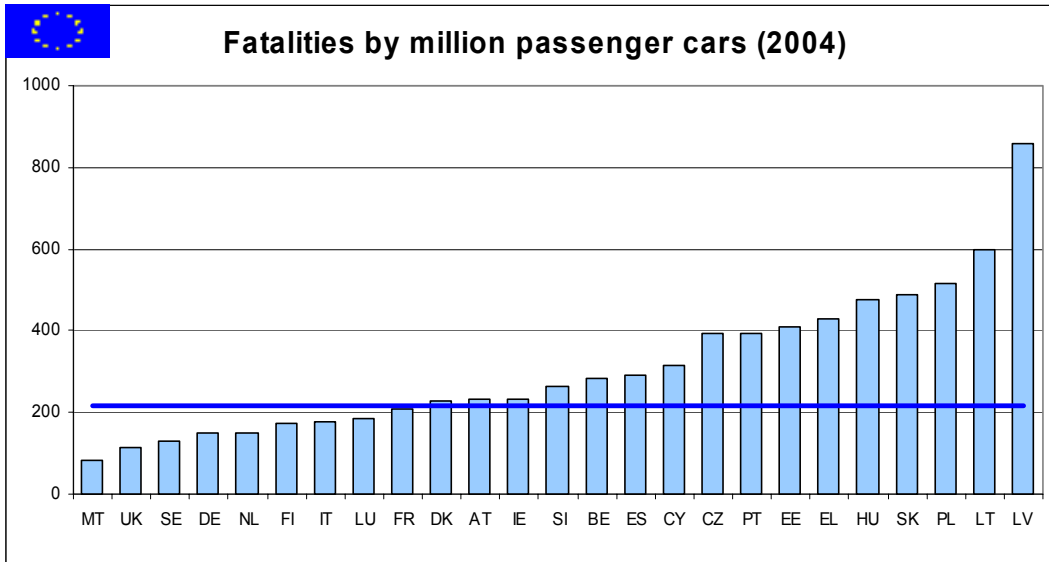
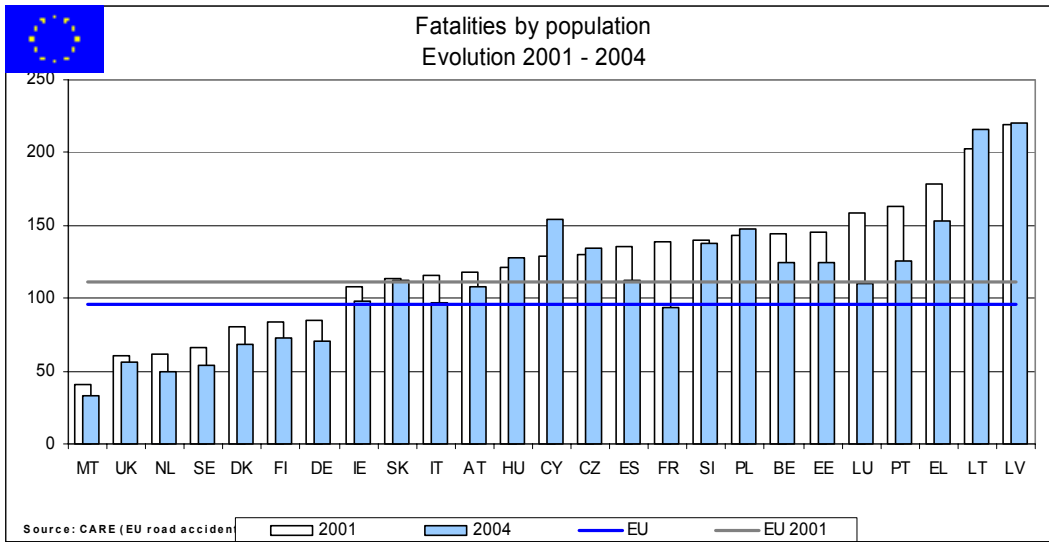
http://europa.eu.int/comm/transport/road/roadsafety/rsap/index_en.htm

