

European Road Safety Observatory

Road safety targets Monitoring report

November 2020

Reporting period 2010 -2019



The purpose of the Monitoring report is to provide key trends in the number of road fatalities in Europe (the European Union and some other countries). The most recent figures in the monitoring report of 2020 refer to 2019.

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| Sources: | All information in this document for 2001-2019 is based on data in the CARE database. For 2019, information is based largely on data published at national level. Date of extraction: 15 th October 2020. |

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1 Trends in the number of fatalities in the EU

In 2010, the EU set a target ([European Commission, 2010](#)) to halve the number of road fatalities by 2020, with respect to their level in 2010. Figure 1 explores to which extent this target has been met and compares the EU target (dark blue line) to the present observed number (light blue line) across the 27 EU Member States.

Figure 1. Observed (2000-2019) and target (2000-2020) road fatalities across the 27 European Union Member States

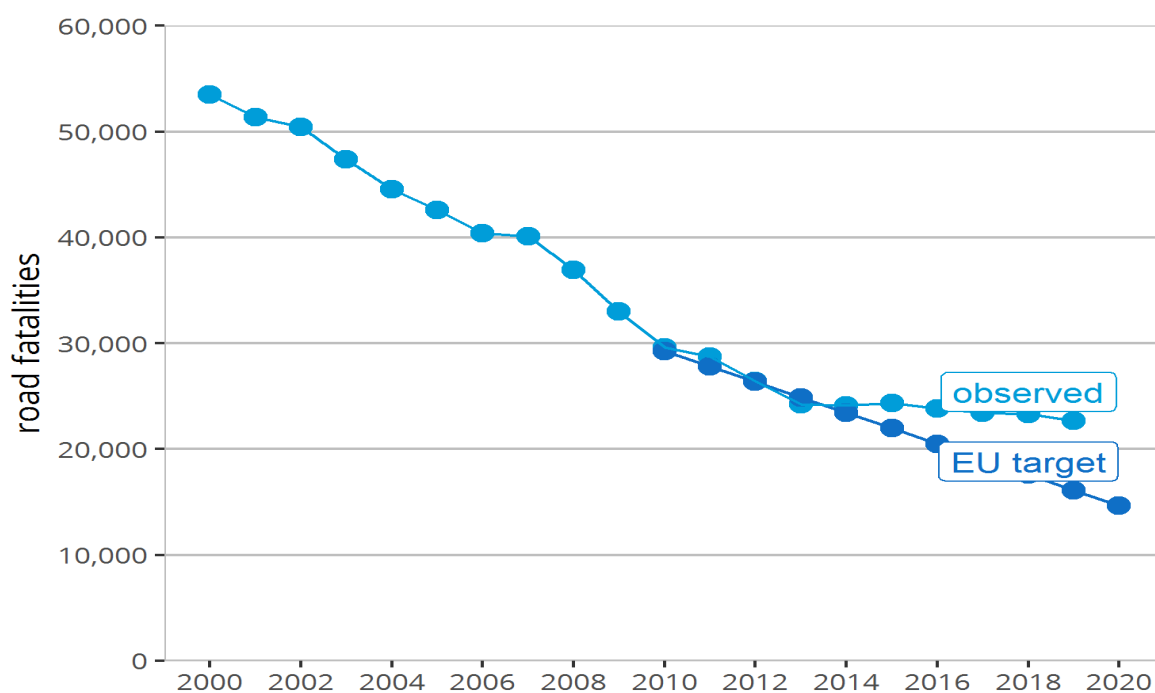


Figure 1 shows that between 2010 and 2014 the number of observed road fatalities was close to or even below the target. However, during the five subsequent years, the number of road fatalities stabilised between 24,400 and 22,700. As a consequence, in 2019 the observed number of fatalities exceeded the target by almost 8,000. The observed trend suggests that the EU target for 2020 will not be met. However, significant progress has been made: in 2019, the number of fatalities was 58% lower than in 2000 and 23% lower than in 2010.

