

Structure and Culture

Basic Data

Table 1: Basic data of Ireland in relation to the EU average

Basic data of Ireland	EU average
- Population: 4,72 million inhabitants (2016)[2]	18,2 million (2016)
- Area: 70.282 km ² (2015)[2] (1,98% water) (2015)[4]	159.678 km ² (2015) 2,94% water (2015)
- Climate and weather conditions (capital city; 2015) [3]:	(2015)
- Average winter temperature (Nov. to April): 6,1°C	5,1°C
- Average summer temperature (May to Oct.): 12,9C	16,6°C
- Annual precipitation level: 733 mm	691,5 mm
- Exposure: 45.950 million vehicle km (2015) [1]	168.260 million vehicle km (2015)
- 0,49 vehicles per person (2015) [2]	0,57 (2015)

Sources: [1] IRTAD; [2] EUROSTAT; [3] DG MOVE; [4] CIA

The Irish population is younger than the European on average.

Country characteristics

Table 2: Characteristics of Ireland in comparison to the EU average

Characteristics of Ireland	EU average
- Population density: 67,9 inhabitants/km ² (2015) [2]	114 inhabitants/km ² (2015)
- Population composition (2015) [2]	
22,1% children (0-14 years)	15,6% children
64,9% adults (15-64 years)	65,6% adults
13,0% elderly (65 years and over)	18,9% elderly (2015)
- Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita: €54.143 (2015) [2]	€27.198 (2015)
- 63,8% of population lives inside urban area (2015)[4]	72,6% (2015)
- Special characteristics[4]: mostly flat to rolling interior plain surrounded by rugged hills and low mountains	

Sources: [1] IRTAD; [2] EUROSTAT; [3] national sources

Structure of road safety management

Policy making is centralized in Ireland. The development of the Road Safety Strategy 2013—2020 was initiated by the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport.

The following key-actors are responsible for Road Safety (RS) policy making:

Table 3: Key actors per function in Ireland

Key functions	Key actors
1. - Formulation of national RS strategy - Setting targets - Development of the RS programme	- Department of transport - Road safety Agency (RSA)
2. Monitoring of the RS development in the country	- RSA - Oireachtas Committee on Transport - National Road Authority (NRA)
3. Improvements in road infrastructure	- The NRA: responsible for national roads - Local road authorities: non-national roads
4. Vehicle improvement	- RSA - Department of Transport
5. Improvement in road user education	- Nationwide Road Safety Education Service within RSA - Department of Transport - Health and Safety Authority
6. Publicity campaigns	- RSA - Department of Transport - Society of the Irish Motor Industry (SIMI)
7. Enforcement of road traffic laws	- Police
8. Other relevant actors	- Medical Bureau of Road Safety (MBRS)

Sources: national sources

The Department of Transport is dealing with road safety issues.

Irish drivers are less supportive for stricter legislation on speeding and drink-driving than drivers in other countries.

Attitudes towards risk taking

- Irish drivers are more supportive for stricter legislation on speeding and drink-driving compared to drivers in other countries.
- The perceived probability of being checked is lower than the ESRA-average.

Table 4: Road safety attitudes and behaviour of drivers

	Ireland	ESRA average
Self-reported driving behaviour	% of drivers that show behaviour at least once	
In the past 12 months, as a road user, how often did you drive without respecting a safe distance to the car in front?	43%	60%
In the past 12 months, as a road user, how often did you talk on a hand-held mobile phone while driving?	30%	38%
In the past 12 months, as a road user, how often did you drive faster than the speed limit inside built-up areas?	50%	68%
Supporting stricter legislation	% of drivers that disagree with the following	
What do you think about the current traffic rules and penalties in your country for each of the following themes? The penalties are too severe: for speeding	70%	61%
What do you think about the current traffic rules and penalties in your country for each of the following themes? The penalties are too severe: alcohol	89%	87%
Do you support the following measure?: Zero tolerance for alcohol (0,0‰) for all drivers	32%	41%
Perceived probability of being checked	% of drivers with answers in following categories	
In the past 12 months, have you been stopped by the police for a check? (once or more)	42%	31%
On a typical journey, how likely is it that you (as a driver) will be checked by the police for respecting the speed limits (including checks by police car with a camera and/or GoSafe cameras)? (Very (big) chance)	27%	37%
In the past 12 months, have you been checked by the police for alcohol while driving a car (i.e., being subjected to a Breathalyser test)? (once or more)	9%	19%

Source: ESRA 2016

Legend

(comparison of country attitude in relation to average attitude of other SARTRE countries):

	2-9% better
	10-19% better
	≥ 20% better
	2-9% worse
	10-19% worse
	≥ 20% worse

Ireland has set road traffic victim targets as well as SPI targets for road safety.

