

European Road Safety Observatory

Road safety targets Monitoring report

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Reporting period 2000-2020



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Version	1.2, November 2021
Authors	Rob Decae, Charles Goldenbeld (SWOV)
Internal review	Annelies Schoeters (Vias institute)
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Sources	All information in this document for 2020 and before is based on data in the CARE database. For 2020, information is based partly on preliminary data. Date of extraction: 8th of November 2021.

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1 Trend in the number of fatalities in the EU

1.1 Observed fatalities and EU target

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 was met and compares the EU target (dark blue line) and presents the observed number (light blue line) across the 27 EU Member States.

Figure 1. Observed fatalities and EU target

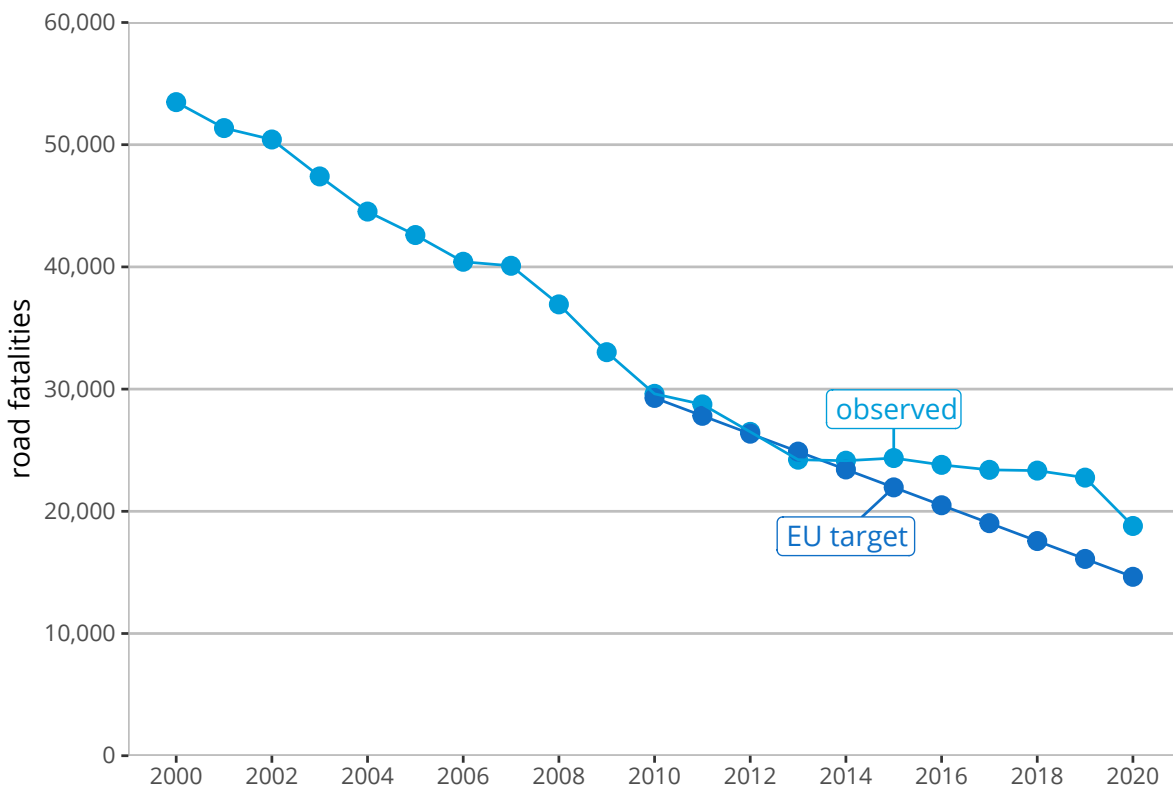


Figure 1 shows that between 2010 and 2014 the number of observed road fatalities was close to or even below the targeted value numbers. In contrast, during the five subsequent years, the number of road fatalities stabilised between 23,400 and 22,500. As a consequence, in 2020 the observed number of fatalities exceeded the target by over 4,100. The EU target for 2020 was not met. However, significant progress was made: in 2020, the number of fatalities was 65% lower than in 2000 and 36% lower than in 2010.