Annex:
Key data on road safety

Road fatalities in the EU															
	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2004/2001
Belgique/België	1.873	1.671	1.660	1.692	1.449	1.356	1.364	1.500	1.397	1.470	1.486	1.353	-	-	-
Česká republika	1.331	1.571	1.524	1.637	1.588	1.562	1.597	1.360	1.455	1.486	1.334	1.431	1.447	1.382	4%
Danmark	606	577	559	546	582	514	489	499	514	498	431	463	432	369	-14%
Deutschland	11.300	10.631	9.949	9.814	9.454	8.758	8.549	7.792	7.772	7.503	6.977	6.842	6.613	5.842	-16%
Eesti	490	287	321	364	332	213	280	284	232	204	199	223	164	170	-15%
Ελλάδα (Elláda)	2.112	2.158	2.160	2.253	2.412	2.157	2.105	2.182	2.116	2.037	1.880	1.634	1.605	1.619	-14%
España	8.837	7.818	6.375	5.612	5.749	5.482	5.604	5.956	5.738	5.777	5.517	5.347	5.400	4.749	-14%
France	10.483	9.902	9.865	9.019	8.892	8.540	8.445	8.920	8.486	8.079	8.162	7.655	6.058	5.530	-32%
Ireland	445	415	431	404	437	453	473	458	414	418	412	376	337	379	-8%
Italia	8.109	8.053	7.187	7.091	7.020	6.676	6.714	6.313	6.633	6.649	6.691	6.736	6.065	5.625	-16%
Κύπρος (Kypros)/K	103	132	115	133	118	128	115	111	113	111	98	94	97	117	19%
Latvija	923	729	670	717	611	550	525	627	604	588	517	518	532	516	0%
Lietuva	1.173	836	958	765	672	667	725	829	748	641	706	697	709	752	7%
Luxembourg	83	69	78	65	70	71	60	57	58	76	70	62	53	49	-30%
Magyarország	2.120	2.101	1.678	1.562	1.589	1.370	1.391	1.371	1.306	1.200	1.239	1.429	1.326	1.296	5%
Malta	16	11	14	6	14	19	18	17	4	15	16	16	16	13	-19%
Nederland	1.281	1.253	1.235	1.298	1.334	1.180	1.163	1.066	1.090	1.082	993	987	1.028	804	-19%
Österreich	1.551	1.403	1.283	1.338	1.210	1.027	1.105	963	1.079	976	958	956	931	878	-8%
Polska	7.901	6.946	6.341	6.744	6.900	6.359	7.310	7.080	6.730	6.294	5.534	5.827	5.695	5.712	3%
Portugal	3.217	3.086	2.701	2.505	2.711	2.730	2.521	2.126	2.028	1.877	1.670	1.655	1.542	1.294	-23%
Slovenija	462	493	493	505	415	389	357	309	334	313	278	269	242	274	-1%
Slovensko	614	677	584	633	660	616	788	819	647	628	614	610	645	603	-2%
Suomi/Finland	632	601	484	480	441	404	438	400	431	396	433	415	379	375	-13%
Sverige	745	759	632	589	572	537	541	531	580	591	583	560	529	480	-18%
United Kingdom	4.753	4.379	3.957	3.807	3.765	3.740	3.743	3.581	3.564	3.580	3.598	3.581	3.658	3.368	-6%
EU	71.160	66.558	61.254	59.579	58.997	55.498	56.420	55.151	54.073	52.489	50.396	49.736	46.900	43.500	-14%

Source: CARE database for EU 15 countries except Germany and national data for Germany and new Member States

Belgium data not available for 2003 and 2004



Source: Eurostat, CARE database for EU 15 countries except Germany and national data for Germany and new Member States.

Belgium data not available for 2003 and 2004