

Chapter 12

France

*This chapter presents the most recent crash data for France, as well as an update on the French road safety strategy and recently implemented safety measures.**

* All data stem from the Observatoire national interministériel de la sécurité routière (ONISR) and IRTAD unless otherwise noted. For more information please contact: onisr.dscr@interieur.gouv.fr.

Based on provisional data, France suffered 120 more fatalities in 2014 than the year before, as warm weather encouraged travel. While rain dampened the number of motorcycle trips in summer 2014, reducing seasonal motorcycle fatalities, motorcyclists still have a higher risk of fatality. While they account for less than 2% of distance travelled, motorcycles and mopeds represent 24% of total fatalities. The Minister of Interior announced on 26 January 2015 an action plan with 26 road safety measures to be implemented within a year.

Road safety data collection

Definitions applied in France

- Road fatality: Person who died within 30 days following a road crash. Before 2005, fatalities were counted within six days. For international comparisons, a correction factor of 1.069 is applied for years before 2005.
- Hospitalised: Non-fatal casualty who stayed longer than 24 hours in hospital. Before 2005, this category used a duration of hospital stay of more than 6 days.
- Slightly injured: Non-fatal casualty who received medical care but did not stay in hospital longer than 24 hours (or 6 days before 2005).
- Seriously injured: People who are injured with at least one injury ranking three or more on Maximum Abbreviated Injury Scale (MAIS3+), not including people who died within 30 days.

Data collection

French official road safety information comes from the National Road Traffic Accident (RTA) database and presents results for mainland France only, unless it is specifically specified that data from overseas areas are included.

Road traffic accidents leading to injury are recorded by the police forces onto their own software according to a dedicated format Injury Accident Analysis Bulletin (BAAC, *Bulletins d'analyse d'accident corporel*). These files are then gathered centrally into web-based software and constitute the National RTA database. This process is managed by the French Road Safety Observatory (ONISR, *Observatoire national interministériel de la sécurité routière*), with the assistance of technical teams from the French Research Centre on Risks, Environment, Mobility and Planning (CEREMA, *Centre d'études et d'expertise sur les risques, l'environnement, la mobilité et l'aménagement*) and the network of local Observatories to check and complement the information as necessary.

The latest version of the BAAC file dates from 2007. Proven suicides and intentional murders are not registered as a road traffic accident.

Monitoring the quality of data is also ensured partially by comparing with the Rhone registry, information gathered from hospitals of the Rhone County on all road traffic crash victims who went to hospitals for medical care. Information on the number of killed is very

accurate, as are the records. Serious injury crashes are usually recorded accurately as well, except for single vehicle crashes of powered two-wheelers and cyclists. Moreover, there are some variations across the country about the way slight injury accidents are recorded or not. The French Institute of Science and Technology for Transport, Development and Networks (IFSTTAR) estimates that the number of injured people is significantly underestimated and could be four times greater than the registered number.

As some expertise has been developed using both the Rhone registry and the National RTA database, IFSTTAR has been tasked with providing a national estimate for MAIS3+ victims to provide the relevant information requested by the European Commission for their 2014 baseline.

Most recent safety data

Road crashes in 2014 – provisional data

Based on provisional data, it is estimated that 120 more fatalities occurred in 2014 on French roads than in 2013, a 3.7% increase. This increase needs to take into account the favourable weather conditions in France in 2013, with a very cold and wet first semester.

There was a 15% decrease in fatalities between 2010 and 2014, a decrease similar to the period 2006 to 2010. However, while car occupant fatalities showed a slight increase compared to the significant drop the previous year, the situation was less favourable for cyclists and pedestrians, for whom fatalities increased dramatically in 2014 after failing to decrease significantly since 2008.

In 2014, temperatures were the warmest since 1900, enhancing personal mobility. However, the very rainy 2014 summer limited motorcycle outings and contributed to a significant decrease in the usual high number of summer motorcyclist fatalities.

Road crashes in 2013

In 2013, all safety indicators showed improvement. There were 3 268 reported road fatalities, representing a 10.5% decrease compared to 2012. This was the fourth largest decline since 1954, when digital statistics began.

Among the 3 268 road fatalities:

- Three quarters were male.
- 60% died on roads outside built-up areas.
- Nearly a quarter were less than 24 years old.
- Nearly a quarter died in a crash involving a driver with a licence not older than two years.
- A quarter were motorcyclists or moped users.

Trends in traffic and road safety (1990-2014)

Traffic

Between 1990 and 2013, the number of motorised vehicles increased by 39% and the overall vehicle kilometres driven by 35%. Over the past 10 years, including 2013, traffic has been more or less stable. Slight variations can be observed according to changes in fuel prices, and heavy goods vehicle (HGV) traffic trended downward with the economic downturn. The 2013 traffic level remained at the same level as 2012 for French trucks, which was rather low, but foreign traffic increased again slightly in 2013.