2 Fatalities by country

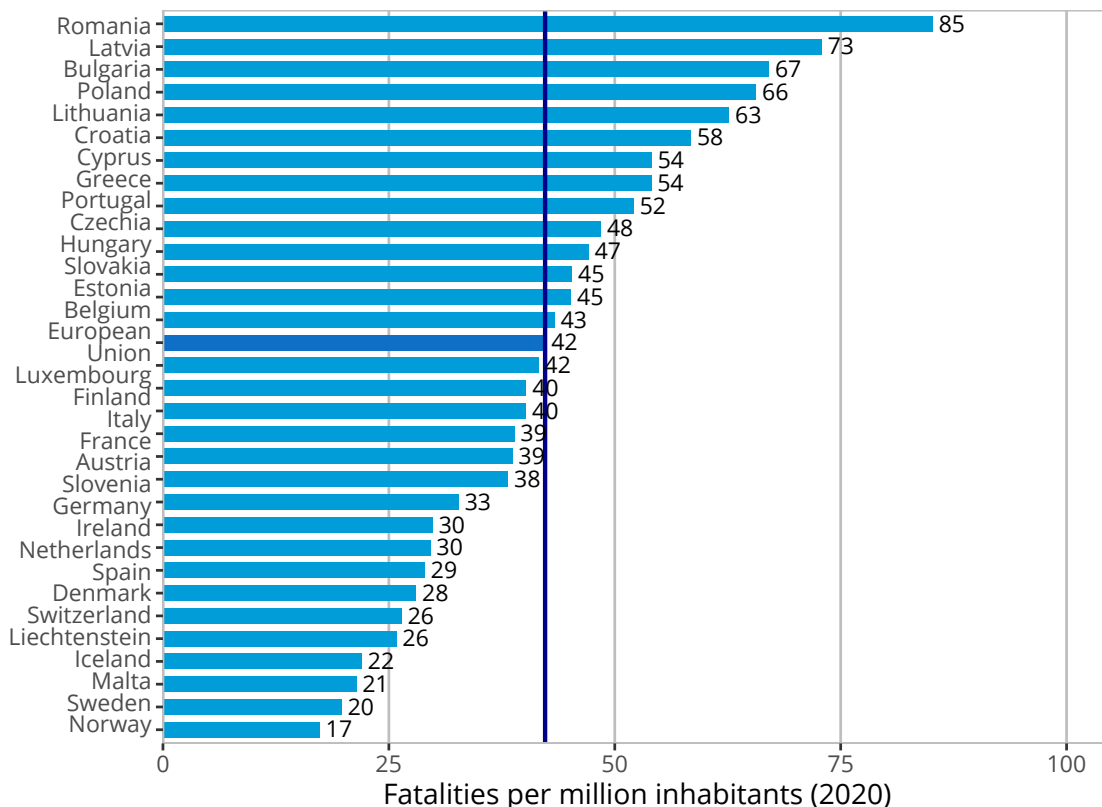
This section will take a closer look at road safety data on the individual country level. The following subsections will present data on:

- Mortality per country in 2020 (Sect. 2.1)
- Long-term and short-term changes in the number of fatalities per country between 2010-2020 (Sect. 2.2).
- Road fatalities per country in 2020 (Sect. 2.3)

2.1 Mortality: the number of fatalities per million inhabitants (2020)

Larger countries often have higher total 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 2020 mortality figures for the 27 EU Member States and the EFTA countries.

Figure 2. Road mortality (number of road fatalities per million inhabitants) in the EU and EFTA¹ (2020).



The vertical dark blue line shows that in 2020, the EU saw a total number of fatalities per million inhabitants of 42. The five best performing EU countries in 2020 were Sweden (20),