Programmes and measures

National strategic plans and targets

- The Road Safety Authority has published a new Road Safety Strategy to cover the period 2013 to 2020.
- Targets (referred to 2011):

Table 5: Road safety targets for Ireland

Year	Fatalities	Serious injuries
2020	Max. 124 or 25 fatalities per million population	-30% Max. 330 or 61 per million population

Source IRTAD, 2017

- Priority topics are defined in 144 actions to be done by 2020.

Road infrastructure

Table 6: Description of the road categories and their characteristics in Ireland

Road type	General speed limits for passenger cars (km/h)
Urban roads	50
Rural roads	80/100
Motorways	120

Source: EC DG-Move, 2017

- Recent activities of road infrastructure improvement have been addressing: no information

Safety impact assessment is an obligatory part of infrastructure management in Ireland, as in 32% of EU countries.

Table 7: Obligatory parts of infrastructure management in Ireland and other EU countries

Obligatory parts in Ireland:	EU countries with obligation
Safety impact assessment: yes	32%
Road safety audits: yes	81%
Road safety inspections: yes	89%
High risk site treatment: yes	74%

Sources: IRTAD, 2015

- Recent activities of road infrastructure improvement have been addressing: no information

Traffic laws and regulations

Table 8: Description of the regulations in Ireland in relation to the most common regulations in other EU countries

Regulations in Ireland [1]	Most common in EU (% of countries)
Allowed BAC ¹ levels:	
- General population: 0,5‰	0,5‰ (61%)
- Novice drivers: 0,2‰	0,2‰ (39%) and 0,0‰ (36%)
- Professional drivers: 0,2‰	0,2‰ (36%) and 0,0‰ (36%)
Phoning:	
- Hand held: not allowed	Not allowed (all countries)
- Hands free: allowed	Allowed (all countries)
Use of restraint systems:	
- Driver: obligatory	Obligatory (all countries)
- Front passenger: obligatory	Obligatory (all countries)
- Rear passengers: obligatory	Obligatory (all countries)
- Children: obligatory	Obligatory (all countries)
Helmet wearing:	
- Motor riders: Obligatory	Obligatory (all countries)
- Moped riders: Obligatory	Obligatory (all countries)
- Cyclists: recommended	Not obligatory (46%)
- Daytime running lights are mandatory for all new cars (since 2011).	
- A penalty point system is in place [2]	

Sources: [1] EC DG-Move 2017; [2] WHO, 2013

Traffic rules in Ireland are common to those of most countries in the EU.

Enforcement

Table 9: Effectiveness of enforcement effort in Ireland according to an international respondent consensus (scale = 0-10)

Issue	Score for Ireland	Most common in EU (% of countries)
Speed legislation enforcement	not available	7 (43%)
Seat-belt law enforcement	not available	7 (25%) and 8 (25%)
Child restraint law enforcement	not available	8 (39%)
Helmet legislation enforcement	not available	9 (50%)
Drink-driving law enforcement	not available	8 (43%)

Source: WHO, 2015

¹ Blood Alcohol Concentration

Road User Education and Training

Table 10: Road user education and training in Ireland compared to the situation in other EU countries

Education and training in Ireland	Most common in EU (% of countries)
General education programmes:	
- Primary school: compulsory	Compulsory (71%)
- Secondary school: compulsory	Compulsory (43%)
- Other groups: no information	-
Driving licences thresholds:	
- Passenger car: 17 years	18 years (82%)
- Motorised two wheeler: 16 years for A1 category; 18 years for A2 category; 24 years for A category (20 years with progressive access)	16 years for low categories (68%) and 18 years for higher categories (64%)
- Buses and coaches: 18 years	21 years (89%)
- Lorries and trucks: 18 years	21 years (71%)