Road safety

Crashes and casualties

The number of road fatalities peaked in 1972 with about 18 000 fatalities. France had a fatality rate of 35 deaths per 100 000 inhabitants. Since then, the number of fatalities has followed a downward trend, with fluctuations from year to year. Between 1990 and 2013, the number of road fatalities decreased by more than 70%. Among the important events from **1990 to 2000**:

- In 1989 the publication of the White Paper on Road Safety paved the way for road safety policies on improving and enhancing enforcement that would come into effect 10 years later.
- The maximum speed limit in built-up areas was set at 50 km/h in 1990, and the maximum allowable blood alcohol content level (BAC) was lowered to 0.5 g/l.
- The demerit point system was introduced in 1992.
- Most motorway network construction was achieved during this period.
- Most vehicles were equipped with airbags.
- The educational continuum was implemented.

Despite these measures, fatalities only decreased by 20% in the decade, as traffic increased by 20%. In 2000, there were 15 people killed per billion vehicle kilometres driven and 14 per 100 000 inhabitants.

In July 2002, French President Jacques Chirac declared road safety to be one of his four main priorities. From **2000 to 2010**, important safety changes include:

- The first permanent automated speed cameras were introduced in 2003.
- A Road Safety National Council was installed for public and private stakeholders to meet and present action proposals to the government.
- Probationary licences were introduced in 2004.
- A driver caught exceeding the maximum blood alcohol concentration level would lose six demerit points out of 12 (or 6 out of 6 for drivers in their probation period).

These changes made it possible to break through the symbolic level of 5 000 fatalities per year in 2006. Fatalities fell by 51 % over the 10 year period. Experts attribute 75% of the improvement to a reduction in average speed and 11 % to improved vehicle safety. At the same time, traffic was up 7%.

Between **2010 and 2014**, fatalities decreased by 15%. The decrease was of 33% for moped riders, 21% for car occupants, 14% for HGV users and 11% for motorcyclists. Fatalities among the 18-24 year olds decreased by 30%. However, fatalities increased by 3% for pedestrians, and 9% for cyclists.

Rates

In 2013, the fatality rate expressed in terms of deaths per 100 000 inhabitants was 5.1 and the fatality risks, expressed in terms of deaths per billion vehicle-kilometres was 5.8. In 1990 the respective rates were 15.8 and 25.2, which means that the risk of dying on a French road was divided by about four between 1990 and 2013. During the same period, the number of vehicles per 1 000 inhabitants has increased by 24%.

Analysis of seriously injured data

IFSTTAR estimates the number of people in road traffic crashes with a MAIS3+ injury. Based on these estimates, 35 000 people were seriously injured in 2012; 43% used powered two-wheelers, 29% were car occupants, 14% cyclists and 11% pedestrians. This means that nearly 70% of the seriously injured are vulnerable road users.

These data also show a slower reduction in the number of people seriously injured compared to the number of fatalities, and wide variation for different road users. Between 2000 and 2012, the number of fatalities decreased by 55% while the number of seriously injured decreased by 43%. Between 2006 and 2012, the decrease was 22% for fatalities and 19% for MAIS3+. The table below shows the reduction in fatalities and seriously injured for various road user groups.

Table 12.1. **Evolution in the number of killed and seriously injured (MAIS3+) 2006-12**

	%	
	Fatalities	Seriously injured (MAIS3+)
All road users	-22	-19
Car occupants	-41	-28
Powered two wheelers riders	-25	-17
Pedestrians	-9	-18
Cyclists	-9	-5

Source: ONISR, IFSTTAR.

Table 12.2. **Road safety and traffic data**

	1990	2000	2010	2012	2013	2013 % change from				
						2012	2010	2000	1990	
Reported safety data										
Fatalities	10 999	8 170	3 992	3 653	3 268	-10.5	-18.1	-60.0	-70.3	
Injury crashes	162 573	121 223	67 288	60 437	56 812	-6.0	-15.6	-53.1	-65.1	
Injured persons hospitalised			30 393	27 142	25 966	-4.3	-14.6			
Deaths per 100 000 inhabitants	19.8	13.7	6.4	5.8	5.1	-10.9	-19.3	-62.6	-74.1	
Deaths per 10 000 registered vehicles	3.9	2.3	1.0	0.9	0.8	-9.8	-21.7	-65.9	-79.7	
Deaths per billion vehicle kilometres	25.2	15.8	7.1	6.5	5.8	-11.2	-19.2	-63.5	-77.2	
Traffic data										
Registered vehicles ¹ (thousands)	29 606	35 452	40 816	41 256	41 204	-0.1	0.9	16.2	39.2	
Vehicle kilometres (millions)	436 000	518 200	560 400	563 700	567 800	0.7	1.3	9.6	30.2	
Registered vehicles per 1 000 inhabitants	523	602	650	651	647	-0.6	-0.5	7.5	23.7	

1. Registered vehicles excluding mopeds.

Road safety by user group

The reduction in road deaths since 2000 did not benefit all categories of users in the same manner. The greatest reductions were observed for car occupants (-70%) and moped riders (-66%). The number of motorcyclists killed decreased by 33%.

The number of pedestrians and cyclists killed decreased respectively by 45% and 46%. These gains were achieved mainly in the first half of the period; and a stagnation was observed since 2007 for cyclists and since 2009 for pedestrians.