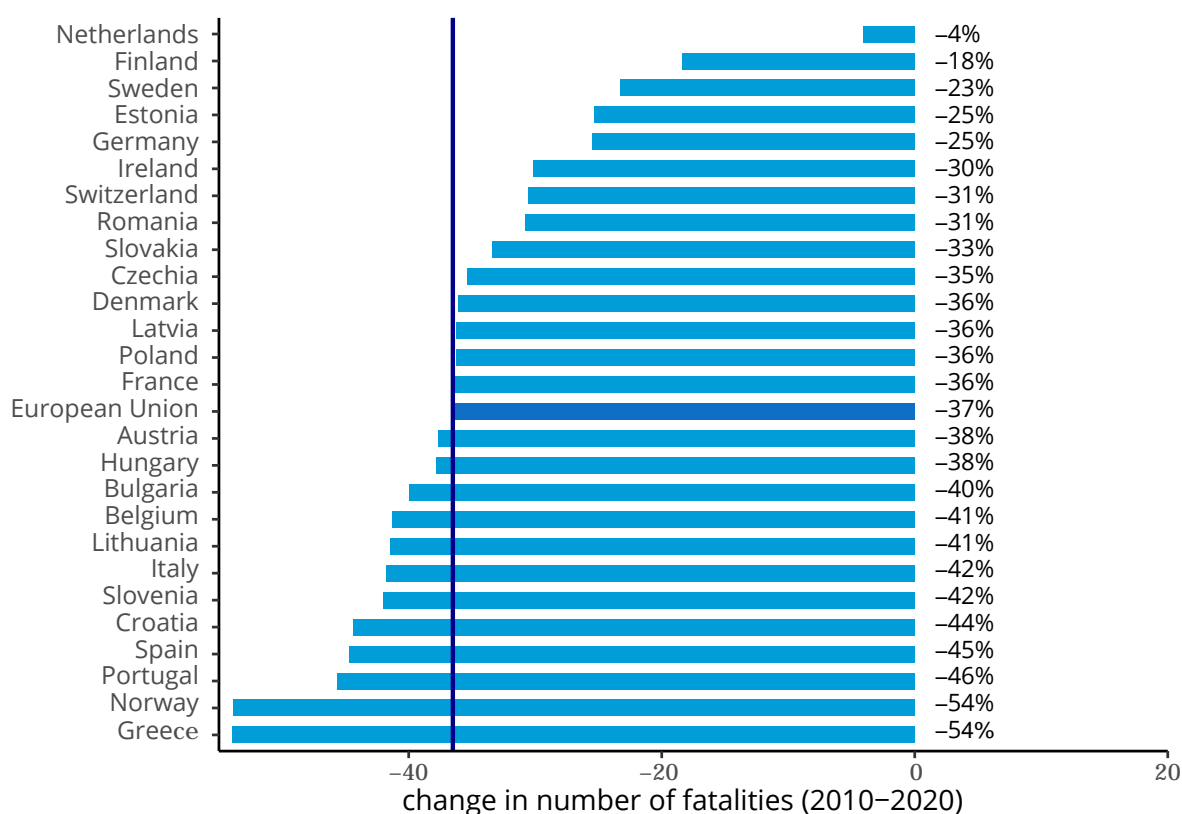
¹Liechtenstein had 1 road fatality in 2020.

Malta (21), Denmark (28), Spain (29) and the Netherlands (30). On the other side of the spectrum, the five least performing countries were Romania (85), Latvia (73), Bulgaria (67), Poland (66) and Lithuania (63). EFTA members Norway (17) and Iceland (22) both performed exceptionally well.

2.2 Trends in the number of fatalities

To examine which countries were most able to reduce their number of road fatalities, Figure 3 presents the long-term trend in the number of fatalities between 2010 and 2020 expressed as the percentage change in fatality numbers in 2020 compared to the fatality numbers in 2010.

Figure 3. Long-term trend in the number of road fatalities in the EU and EFTA² (2010-2020), reference year: 2010.



Note: Iceland (0%), Cyprus (-20%), Luxembourg (-19%) and Malta (-15%) were excluded due to their small number of fatalities which tends to fluctuate from year to year. Portugal - From 2018 onwards, data includes the NUTS I regions Região Autónoma dos Açores (PT2) and Região Autónoma da Madeira (PT3). The figure for the trend 2010-2020 excludes these two regions.