Sources: [1] ROSE25, 2005; [2] national sources; [3] EC website

Public Campaigns

Table 11: Public campaigns in Ireland compared to the situation in other EU countries

Campaigns in Ireland	Most common issues in EU (% of countries)
Organisation:	
- The Ministry of Transport	
- The Ministry of State at the Department of Health and Children	
- The Garda National Traffic Bureau	
- The National Safety Council	
- The Automobile Association	
Main themes:	
- Drink-driving	Drink-driving (96%)
- Speeding	Speeding (86%)
- Seat-belt	Seat-belt (79%)
- Tyre safety	
- Commercial vehicle safety	
- Child car seats	
- Driver fatigue	
- Vulnerable road users	

Sources: IRTAD, 2017; national sources

Vehicles and technology (national developments)

Table 12: Developments of vehicles and technology in Ireland, compared to the situation in other EU countries

Mandatory technical inspections:	Most common in EU (% of countries)
Passenger cars: every 12 months	Every 12 months (39%)
Motorcycles: every 12 months	Every 24 months (32%)
Buses or coaches: every 12 months	Every 12 months (61%)
Lorries or trucks: every 12 months	Every 12 months (68%)

Sources: EC website, national sources

Driving licences thresholds for passenger cars are lower in Ireland than the EU average.

Mandatory vehicle inspection periods in Ireland are similar to the most common periods in the EU.

The number of speed tickets per population in Ireland is about half the EU average.

Road Safety Performance Indicators

Speed

Table 13: Number of speed tickets per population in Ireland versus the EU average

Measure	2007	2015	Average annual change	EU average (2015)
Number of speed tickets/1.000 population	45	49	1,1%	94

Sources: [1] ETSC, 2010; [2] ETSC, 2016

Table 14: Percentage of speed offenders per road type in Ireland compared to the EU average

Road type	2004	2015	Average annual change	EU average
Motorways	19%	21%	0,9%	n/a
Rural roads	n/a	22%	-	n/a
Urban roads	72%	60%	-1,6%	n/a

Sources: [1] ETSC, 2010; [2] IRTAD, 2016

Table 15: Mean speed per road type in Ireland compared to the EU average

Road type	2004	2015	Average annual change	EU average
Motorways	108 km/h	114 km/h	0,5%	n/a
Rural roads	87,2 km/h	95 km/h*	0,8%	n/a
Urban roads	60,2 km/h	59 km/h	-0,2%	n/a

Sources: [1] ETSC, 2010; [2] IRTAD, 2016

*on dual carriageways

Alcohol

Table 16: Road side surveys for drink-driving in Ireland compared to the EU average

Measure	2007	2015	Average annual change	EU average (2015)
Amount of tests/1.000 population	113	71	5,6%	209
% tested over the limit	4,1%	n/a	-	2,2%

Sources: [1] ETSC, 2010; [2] ETSC, 2016

The number of drink-driving tests per population in Ireland is much lower than the EU average.

The vehicle fleet in Ireland is much newer and has a higher occupant score than the EU average.

Vehicles

Table 17: State of the vehicle fleet in Ireland compared to the EU average

Vehicles	EU average
Cars per age group (2015) [1]:	Passenger cars (2015)
- < 2 years: 20,8%	<2 years: 10,5%
- 2 to 5 years: 17,1%	2 to 5 years: 12,5%
- 5 to 10 years: 37,2%	6 to 10 years: 26,0%
- > 10 years: 24,9%	>10 years: 51,0%
EuroNCAP occupant protection score of cars (new cars sold in 2013) [2]:	
- 5 stars: 62,9%	5 stars: 52,5%
- 4 stars: 3,6%	4 stars: 4,5%
- 3 stars: 1,5%	3 stars: 2,9%
- 2 stars: 0,4%	2 stars: 0,5%
- not tested: 31,5%	not tested: 39,6% ²

Source: [1] EUROSTAT, 2017; [2] ETSC, 2016

Protective systems

Table 18: Protective system use in Ireland versus the average in EU

Protective systems	EU average ³
Daytime seat-belt wearing in cars and vans (2016) [1]:	(2016)
- no information on % front	not available
- 92% driver	91,6% driver
- 94% front passenger	92,4% front passenger
- 74% rear	70,9% rear
- 95% child restraint systems (2015) [2]	not available
Helmet use (2015) [1]:	
- 99,9% motorcyclists	not available
- 38% cyclists	

Source: [1] IRTAD, 2017; [2] IRTAD, 2016

Ireland has relatively high seat-belt wearing rates in cars and vans. Also helmet wearing rates are high in Ireland.