Powered two-wheelers (moped riders and motorcyclists) are overrepresented in road fatalities. While they account for less than 2% of distance travelled, they represent 24% of

Figure 12.1. Road safety and traffic data index 1990 = 100

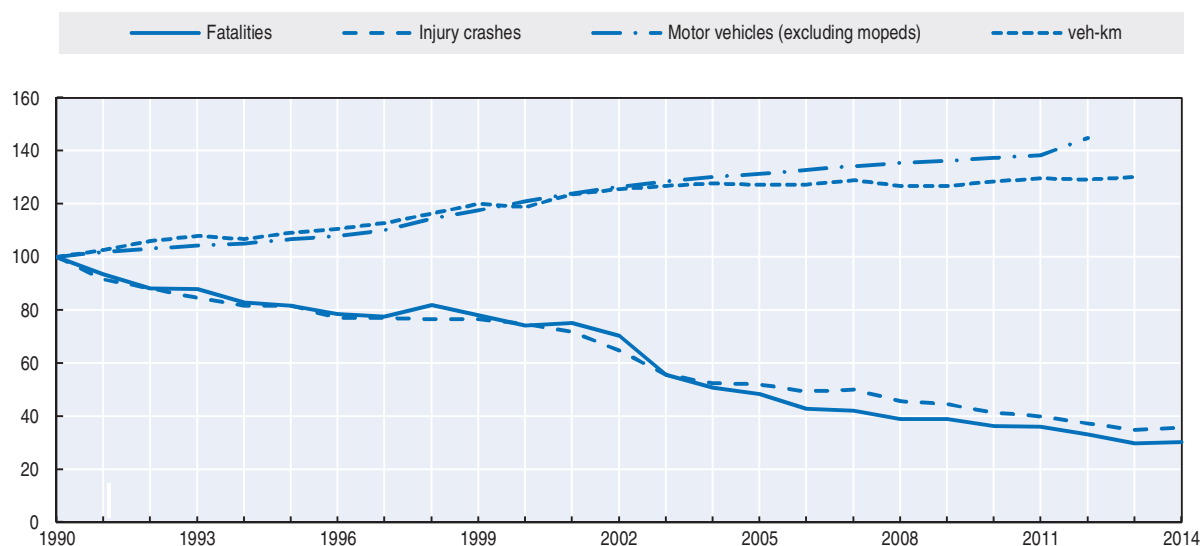


Table 12.3. Road fatalities by road user group

	1990	2000	2010	2012	2013	2013 % change from			
						2012	2010	2000	1990
Cyclists	429	273	147	164	147	-10.4	0.0	-46.2	-65.7
Moped users	702	461	248	179	159	-11.2	-35.9	-65.5	-77.4
Motorcyclists	1 011	947	704	664	631	-5.0	-10.4	-33.4	-37.6
Passenger car occupants	6 729	5 351	2 117	1 882	1 612	-14.3	-23.9	-69.9	-76.0
Pedestrians	496	848	485	489	465	-4.9	-4.1	-45.2	-6.3
Others	1 632	290	291	275	254	-7.6	-12.7	-12.5	-84.4
Total	10 999	8 170	3 992	3 653	3 268	-10.5	-18.1	-60.0	-70.3

total fatalities and 43% of the seriously injured. The risk of fatality per kilometre driven is 23 times higher for a motorcyclist than for a car occupant.

Road safety by age group

The 18-29 year olds are the most affected by road crashes, as young men are more often prone to risky behaviour (most of all driving at high speed), and most novice drivers are in this age group. The 20-24 group has a death rate twice as high as the 30-59 group. The 15-17 years old are also associated with a high number of injured hospitalised in the BAAC file, but their mortality is now moderate following a strong decrease in the number of moped riders in the 2000s.

Since 2000, the different age groups have followed different trends. This is the result of both an evolution in individual risk and demographic change. For the entire population, the death rate per 100 000 inhabitants (or individual risk) was reduced from 13.9 in 2000 to 5.1 in 2013, a decrease by 63%. The decrease was greater than the average for the 0-14 and 15-17 (respectively 75% and 71%) and lower than the average for the person 75 years old or more (-57%). People between 18 and 75 years have a fatality risk close to the average.

Regarding the impact of demographic changes, the population is increasing for the 45-64 age group (the baby boomers) and those 75 and above. As a consequence between

2000 and 2013, the number of fatalities among these age groups has declined more slowly than for the average population (respectively by 51% and 40%). Older people are particularly vulnerable as pedestrians.

Child safety

Children up to 14 years old represented 3% of fatalities in 2013 and 18% of the French population. Child fatalities decreased by 65% between 2000 and 2010, and by 25% between 2010 and 2013. Children have benefited from the decrease of car occupant fatalities and from the decrease in the use of mopeds.

Road safety measures that targeted this age group were:

- In 1992, the requirement to use child specific restraints for children under 10.
- In 1997, compulsory training leading to a diploma (“*Brevet de sécurité routière*”) in order to be able to use a moped.
- In 2003, an increase in the severity of the penalty (number of demerit points) for not wearing a seat belt.
- In the 2000s, a strong increase in school public transport services, reducing the need to use a moped.

In 2013, a quarter of children killed and nearly half of those injured were pedestrians.