2 Fatalities by country

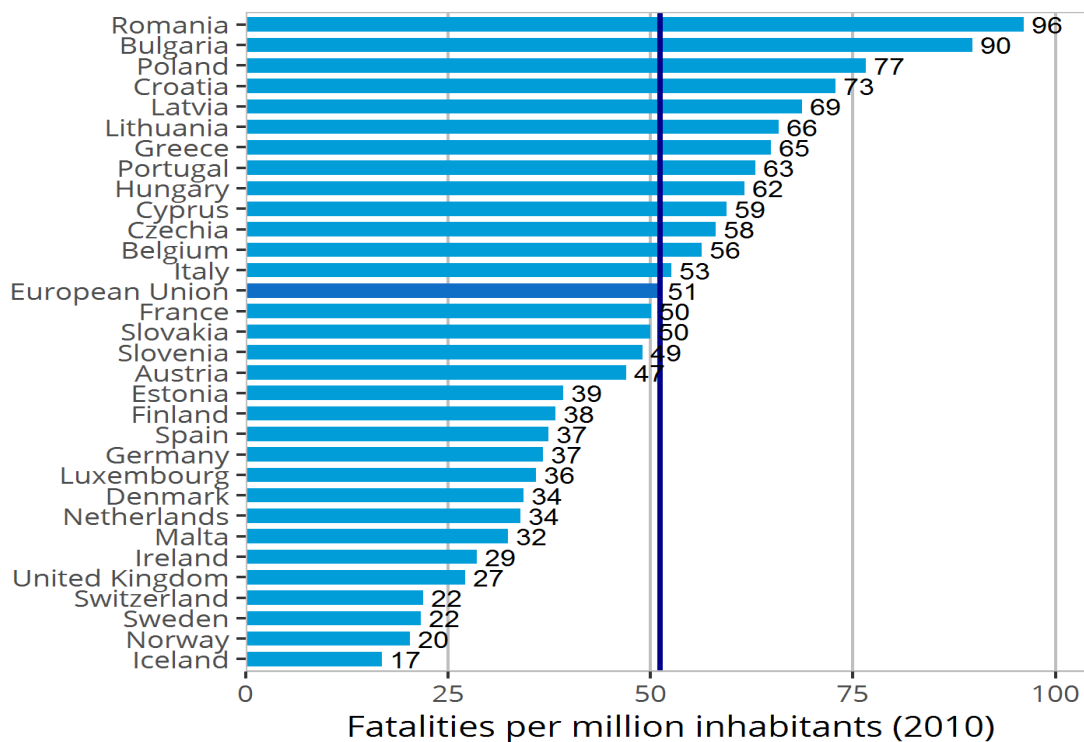
This section takes a closer look at road safety data on the individual country level. The following subsections present data on:

- Mortality per country in 2019 (Sect. 2.1)
- Long-term and short-term changes in the number of fatalities per country between 2010-2019 (Sect. 2.2)
- Road fatalities per country in 2019 (Sect. 2.3)

2.1 Mortality: the number of fatalities per million inhabitants (2019)

Larger countries tend to have higher numbers of road fatalities. To compensate for differences in population size, road mortality rates can be used, which compute the number of fatalities per million inhabitants. Figure 2 presents the 2019 mortality figures for the 27 EU-Member States, the EFTA¹ countries and the United Kingdom.

Figure 2. Road mortality (number of road fatalities per million inhabitants) in the EU, EFTA¹ and UK (2019). The vertical dark blue line indicates the EU average.



