

Structure and Culture

Basic Data

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

Basic data of France	EU average
- Population: 66,42 million inhabitants (2015)[2]	18,1 million (2015)
- Area: 633.133 km ² (2015)[2] (0,52% water) (2015)[4]	159.663 km ² (2015) 2,94% water (2015)
- Climate and weather conditions (capital city; 2015) [3]:	(2015)
- Average winter temperature (Nov. to April): 4,7°C	6,5°C
- Average summer temperature (May to Oct.): 19,7°C	17,8°C
- Annual precipitation level: 649 mm	651 mm
- Exposure: 572,4 billion vehicle km (2014) [1]	122,4 billion vehicle km (2014) ¹
- 0,67 vehicles per person (2014) [1]	0,62 (2014)

Sources: [1] IRTAD; [2] EUROSTAT; [3] national sources ; [4] CIA

France has a higher GDP per capita than the EU average.

Country characteristics

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

Characteristics of France	EU average
- Population density: 105 inhabitants/km ² (2015) [2]	114 inhabitants/km ² (2015)
- Population composition (2015) [2] 18,6% children (0-14 years) 63,0% adults (15-64 years) 18,4% elderly (65 years and over)	15,6% children 65,5% adults 18,9% elderly (2015)
- Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita: €31.500 (2015) [2]	€26.300 (2015)
- 79,5% of population lives inside urban area (2015)[4]	73,3% (2015)
- Special characteristics [4]: mostly flat plains or gently rolling hills in north and west; remainder is mountainous, especially Pyrenees in south, Alps in east	

Sources: [1] IRTAD; [2] EUROSTAT; [3] national sources ; [4] CIA

¹ Based on the average of 24 EU countries.

Structure of road safety management

Policy making is centralized in France. As road fatality figures have been increased by 3,5% in 2014, the French government decided to adopt an inter-ministerial action.

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

Table 3: Key actors per function in France

Key functions	Key actors
1. - Formulation of national RS strategy - Setting targets - Development of the RS programme	- The Inter-ministerial Committee for Road Safety (CISR): overall decision-making body for road safety - The National Road Safety Council (CNSR): propositions to improve road safety. It involves all stakeholders - The Ministry of Interior via the Directorate of Road Safety and Road Traffic (DSCR)
2. Monitoring of the RS development in the country	- ONISR responsible for the evaluation of the road safety policies
3. Improvements in road infrastructure	- The Ministry of Transport (MEDDE) - Road concessionaires - Local authorities (County and City level)
4. Vehicle improvement	- The Ministry of Transport (MEDDE) responsible for vehicle regulations - The Ministry of Interior responsible for driver regulations and training (DiSR)
5. Improvement in road user education	- Directorate of Road Safety and Road Traffic (DSCR) - Ministry of Education
6. Publicity campaigns	- Directorate of Road Safety and Road Traffic (DSCR) - Insurance companies - Road Safety association
7. Enforcement of road traffic laws	- Police forces: “gendarmerie nationale” in nonurban areas, “police” in urban areas
8. Other relevant actors	- Ministry of Justice - Ministry of Health - Ministry of Work - Research institute: IFSTTAR (technical improvements and vehicles) - Centre of studies and expertise on risks, environment, mobility and development (CEREMA)

Sources: national sources

Ministry of Interior is in charge of road safety issues in France, working with other ministries.

French drivers are less supportive for stricter legislation on speeding and drink-driving compared to drivers in other countries.

Attitudes towards risk taking

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

Table 4: Road safety attitudes and behaviour of drivers

	France	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?	67%	60%
In the past 12 months, as a road user, how often did you talk on a hand-held mobile phone while driving?	31%	38%
In the past 12 months, as a road user, how often did you drive faster than the speed limit inside built-up areas?	68%	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	46%	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	85%	87%
Do you support the following measure?: Zero tolerance for alcohol (0,0‰) for all drivers	50%	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)	30%	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)	56%	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)	23%	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

France has a road safety plan updated every year.

High risk site treatment, road safety audits and inspections are compulsory parts of the management of the trunk road network in France.

Programmes and measures

National strategic plans and targets

- The national road safety plan is prepared annually.
- Targets (referred to 2010):

Table 5: Road safety targets for France

Year	Fatalities
2020	-50% Max. 2.000

- Priority topics:
 - reduce fatalities among young people and novice drivers
 - reduce fatalities among motorised two wheelers
 - combat the main accident-contributing factors, like speed and impaired (alcohol/drug) driving

(Source: IRTAD, 2016)

Road infrastructure

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

Road type	General speed limits for passenger cars (km/h)
Urban roads	50
Rural roads	90
Motorways	130

Source: IRTAD, 2016

- Special rules for:
 - 80 km/h on rural roads and 110 km/h on motorways in wet weather or for novice drivers
 - 110 km/h on dual carriageways and 100 km/h in wet weather or for novice drivers
- Guidelines and strategic plans for infrastructure are available in France.