Table 12.4. Road fatalities by age group

Age	1990	2000	2010	2012	2013	2013 % change from			
						2012	2010	2000	1990
0-5	204	125	45	41	44	7.3	-2.2	-64.8	-78.5
6-9	124	68	27	22	24	9.1	-11.1	-64.9	-80.6
10-14	207	173	58	52	29	-44.2	-50.0	-83.3	-86.0
15-17	463	354	161	131	102	-22.1	-36.6	-71.2	-78.0
18-20	1 131	867	370	334	253	-24.3	-31.6	-70.8	-77.6
21-24	1 563	879	461	419	383	-8.6	-16.9	-56.4	-75.5
25-64	5 672	4 204	2 105	1 909	1 745	-8.6	-17.1	-58.5	-69.2
≥ 65	1 607	1 358	764	745	688	-7.7	-9.9	-49.3	-57.2
Total	10 999	8 170	3 992	3 653	3 268	-10.5	-18.1	-60.0	-70.3

Road safety by road type

France has more than 1 million kilometres of roads, of which 80% is rural (not including interurban motorways). When fatalities per billion vehicle-kilometres travelled are broken down by type of road, the risk on country roads is much higher. Motorways are the safest network, since they absorb 25% of the traffic and account for 8% of fatalities.

In 2013, 64% of fatalities occurred on rural roads, 28% on urban roads and 8% on motorways. More than half of people killed die on a road with a 90 km/h speed limit outside built-up areas.

Since 2000, the decrease in the number of fatalities in built up areas and rural roads has been of the same magnitude, about 60%. On the motorway network, the number of fatalities decreased more than on the rest of the network up to 2008 but mortality has stagnated since.

Figure 12.2. Road death rates by age group
Fatalities per 100 000 inhabitants in a given age group, 1990-2013

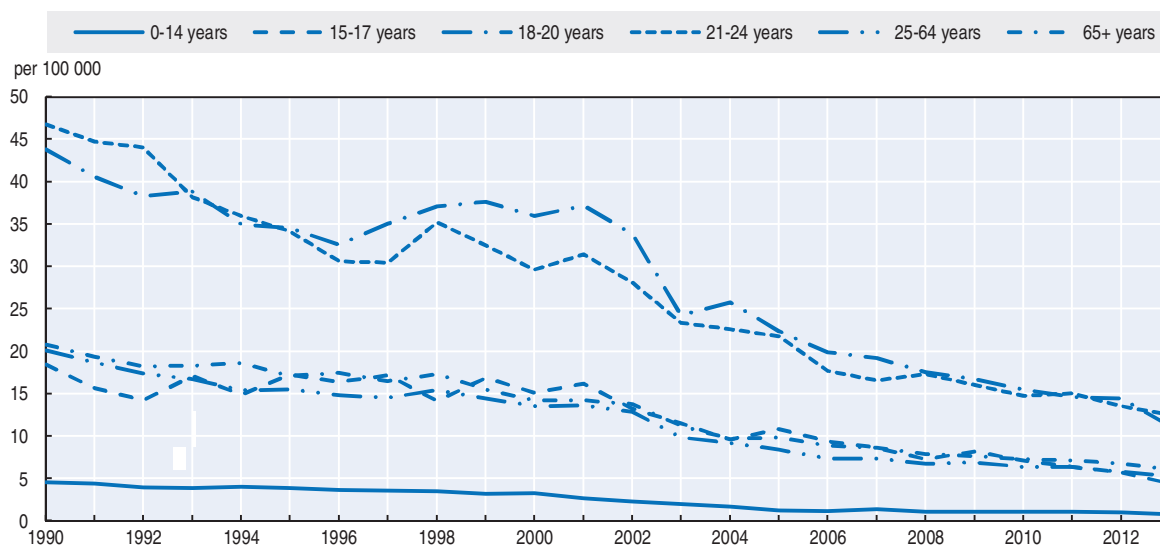
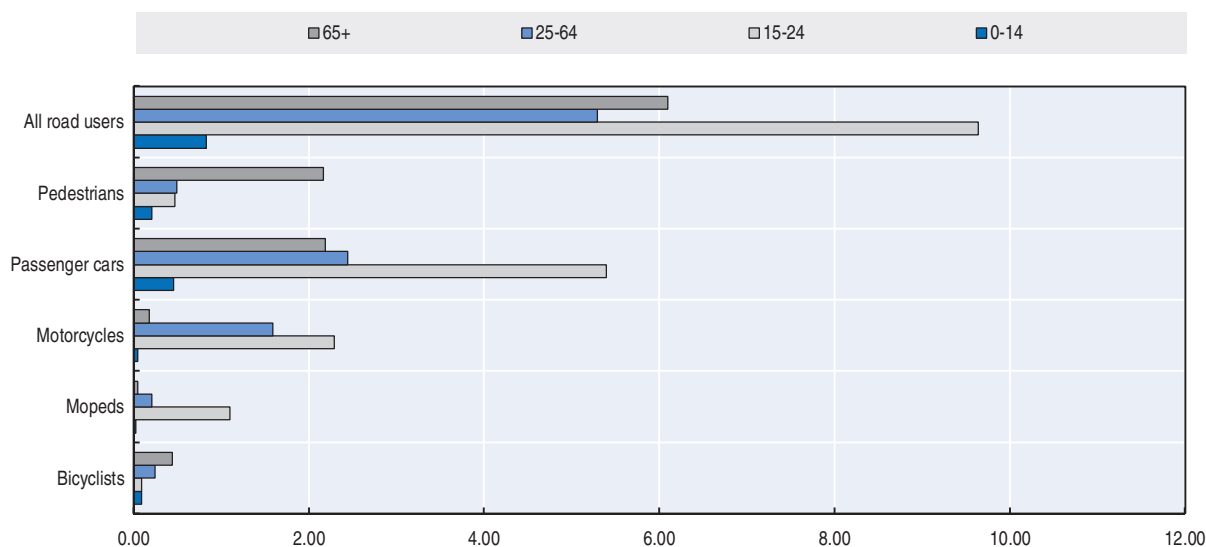