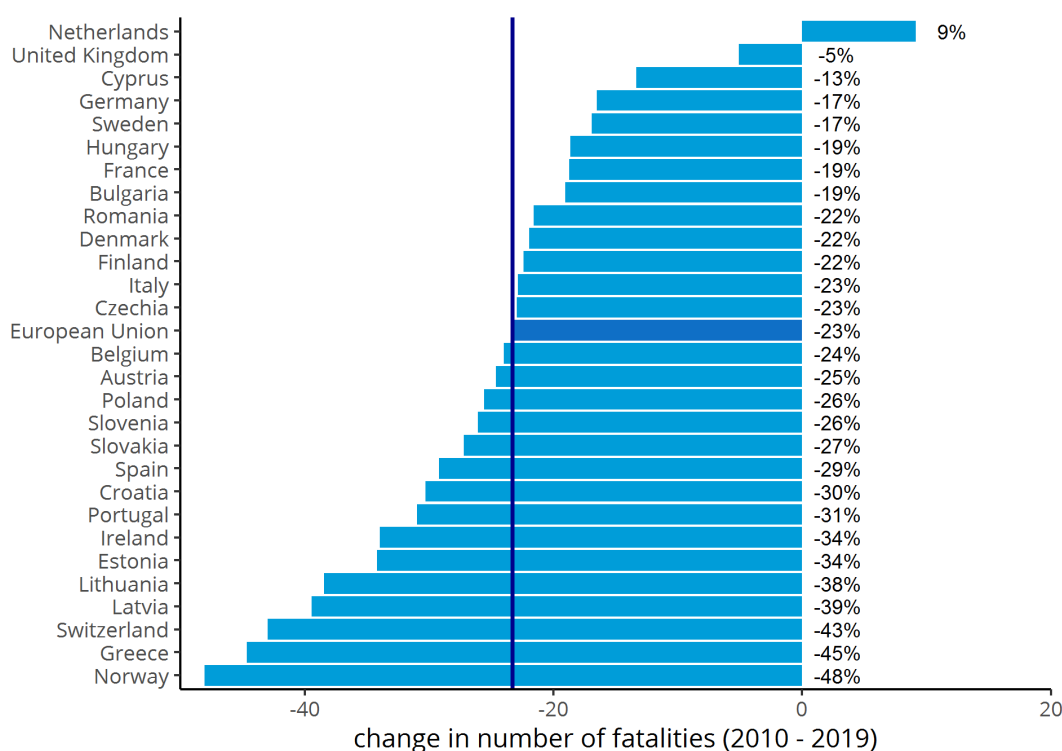
¹ Liechtenstein had no road fatalities in 2019

The vertical dark blue line shows that in 2019, the EU (excluding the UK) saw a total of 51 fatalities per million inhabitants. The five best performing EU countries in 2019 were Sweden (22), Ireland (29), Malta (32), the Netherlands (34) and Denmark (34). On the other side of the spectrum, the five least performing countries were Romania (96), Bulgaria (90), Poland (77), Croatia (73) and Latvia (69). EFTA members Iceland (17), Norway (20) and Switzerland (22) each performed exceptionally well.

2.2 Trend in number of fatalities

To examine which countries showed the largest reduction in the number of road fatalities, Figure 3 presents the long-term trend in the number of fatalities between 2010 and 2019 expressed as the percentage change in fatality numbers in 2019 compared to the fatality numbers in 2010.

Figure 3. Long-term trend in the number of road fatalities in the EU, EFTA² and UK (2010-2019), reference year: 2010.



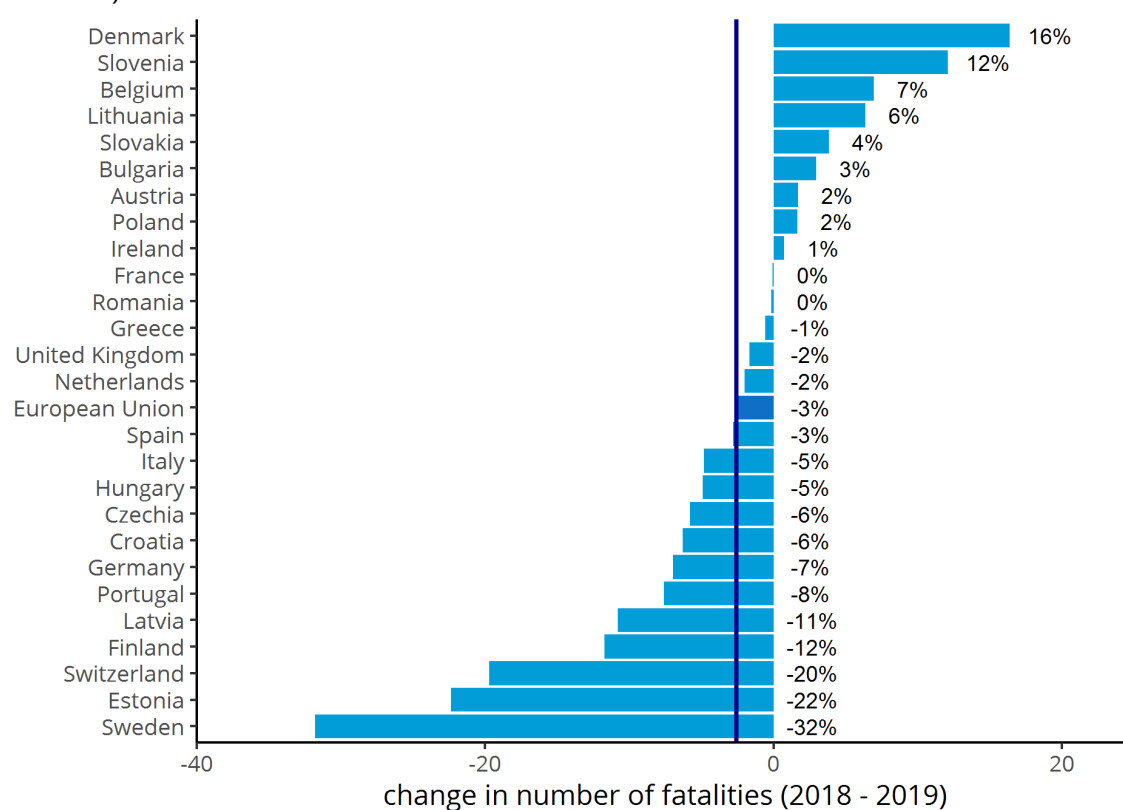
Note: Luxembourg (-31%), Malta (+23%) and Iceland (-25%) were excluded due to their small number of fatalities which tends to fluctuate from year to year.