² Based on data of 25 EU countries (excl. HR, LU and MT).

³ Based on data of 17 EU countries; data of AT, DE, IE, IT, LT, FI, SE (2016); data of BE, CZ, HU, LU, PL, SI (2015); data of DK, HR, UK (2014); data of PT (2013)

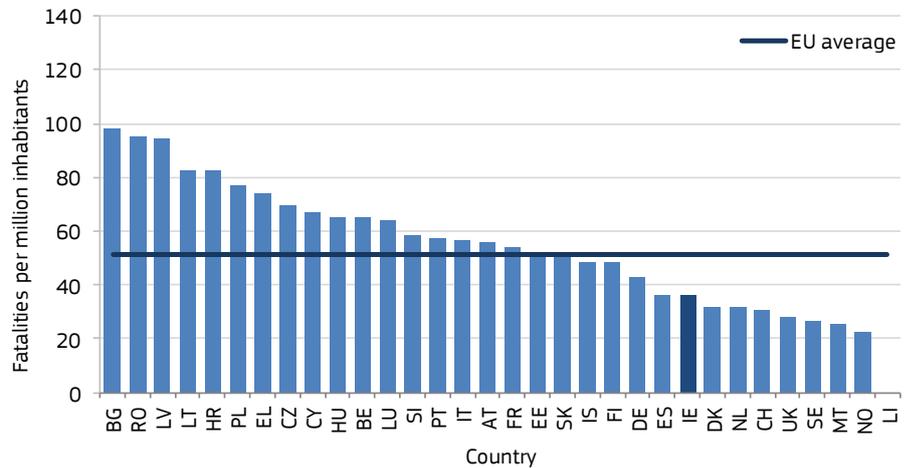
The fatality rate of Ireland is lower than the EU average; the development has been similar to the EU average in the period 2001-2015.

Road Safety Outcomes

General positioning

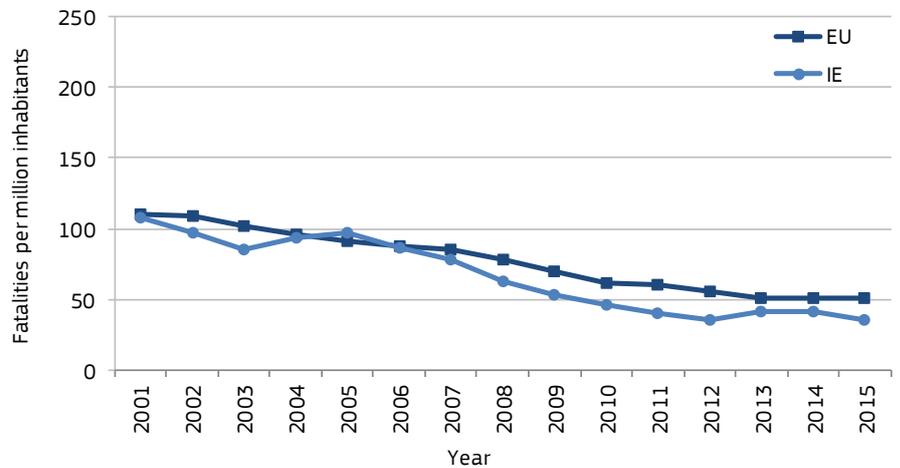
The fatality rate of Ireland is lower than the EU average (around 36 fatalities per million population in 2015). Since 2001, the Irish fatality rate and the EU average rate have shown similar developments.

Figure 1: Fatalities per million inhabitants in 2015 with EU average



Sources: CARE, Eurostat

Figure 2: Development of fatalities per million inhabitants between 2001 and 2015 for Ireland and the EU average



Sources: CARE, Eurostat

The share of car occupant fatalities is higher than the EU average.