Figure 12.3. Road death rate by age and road user group
Fatalities per 100 000 inhabitants, 2013

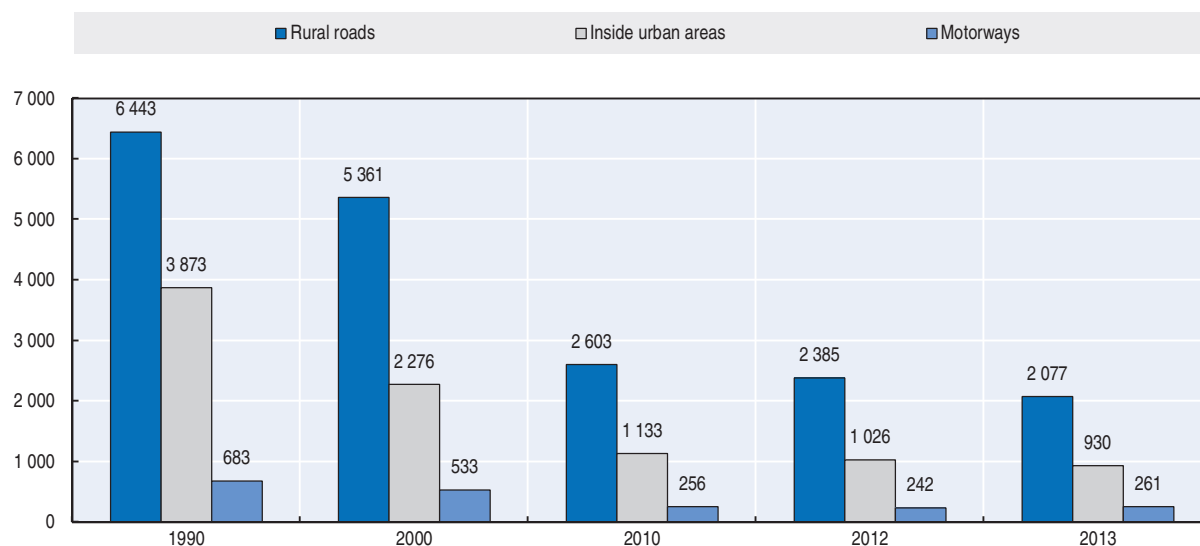


Economic costs of traffic crashes

Road traffic crashes represent a significant cost for society. Based on reported crashes, the cost was estimated in 2013 at about EUR 37.3 billion, or 1.7% of the gross domestic product. These costs cannot be directly compared to the costs published for previous years, as unit values for a road fatality, injured person and property damage have been rebased following a 2014 instruction on the socio economic evaluation of projects following recommendations from the OECD (CGSP, 2013).

Costs of road crashes take into account production losses, affective loss for the relatives, medical costs and the loss of quality of life. New values are set in Euros 2010 and are re-evaluated each year following GDP per capita. In 2014, the following values are applied:

Figure 12.4. Road fatalities by road type



- EUR 3 223 million for a road fatality (it was EUR 1 342 million before the 2014 revision)
- EUR 402 826 for a hospitalised person (it was EUR 143 787 before the 2014 revision)
- EUR 16 113 for a person slightly injured (it was EUR 5 752 before the 2014 revision)
- EUR 4 941 for property damage of each injury crash (it was EUR 6 778 before the 2014 revision).

Table 12.5. Costs of road crashes, 2014

	Unit cost	Total
Fatalities	EUR 3.223 million	EUR 10.5 billion
Hospitalised persons	EUR 402 826	EUR 10.5 billion
Slight injuries	EUR 16 113	EUR 0.7 billion
Property damage costs of injury crashes	EUR 4 941	EUR 0.3 billion
Property damage costs of non-injury crashes		EUR 15.3 billion
Total		EUR 37.3 billion
Total as % of GDP		1.7%

The total costs could actually be much higher, when taking into account non-reported crashes. IFSTTAR estimates that the number of injured people could be four times greater than the registered number, and the number of hospitalised nearly twice as great. This could lead to an additional EUR 24 billion and a global total of EUR 50 billion, representing 2.3% of the GDP of France.

Recent trends in road user behaviour

Impaired driving

Drink driving

The maximum authorised BAC is 0.5 g/l for all drivers (including cyclists) and 0.2 g/l for bus drivers.