² Liechtenstein had no road fatalities in 2019

On average across the EU, the total number of road fatalities dropped by 23% between 2010 and 2019. When ignoring countries with fewer than 40 fatalities per year, only the Netherlands has seen a rise (by 9%) in the number of road fatalities between 2010 and 2019 rather than a reduction. Most countries, however, have shown a reduction, with the largest reductions (at least 35%) for Norway, Greece, Switzerland, Latvia, and Lithuania. Some of these better-performing countries could reach the 50%-reduction-target for 2020.

The year-on-year changes between 2018 and 2019 are shown in Figure 4. The EU as a whole saw a 3% reduction in overall fatalities during this last recorded year. Two Member States experienced a substantial increase in fatalities: Denmark (16%), and Slovenia (12%) while a number of countries performed much better than the EU as a whole, with best EU performers Latvia, Finland, Estonia, Sweden and EFTA member Switzerland all showing a reduction of at least 10% (excluding countries with less than 40 fatalities per year)

Figure 4. Year-on-year change in the number of road fatalities in the EU, EFTA³ and UK (2018-2019).



Note: Luxembourg, Malta, and Iceland were excluded due to their small number of fatalities which tends to fluctuate from year to year.

2.3 Number of road fatalities (2019)

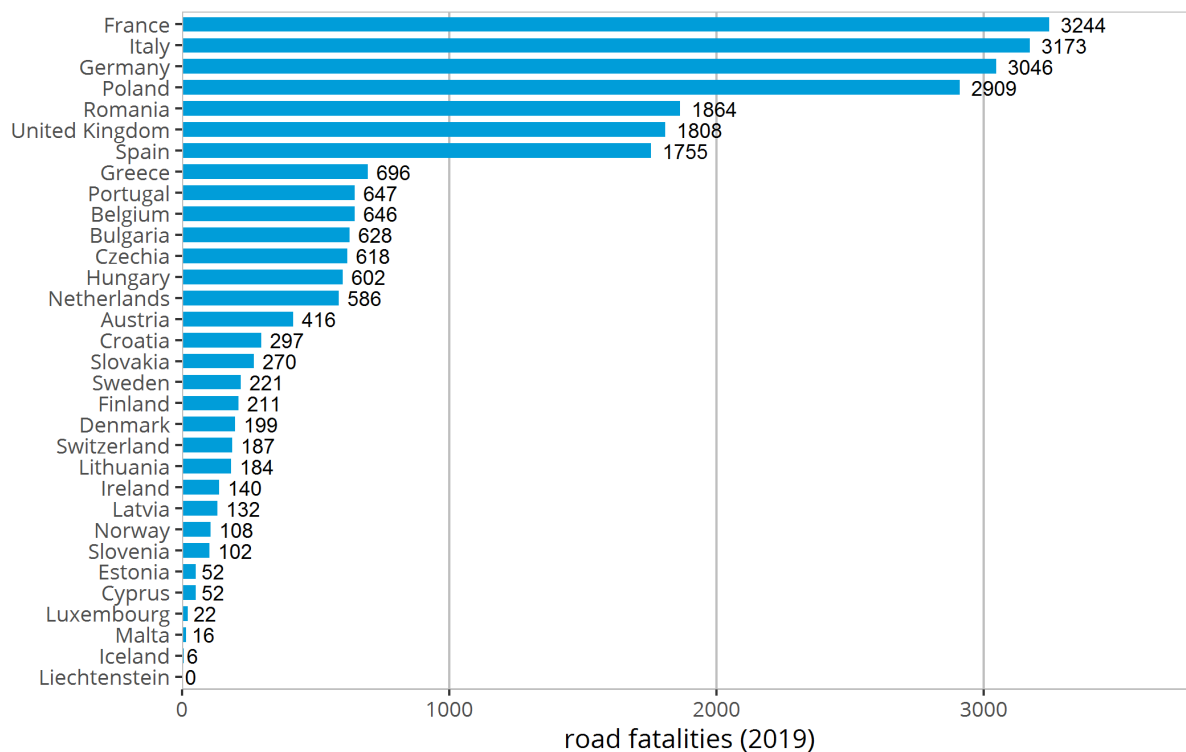
Figure 5 presents the number of road fatalities for each of the 27 EU countries, the four EFTA countries and the United Kingdom. In four EU countries (Italy, Germany, France, and Poland),