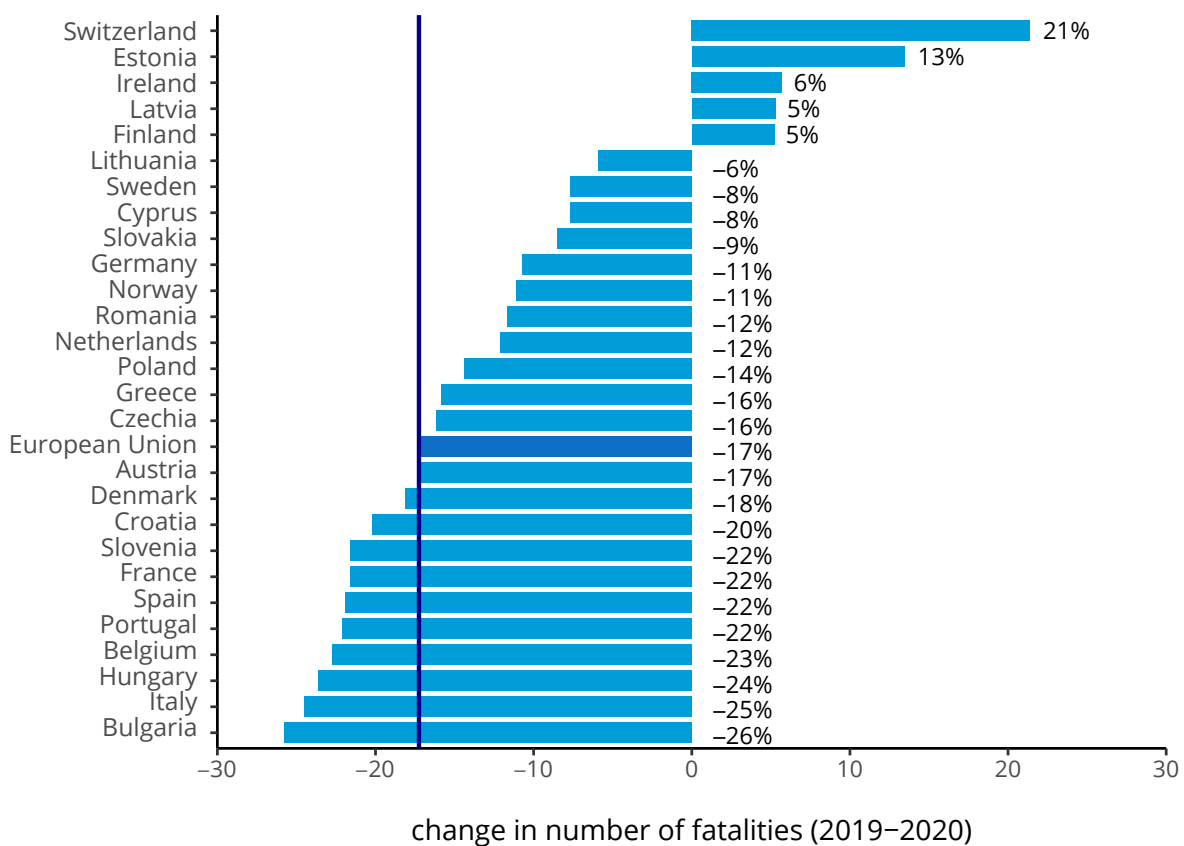
On average across the EU, the total number of road fatalities dropped by 36% between 2010 and 2020. When ignoring countries with less than 50 fatalities per year, all countries showed a reduction in the number of road fatalities between 2010 and 2020.

²Liechtenstein had 1 road fatalities in 2020.

The largest reductions (42% or more) were observed for Greece, Norway, Spain, Croatia, Portugal, Slovenia and Italy. Two of these better-performing countries reached the 50%-reduction-target for 2020.

The year-on-year changes between 2019 and 2020 are shown in Figure 4. The EU as a whole saw a 17% reduction in overall fatalities during this last recorded year. When ignoring countries with less than 50 fatalities per year, two countries experienced a substantial increase in fatalities: Switzerland (21%) and Estonia (13%), while a number of countries performed much better than the EU as a whole, with best EU performers Bulgaria and Italy showing a reduction of at least 25%.

Figure 4. Year-on-year change in the number of road fatalities in the EU³ and EFTA⁴ (2019-2020).



³ Three countries had less than 50 fatalities during last year: Iceland (33%) ,Luxembourg (18%) and Malta (-31%). These countries are not included in the graph.