It is estimated that alcohol is the principal cause in 20% of fatal crashes. In 2013, 4 774 injury crashes and 762 fatalities were recorded in which a driver had a BAC equal to or above the legal limit. However, when taking into account fatal crashes for which the BAC has not been recorded, the estimated number of fatalities with alcohol as a factor is 952 for 2013 (i.e. 29% of all fatalities).

Drinking and driving involves all age groups.

Drugs and driving

In 2013, there were 19 700 reported prosecutions for drugs and driving; this is four times as many as in 2007 but represents a police effort to enforce this type of infringements rather than an increase in that type of risk.

A driver was controlled positive for illegal drugs in crashes involving 436 fatalities, but even more than for alcohol, results are not well registered in the national BAAC database. Therefore, when taking into account fatal crashes for which drug test results are not known, the estimated number of fatalities with illegal drugs as a factor is 686 for 2013, or 21% of all fatalities.

It is estimated that illegal drugs are the main cause of 4% of fatal crashes.

Half of the drivers testing positive in a drug test also have a BAC level above the legal limit.

A study among drivers estimated that 3% of crashes could be attributed to the consumption of medical drugs.

Distraction

Some studies show that between 25% and 50% of injury crashes are due to a lack of attention, but these incidents are difficult to report. In police files, the factor “distracted attention” was mentioned for 273 fatal cases in 2013 (8.7% of fatalities), 240 due to drivers’ lack of attention and 33 due to pedestrians’ lack of attention.

It is forbidden to drive with a hand-held mobile phone, but the use of hands-free mobile phones is tolerated. A study undertaken in 2010 estimated that 10% of injury crashes could be attributed to phone use while driving.

While phoning while driving is a growing concern, the concern is even bigger as the number of communication functions offered by a smartphone is expanding. A survey by AXA prevention in 2014 (TNS Sofres, 2015) showed that:

- 22% of car drivers use their smartphone for its GPS navigation function.
- 19% of car drivers read or send a text message while driving.
- 3% of car drivers send or read an email.
- 1% read the news or watch a video.

Sleepiness and fatigue

Among contributing factors to a crash, police files include sickness and fatigue. According to these files, sickness/fatigue is a contributing factor in 8.3% of fatal crashes. Its prevalence is more important on motorways, where it is reported as a contributing factor in 18% of fatal crashes.

Speed

In 2013, inappropriate or excessive speed was the main cause in 25% of fatal crashes.

Since 2000, average speeds during daytime have decreased by 10 km/h or more on all non-urban networks. Car speeds decreased the most, as cars were the first targeted by automatic speed cameras. HGV speeds started decreasing later in the period and in a more moderate way. Motorcycle average speeds have also decreased, but they remain nearly 10% higher than car average speeds.

The table below summarises the main speed limits in France.

Table 12.6. Passenger car speed limits by road type, 2015

	General speed limit	Comments
Urban roads	50 km/h	
Rural roads	90 km/h	80 km/h in wet weather or for novice drivers
Dual carriageways	110 km/h	100 km/h in wet weather or for novice drivers
Motorways	130 km/h	110 km/h in wet weather or for novice drivers

Seat belts and helmets

Seat belt wearing has been compulsory in front seats in urban areas by night and urban motorways since 1975 and all the time since 1979. They are compulsory in rear seats since 1990. Children under 10 must be seated in a rear seat and be adequately restrained, taking into account their weight and height.

The seat belt wearing rate is among the highest in OECD countries; however, there is still room for improvement, especially for the rear seats. In 2013, 20% of car occupants killed and 38% of utilitarian vehicle occupants killed were not wearing a seat belt or the seat belt was not well buckled when the crash occurred. It is estimated that 150 lives could have been saved if all vehicle occupants had worn their seat belt.

Table 12.7. Seat belt wearing rate by car occupancy and road type

	%	
	2005	2012
Front seat		
Urban roads	94.2	95.8
Motorways	98.3	98.6
Rear seats		
Adults – Urban roads	66	71
Adults – Motorways	73	84
Children (use of child restraint) – Urban roads	85	89
Children (use of child restraint) – Motorways	82	94

Wearing a helmet was made compulsory in 1973 for motorcyclists with engines over 125 cc, for moped riders and for motorcyclists with engines of 50cc to 125cc in rural areas. This obligation was extended to urban areas in 1975. Helmet-wearing rate of powered two-wheelers (it is difficult to discriminate between mopeds and motorcycles during observations) is almost 100% during week days but only 90% during the weekend. In 2012, 23 motorcyclists killed (3.6%) and 19 moped riders killed (11.9%) did not wear a helmet.

There is no mandatory helmet use law for cyclists. However, recent research by IFSTTAR has demonstrated that the risk of severe injury was considerably reduced when wearing a helmet. In particular the chance of a severe head injury (MAIS3+) was reduced by 66% in urban areas and by 97% outside urban areas.

National road safety strategies and targets

Organisation of road safety

Since the change of government in 2012, the lead agency for road safety (Road Safety Inter-ministerial Directorate) reports to the Minister of the Interior. The Minister of the Interior chairs the Inter-ministerial Road Safety Committee, an assembly of ministries' representatives in which decisions are taken. The ONISR observatory reports to the road safety director and is in charge of managing the road traffic accident database, analysing road safety performance and organizing research to prepare for new measures. It is also in charge of assisting the National Road Safety Council, composed of 50 members from public service, enterprises, victims and road users' representatives, in presenting road safety action proposals to the government.