(Source: IRTAD, 2016)

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

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

Sources: IRTAD, 2015

The allowed BAC level is 0,2‰ for drivers of buses and coaches in France, which is at the level of most other EU countries.

- Recent infrastructural actions have been addressing:
 - set additional yellow “no entry” signs on exit slip roads to warn people about accessing the motorway the wrong way.
 - rumble strips on the edges of road markings on new motorways

(Source: IRTAD, 2016)

Traffic laws and regulations

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

Regulations in France [1]	Most common in EU (% of countries)
Allowed BAC² levels:	
- General population: 0,5‰	0,5‰ (61%)
- Novice drivers: 0,2‰	0,2‰ (39%) and 0,0‰ (36%)
- Professional drivers: 0,5‰ (0,2‰ for bus/coach drivers)	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 for children	Not obligatory (46%)
- A demerit point system is in place. [2]	

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

Speed and seat-belt enforcement is assessed as more effective in France than in most EU countries.

Enforcement

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

Issue	Score for France	Most common in EU (% of countries)
Speed legislation enforcement	9	7 (43%)
Seat-belt law enforcement	9	7 (25%) and 8 (25%)
Child restraint law enforcement	8	8 (39%)
Helmet legislation enforcement	9	9 (50%)
Drink-driving law enforcement	8	8 (43%)

Source: WHO, 2015

² Blood Alcohol Concentration

There are compulsory Road Safety Education, curricula and guidelines for children from 6 to 18 years.

Road User Education and Training

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

Education and training in France	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: 18 years	18 years (79%)
- Motorised two wheeler: 18 years (21 years for faster vehicles)	18 years (low categories) and higher ages (32%)
- Buses and coaches: 21 years	21 years (86%)
- Lorries and trucks: 21 years	21 years (75%)

Sources: [1] ROSE25, 2005; [2] ETSC, 2011; [3] national sources

Public Campaigns

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

Campaigns in France	Most common issues in EU (% of countries)
Organisation:	
- Ministry of Interior	
Main themes:	
- Drink-driving & drugs	Drink-driving (96%)
- Speeding	Speeding (86%)
- Phone/Text message	Seat-belt (79%)
- Road safety education of children	
- Motorcyclists	

Sources: IRTAD, 2016; national sources

Vehicles and technology (national developments)

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

Mandatory technical inspections:	Most common in EU (% of countries)
Passenger cars: every 24 months	Every 12 months (39%)
Motorcycles: not submitted to checks	Every 24 months (32%)
Buses or coaches: every 24 months	Every 12 months (61%)
Lorries or trucks: every 12-24 months	Every 12 months (68%)

Sources: EC website, national sources

Mandatory vehicle inspection periods are twice as long as the most common periods in other EU countries.

The amount of speed tickets per population is much higher than the EU average.

Road Safety Performance Indicators

Speed

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

Measure	2006	2015	Average annual change	EU average (2015)
Number of speed tickets/1.000 population	114	205	6,7%	91

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

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

Road type	2004	2012	Average annual change	EU average
Motorways	39,9%	18,2%	-9,3%	n/a
Rural roads	45,5%	24,1%	-7,6%	n/a
Urban roads	52,8%	49,7%	-0,8%	n/a

Sources: national sources

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

Road type	2004	2012	Average annual change	EU average
Motorways	116,9 km/h	108,9 km/h	-0,9%	n/a
Rural roads	89 km/h	83,9 km/h	-0,7%	n/a
Urban roads	52,8 km/h	49,7 km/h	-0,8%	n/a

Sources: national sources

Alcohol

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

Measure	2006	2015	Average annual change	EU average (2015)
Amount of tests/1.000 population	186	152	-2,2%	209
% tested over the limit	3,2%	2,9%	-1,1%	2,2%

Sources: [1] ETSC, 2010; [2] ETSC, 2015

The amount of drink-driving checks has decreased between 2006 and 2015.

The largest proportion (51%) of the cars sold in 2013 in France had the highest EuroNCAP score for occupant protection.

Vehicles

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

Vehicles	EU average
Cars per age group (2012) [1]:	Passenger cars (2012) [2]
- ≤ 2 years: 13%	≤ 2 years: 9%
- 3 to 5 years: 21%	3 to 5 years: 13%
- 6 to 10 years: 34%	6 to 10 years: 28%
- > 10 years: 33%	>10 years: 49%
EuroNCAP occupant protection score of cars (new cars sold in 2013) [2]:	
- 5 stars: 50,5%	5 stars: 52,5%
- 4 stars: 4,3%	4 stars: 4,5%
- 3 stars: 5,0%	3 stars: 2,9%
- 2 stars: 1,3%	2 stars: 0,5%
- not tested: 39,0%	not tested: 39,6% ³

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

Protective systems

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

Protective systems	EU average ⁴
Daytime seat-belt wearing in cars and vans (2012):	(2015)
- 95,8-98,6% front	89,7% front
- no information on % driver	not available
- no information on % front passenger	not available
- 71-84% rear	69,5% rear
- 89-94% child restraint systems	not available
Helmet use (2012):	
- 90-100% powered two-wheelers	not available
- no information on % cyclists	

Source: IRTAD, 2016

Seat-belt wearing rates are higher in France than on average in the EU. Also helmet wearing rates are very high.