³ Liechtenstein had no road fatalities in 2019

the number of road fatalities is close to or exceeds 3,000. Two Member States (Romania and Spain) have between 1,800 and 1,870 road fatalities and six countries (Portugal, Greece, Czechia, Hungary, Bulgaria and Belgium) between 600 and 700 road fatalities. For all other EU countries, the number of fatalities is below 600.

Absolute numbers of fatalities cannot be meaningfully compared but should be related to the number of inhabitants of a country (road mortality), as was done in section 2.1 or to the distance travelled (fatality risk). The absolute number of fatalities is provided here simply to complement the data in section 2.1 and 2.2

Figure 5. Number of road fatalities in the EU, EFTA and UK (2019)^{4,5,6,7}



⁴ For a number of countries, the number of fatalities could be found in the CARE system at the extraction date, but for other countries, the number of fatalities were provided separately by the European Commission and have been published nationally.

⁵ Portugal - as of 2018, includes data for Azores and Madeira which account for around 4% of the total

⁶ Ireland - provisional figures for 2018 and 2019

⁷ Netherlands - The number of fatalities registered by the police is under-reported and equates to around 85% of the total number of fatalities published nationally. In 2019, the overall total was 661.

3 Synthesis

The EU target of reducing road fatalities by 50% during the 2010-2020 period will not be met. However, the underlying trend remains downward. Eight Member States registered their lowest fatality numbers on record in 2019: Croatia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Latvia, Luxembourg and Sweden. With only one year to go, no country has yet met the 50% reduction target although several countries have reduced their number by at least 30/35% with Greece experiencing the largest reduction of 45%.

EU-wide, the fatality rate was 51 fatalities per million inhabitants in 2019 but many of the countries performed better. The safest roads were in Sweden (22 deaths/million inhabitants) and Ireland (29/million), while Romania (96/million), Bulgaria (90/million) and Poland (77/million) reported the highest fatality rates in 2019.

The year-on-year change in the number of fatalities at EU level was 3%. Sweden, Finland and some of the smaller EU countries performed well during the last recorded year.

References

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Notes

The main data source for this report is CARE (Community database on road accidents). The database contains data that was obtained from national data sources, not only EU members but also from the UK and the 4 EFTA countries (Switzerland, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein). The database was last queried on 15 October 2020. As the database is not complete for all countries and all years, additional data was provided by the European Commission in order to be able to calculate totals for the EU-27 fatalities and derived ratios for individual countries. Non-CARE data were only used when no CARE data was available for the particular country and year

The number of inhabitants per country was retrieved from the Eurostat database on 23 May 2020.

Absolute numbers of fatalities can be very small for small countries, which can strongly influence derived ratios. Care should be taken when interpreting variations in numbers for these countries.