Road safety strategy for 2011-20

In order to reduce the number of road deaths by half over the period 2011-20, which would mean fewer than 2 000 persons killed on French roads at the end of the decade, the government has tasked the National Road Safety Counsel to work on new road safety measures. In the meantime, the Ministry of Interior works with other ministries on more technical measures that are required and assesses the feasibility and implementation of what the National Road Safety Counsel proposes.

The key priorities identified by the government are to:

- reduce fatalities among young people and novice drivers
- reduce fatalities among motorised two-wheelers
- combat the main crash-contributing factors of speed and impaired (alcohol/drug) driving.

The Minister of Interior announced on 26 January 2015 an action plan with 26 road safety measures to be implemented within a year. The 26 measures aim at all issues dealing with road safety, in particular to reduce injuries to vulnerable road users as they represent 70% of the seriously injured.

Road safety targets

The current target of the French government is to reduce the number of road fatalities below 2 000 by 2020, which is in line with the European Commission goal to reduce by half the number of fatalities by 2020.

Monitoring

Since 2013, national indicators were calculated for each region over a three-year period, and progress on the overall fatality numbers are benchmarked against the 2010 baseline. In 2015, dashboards with these indicators will be issued on a quarterly basis to all county executives to assist them in the way they manage their local road safety action plans.

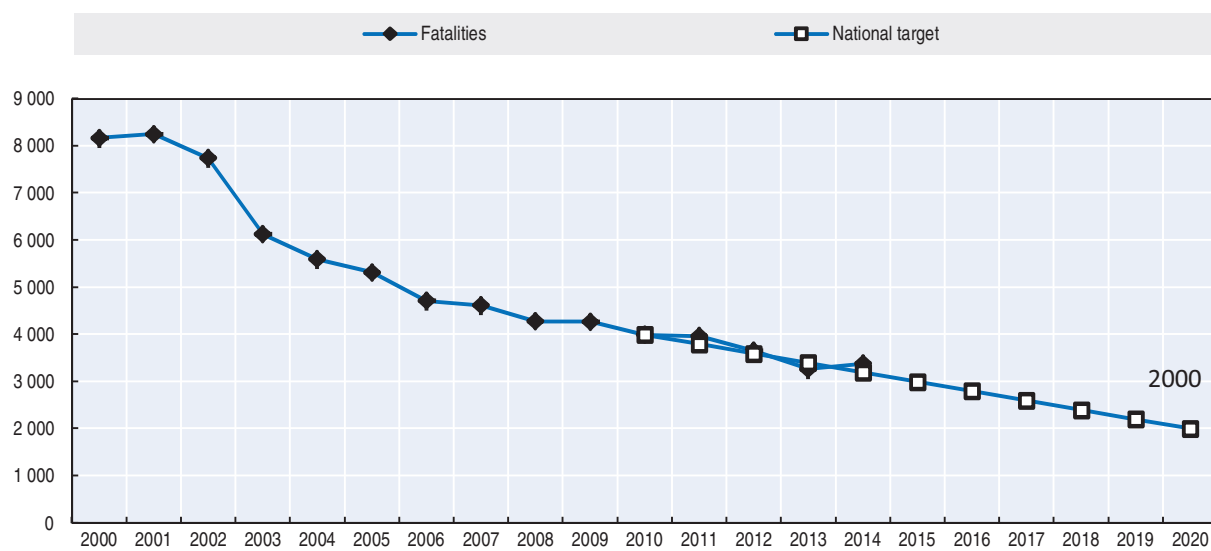
At the end of 2014, France is estimated to be one year behind to achieve the 2020 target.

Recent safety measures (2012-14)

Road safety management

- The expert committee advising the National Road Safety Counsel produced a first report in 2013 advising on measures to reduce the number of fatalities, including a reduced

Figure 12.5. Trends in road fatalities towards national target



speed limit on single carriageways, the use of alcolocks, a reduced number of road side obstacles and strengthened road safety management. A specific report on road users with a higher risk (cyclists, motorcyclists, young people and seniors) was finalised in 2014.

- The National Road Safety Counsel issued 17 recommendations to the government. Some of them have already been implemented (e.g. signs to announce fixed speed cameras, communication rather than enforcement around the use of self-alcohol testing, promoting accompanied driver education). Others were among the 26 measures announced in January 2015 by the Minister of Interior (e.g. regulations for motorcyclists driving between two lanes, forbidding the use of ear pieces and audio head sets, standardising powered two wheelers number plates, defining auditing methods for local road networks to deal with road side obstacles, experimenting with some reduction in speed limits on single carriageways).
- Working groups with ministries on specific topics will continue to provide new measures. This method was preferred to the organisation of a one-off Inter-ministerial National Committee. Main ministries involved currently are Ecology/Transport (auditing road networks and decreasing speed in relation to pollution and global warming), Justice (securing enforcement and implementing alcolock) and Health (alcohol BAC level and more efficient drugs testing).