Transport mode

The share of car occupant fatalities is substantially higher than the EU average. While the average annual reduction of motorcyclist fatalities between 2001 and 2013 was 5%, it was 6% for car occupants. In the same period, the annual reduction rates of pedestrian and cyclist fatalities were 8% and 7%.

Table 19: Reported fatalities by mode of road transport in Ireland compared to the EU average

Transport mode	2001	2013	Average annual change	Share in 2013	EU average (2013)
Pedestrians	89	31	-8%	16%	22%
Car occupants	231	107	-6%	57%	45%
Motorcyclists	50	26	-5%	14%	15%
Mopeds	-	-	-	-	3%
Cyclists	12	5	-7%	3%	8%
Bus/coach occupants	0	0	0%	0%	1%
Lorries or truck occupants	26	14	-5%	7%	5%

Sources: CARE, national sources

Age, gender and nationality

Table 20: Reported fatalities by age, gender and nationality in Ireland versus the EU average

Age and gender	2001	2013	Average annual change	Share in 2013	EU average (2013)
Females					
0 - 14 years	11	4	-8%	2%	1%
15 - 17 years	5	3	-4%	2%	1%
18 - 24 years	26	7	-10%	4%	3%
25 - 49 years	29	12	-7%	6%	6%
50 - 64 years	12	5	-7%	3%	4%
65+ years	18	15	-2%	8%	9%
Males					
0 - 14 years	15	2	-15%	1%	1%
15 - 17 years	14	1	-20%	1%	2%
18 - 24 years	87	29	-9%	15%	12%
25 - 49 years	122	62	-5%	33%	30%
50 - 64 years	32	17	-5%	9%	15%
65+ years	29	31	1%	16%	16%
Nationality of killed person					
National	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Non-national	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Sources: CARE, national sources

Ireland has a similar share of road fatalities by age and gender to the EU average.

Fatalities in rural areas are over-represented in Ireland.

Location

Fatalities in rural areas are over-represented in Ireland compared to the EU average.

Table 21: Reported fatalities by location in Ireland compared to the EU average

Location	2001	2013	Average annual change	Share in 2013	EU average (2013)
Built-up areas	104	35	-9%	19%	38%
Rural areas	304	145	-6%	77%	54%
Motorways	4	8	6%	4%	7%
Junctions	82	40	-6%	21%	19%

Sources: CARE, national sources

Lighting and weather conditions

Table 22: Reported fatalities by lighting and weather conditions in Ireland compared to the EU average

Conditions	2001	2013	Average annual change	Share in 2013	EU average (2013)
Lightning conditions					
During daylight	n/a	103	-	55%	49%
During night-time	401	83	-12%	44%	30%
Weather conditions					
While raining	71	40	-5%	21%	9%

Sources CARE, national sources

No information is available about single vehicle accidents in Ireland.

Single vehicle accidents

Table 23: Reported fatalities by type in Ireland compared to the EU average

Accident Type	2001	2003	Average annual change	Share in 2003	EU average (2003)
Single vehicle accidents	n/a	n/a	-	-	-