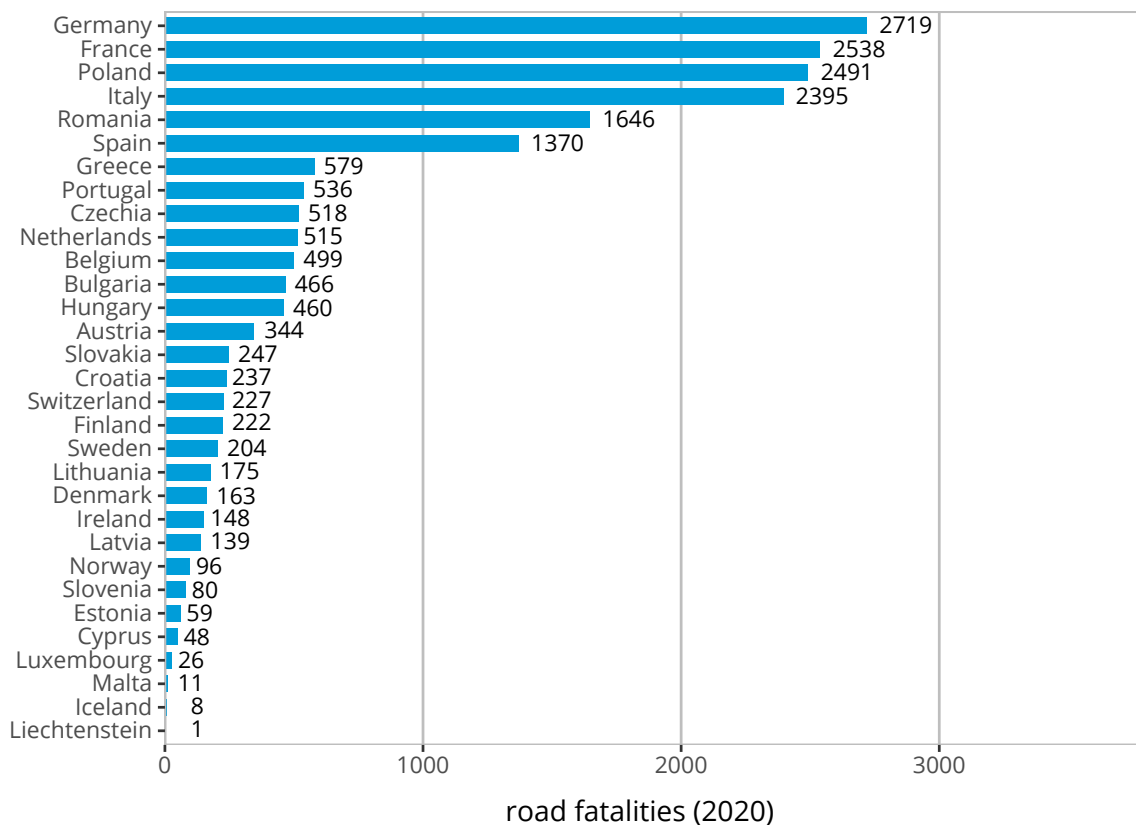
⁴ Liechtenstein had 1 road fatalities in 2020 and none in 2019.

2.3 Number of road fatalities (2020)

Figure 5 presents the number of road fatalities for each of the 27 EU countries and the four EFTA countries^{6,7,8,9}. In four EU countries (Italy, Germany, France, and Poland), the number of road fatalities approaches or exceeds 3,000. Two Member States (Romania and Spain) have between 1,000 and 1,700 road fatalities and four countries (Portugal, Greece, Czechia and the Netherlands) between 500 and 600 road fatalities. For all other EU countries, the number of fatalities is below 500.

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 to complement the data in section 2.1 and 2.2

Figure 5. Number of road fatalities in the EU and EFTA (2020)



⁶For 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.

⁷ Portugal - as of 2018, data includes the NUTS I regions Região Autónoma dos Açores (PT2) and Região Autónoma da Madeira (PT3)

⁸ Provisional numbers for - Greece (2020), Ireland (2018-2020), Finland (2020).

⁹ 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 2020, the overall total was 610.

3 Synthesis

The EU target of reducing road fatalities by 50% during the 2010-2020 period was not met. The exceptional circumstances in 2020 and 2021 have led to a substantial decrease of road fatalities in many countries but this effect is likely to be temporary. 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. Based on the data for 2020, Norway and Greece reached the target and several other countries reduced their number by at least 30/35%. EU-wide, the fatality rate was 42 fatalities per million inhabitants in 2020. This was much lower than in 2019 when there were 51 fatalities per million inhabitants. But many of the countries performed even better than the EU average. The safest roads were in Sweden (20 deaths/million inhabitants) and (Malta 21 deaths/million inhabitants) while Romania (85 deaths/million inhabitants), Latvia (73 deaths/million inhabitants) and Bulgaria (67 deaths/million inhabitants) reported the highest fatality rates in 2020. The change in year-on-year fatalities at EU level was due largely to reduced traffic levels related to the pandemic at -17%. Bulgaria, Hungary and Italy were among the countries to experience the largest falls during the last recorded year (2020).

4 References

European Commission (2010). Towards a European road safety area: policy orientations on road safety 2011-2020 (COM(2010)889 final of 20 July 2010). Retrieved 14 July 2020 at: https://ec.europa.eu/transport/sites/transport/files/road_safety/pdf/om_20072010_en.pdf

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5 Notes

The main data source for this report is CARE (Community database on road accidents). The data-base contains data that was obtained from national data sources, not only EU members but also from the four EFTA countries (Switzerland, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein). The database was last queried on 6 November 2021. 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 6 November 2021.

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.