Road users

Driving license

- As a result of a European Directive, since January 2013 new driving licence categories were created to implement progressive access to more powerful motorised two-wheelers: AM for mopeds and A2 for motorcycles of average power.
- Since 1 November 2014, accompanied driving practice is possible from the age of 15 (instead of 16 before). Those young people will be able to take the driving license examination at 17½, although they will not be driving on their own before they turn 18.

Speed management

- At the end of 2013, there were 2 473 fixed speed cameras, 867 mobile speed cameras and 712 traffic light radars. Fixed speed cameras are spread across all networks: 15% on motorways, 27% on trunk roads, 55% on county roads and 5% on local roads. Traffic light radars are spread even (a third each) across major cities (more than 500 000 inhabitants), middle cities (between 100 000 and 500 000 inhabitants) and minor cities (fewer than 100 000 inhabitants). The current objective is to modernise the cameras in place and to stabilise the total number of cameras to 4 200 devices (both for speed and traffic).
- In 2014, the speed camera fleet was strengthened with new automated speed cameras including control of average speeds across highway sections. Other new automated cameras enforce stops at train crossings and traffic lights. In 2015 France is experimenting with fixed speed cameras that catch excess speed in both directions, speed cameras that take pictures of both the front and rear of the vehicle, and traffic light radars to determine if they can be adapted to capturing excessive speed as well.

Protective equipment for motorcyclists

- A guide was released in 2012 to promote the benefits of individual protective equipment. In 2014 and 2015, a partnership with insurance companies, protective equipment providers and bikers' associations set up an incentive scheme for users of motorised two-wheelers to purchase personal protective equipment as a package deal (gloves, boots, clothing and possibly an airbag suit).

Education and awareness

- In 2013, a new communication campaign was launched on the dangers of excessive or inappropriate speed: "The faster you drive, the more irreversible the consequences". It was complemented in 2014 by another campaign, "We regret speeding only when it is too late".
- National advertising campaigns to combat alcohol and drug consumption when driving were widely disseminated (with the well-known character "SAM, the guy who drives and does not drink").
- A new initiative took place concerning text messaging ("When you look at your smartphone while driving, who looks at the road?").
- Important advertising campaigns for motorised two-wheeler users are conducted each year. In order to make motorcyclists aware of crash circumstances, the slogan was: "With motorcycles, the danger is in thinking that there is none!" The film won an award at the 2013 Global Road Safety Festival.

Infrastructure

- New motorways are being equipped with rumble strips on the edges of road markings to prevent crashes due to drowsiness.
- As one of the 26 priority measures of January 2015, it will be possible to set additional yellow "no entry" signs on exit slip roads to warn people about accessing the motorway the wrong way.

Vehicles

- In order to better know the mechanisms of crashes, the French government supports the European initiative to look into the feasibility of standardising CAN bus data in vehicles and making them available for research purposes.

Recent and ongoing research

Some research projects are presented below.

- Road Safety and Education in secondary schools – Assessment of the actions (PERLE)

The results of the survey between 2012 and 2013 show that every year 50% of secondary schools hold a road safety event. To be effective, the actions have to target a main topic (seat belt for example). The assessment of the actions conducted in schools indicates that the results obtained are specific to each action and each school (Cestac et al., 2013).

- Prevention and risks assessment (PREVER)

The aim of the research undertaken by IFSTTAR is to strengthen the knowledge in accidentology and risk exposure; developing knowledge in the field of naturalistic driving; studying specificities of motorised two-wheelers; assessing measures in the treatment of the risks. <http://actions-icinitatives.ifsttar.fr/orsi-mobilites/encours/prever/>.

- Saving lives by return of analysis on accidents (SVRAI)

The research points out the contribution of crash analysis to road infrastructure and diagnosis of driver behaviour. www.ouest.cerema.fr/IMG/pdf/2011-10-11_Projet_SVRAI.pdf.

- Safety of powered two-wheelers in urban areas

The study analysed different crash scenarios of scooters and maxi scooters, which are involved in approximately 40% of injury crashes involving motorised two-wheelers. (Van Elslande et al., 2014).

- In-depth investigations of crashes involving light goods vehicles (EDAVUL)

The aim of this research project is to identify parameters having a leading role in various types of crashes involving light good vehicles.

- Estimation of the real number of seriously injured people in road crashes

This project is based on the linkage of the BAAC and the Rhone County hospital files to assess the real number of people seriously injured. Results are then extrapolated to estimate the number of people injured on the whole territory of France.

- “Health and driving”

This website gathers information from the latest news and scientific papers on ability to drive. <http://medecins.inserr.org/>.

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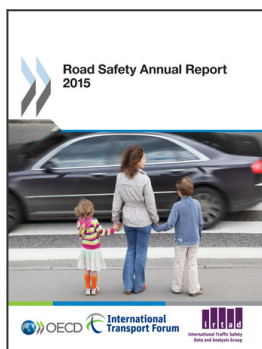
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- IFSTTAR – The French institute of science and technology for transport, development and networks: www.ifsttar.fr/.
- CEREMA – The French research centre on risks, environment, mobility and planning www.cerema.fr.



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