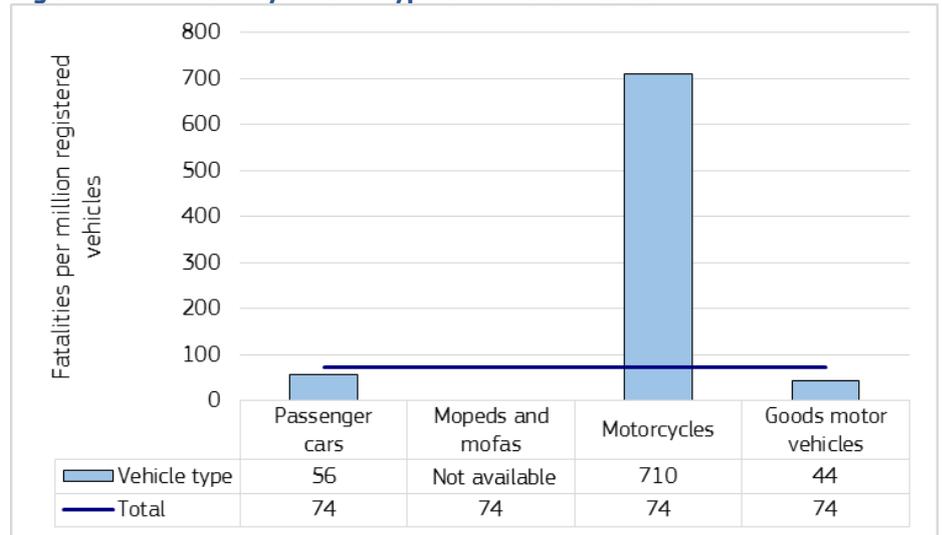
Sources: CARE, national sources

Under-reporting of casualties

- Fatalities: 100%, due to improvements of the data recording systems.
- Hospitalised: no studies with quantitative information exist.

Risk Figures

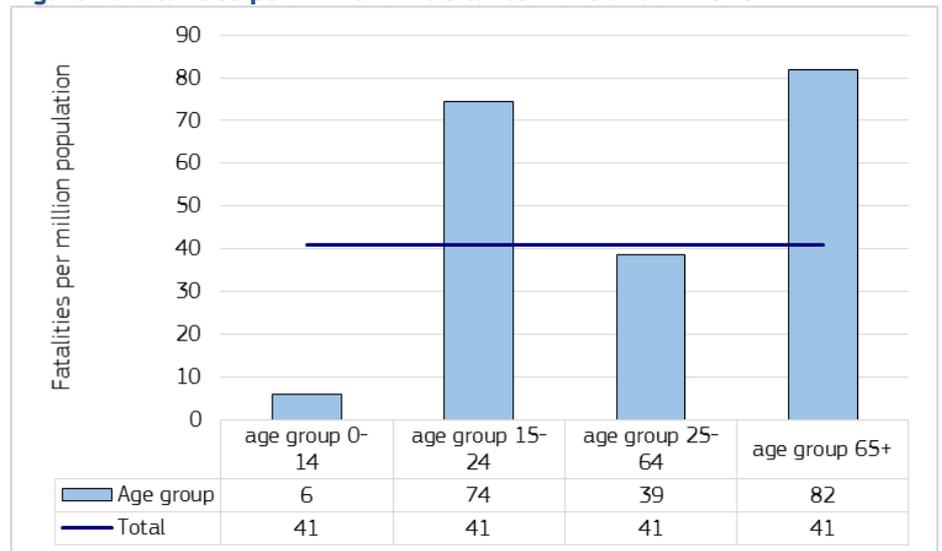
Figure 3: Fatalities by vehicle type in Ireland in 2013



Sources CARE, IRTAD; Fatalities for Mopeds and mofas as well as number of registered mopeds and mofas was not available since Ireland does not distinguish between motorcycles and mopeds, Mopeds are counted as motorcycles

In Ireland motorcyclists, youngsters and the elderly have the highest risk.

Figure 4: Fatalities per million inhabitants in Ireland in 2013



Sources: CARE, EUROSTAT

Social Cost

- The total cost of road accident casualties (fatalities and injuries) is estimated at 48,5 billion euros (2014).
- The following costs are an update of the values in Table 5.3 of the HEATCO Deliverable D5 (2006) to base year 2010. Each figure includes the value of safety per se (VSL⁴ for fatality, 13% of VSL for severe, 1% for light injury) and the value of direct and indirect economic costs (10% of VSL for fatality, severe and slight injury based on HEATCO (2005)). EU average based on the VSL of €1,7 million.
- The costs per casualty for 2010 are as follows:

Table 24: Cost (€) per injury type in Ireland versus the EU average

Country	Fatality	Severe injury	Slight injury
Austria	2.395.000	327.000	25.800
Belgium	2.178.000	330.400	21.300
Bulgaria	984.000	127.900	9.800
Croatia	1.333.000	173.300	13.300
Cyprus	1.234.000	163.100	11.900
Czech Republic	1.446.000	194.300	14.100
Denmark	2.364.000	292.600	22.900
Estonia	1.163.000	155.800	11.200
Finland	2.213.000	294.300	22.000
France	2.070.000	289.200	21.600
Germany	2.220.000	307.100	24.800
Greece	1.518.000	198.400	15.100
Hungary	1.225.000	164.400	11.900
Ireland	2.412.000	305.600	23.300
Italy	1.916.000	246.200	18.800
Latvia	1.034.000	140.000	10.000
Lithuania	1.061.000	144.900	10.500
Luxembourg	3.323.000	517.700	31.200
Malta	2.122.000	269.500	20.100
Netherlands	2.388.000	316.400	25.500
Poland	1.168.000	156.700	11.300
Portugal	1.505.000	201.100	13.800
Romania	1.048.000	136.200	10.400
Slovakia	1.593.000	219.700	15.700
Slovenia	1.989.000	258.300	18.900
Spain	1.913.000	237.800	17.900
Sweden	2.240.000	328.700	23.500
Great Britain	2.170.000	280.300	22.200
EU average	1.870.000	243.100	18.700

Source: Update of the Handbook on External Costs of Transport. Final Report. Report for the European Commission: DG MOVE. Ricardo-AEA/R/ ED57769 Issue Number 1; 8th January 2014

The estimated road injury costs are higher in Ireland than on average in the EU.

⁴ Value of Statistical Life

The vehicle fleet in Ireland is much newer and has a higher occupant protection score than the EU average.

Synthesis

Safety position

- Ireland is one of the ten European countries with the lowest fatality rates per million population in 2015 (around 36 fatalities per million population).

Scope of problem

- A large number of road fatalities in Ireland are car occupants, whose share is significantly higher than the EU average. The risk of being involved in a fatal accident is highest for motorcyclists.
- Young people are an important risk group in Ireland (taking into account their representation in the population). Especially young males have a higher proportion in the total number of fatalities compared to the EU average. Young as well as older people have the highest fatality risk in Ireland.
- In Ireland, a lot more fatalities happen during rain than on average in the EU.
- The number of drink-driving tests per population in Ireland is much lower than the EU average.
- The number of speed tickets per population in Ireland is half the EU average.

Recent progress

- Since 2001, the Irish fatality rate and the EU average rate have shown similar developments.
- A decrease in mean speed was recorded on rural and urban roads between 2004 and 2008.
- The vehicle fleet in Ireland is much newer and has a higher occupant protection score than the EU average.

Remarkable road safety policy issues

- Ireland has set road traffic victim targets as well as SPI targets for road safety.
- Safety impact assessment, road safety audits and inspections, as well as high risk site treatment are obligatory in Ireland
- Driving licences thresholds for passenger cars are lower in Ireland than in the EU on average.

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Notes

1. Country abbreviations

	Belgium	BE		Italy	IT		Romania	RO
	Bulgaria	BG		Cyprus	CY		Slovenia	SI
	Czech Republic	CZ		Latvia	LV		Slovakia	SK
	Denmark	DK		Lithuania	LT		Finland	FI
	Germany	DE		Luxembourg	LU		Sweden	SE
	Estonia	EE		Hungary	HU		United Kingdom	UK
	Ireland	IE		Malta	MT			
	Greece	EL		Netherlands	NL		Iceland	IS
	Spain	ES		Austria	AT		Liechtenstein	LI
	France	FR		Poland	PL		Norway	NO
	Croatia	HR		Portugal	PT		Switzerland	CH

2. Sources: CARE (Community database on road accidents), EUROSTAT, ITF-IRTAD, National sources.

The full glossary of definitions of variables used in this Report is available at: http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/pdf/statistics/cadas_glossary.pdf

3. Data available in September 2017.

4. Average annual change is calculated with the power function between the first and last years:

[aac = (b/a)^{1/n}-1, where aac: annual average change, a: first year value, b: last year value, n: number of years].

5. Explanation of symbols in Tables:

n/a: not available

"-": not applicable (e.g. calculation cannot be performed)

6. This 2017 edition of Road Safety Country Overviews updates the previous version produced in 2012 within the EU co-funded research project [DaCoTA](#).

7. Disclaimer

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8. Please refer to this Report as follows:

European Commission, Road Safety Country Overview - Ireland, European Commission, Directorate General for Transport, September 2017.