³ Based on data of 25 EU countries (excl. HR, LU and MT).

⁴ Based on data of 15 EU countries; data of AT, BE, IE, IT, LU, HU, FI, SE (2015); data of CZ, DE, DK, HR, LT, PL, UK (2014); data of PT (2013)

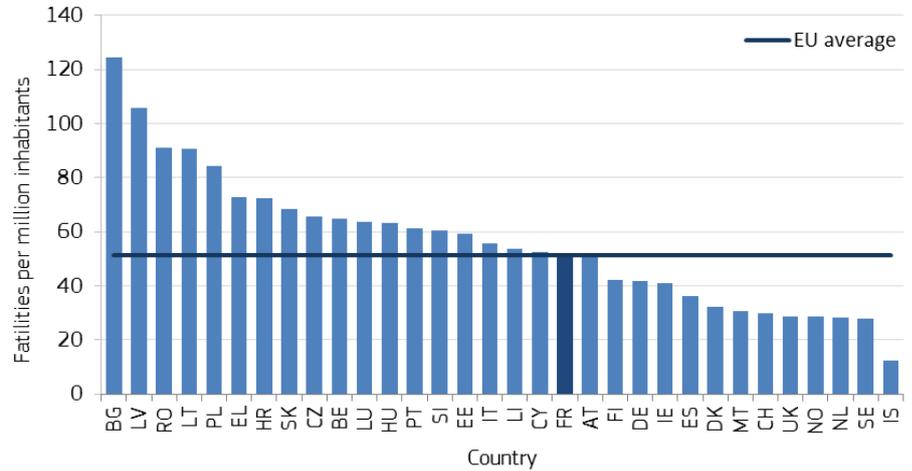
The fatality rate of France is at EU average; since 2009, the French and the EU average rates have shown equal developments.

Road Safety Outcomes

General positioning

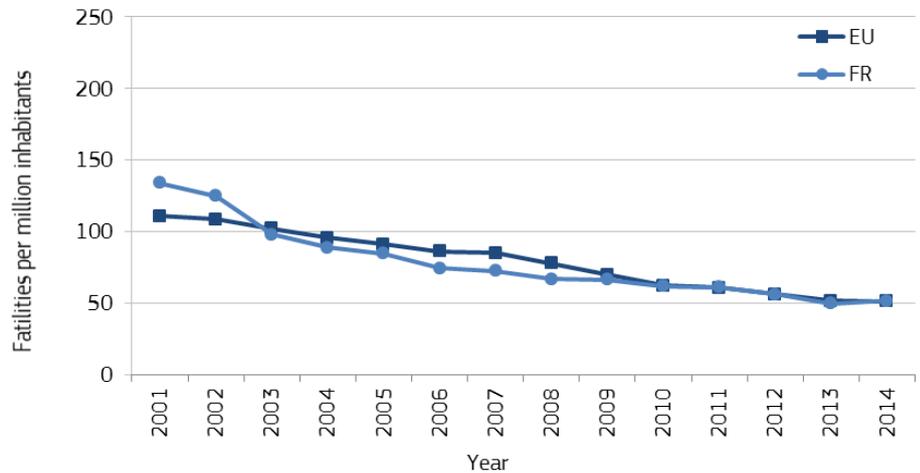
The fatality rate of France is at EU average (around 51 fatalities per million population in 2014). Since 2009, the French fatality rate and the EU average rate have shown equal developments.

Figure 1: Fatalities per million inhabitants in 2014 with EU average



Sources: CARE, Eurostat

Figure 2: Development of fatalities per million inhabitants between 2001 and 2014 for France and the EU average



Sources: CARE, Eurostat

The shares of motorcyclist and car occupant fatalities are a bit higher compared to the EU average.

Transport mode

The shares of motorcyclist and car occupant fatalities are a bit higher than the EU average. While the average annual reduction of motorcyclist fatalities between 2001 and 2014 was only 4%, it was 9% for car occupants. In the same period, the annual reduction rates of pedestrian and cyclist fatalities were 4% each.

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

Transport mode	2001	2014	Average annual change	Share in 2014	EU average (2014)
Pedestrians	822	499	-4%	15%	22%
Car occupants	5.283	1.664	-9%	49%	45%
Motorcyclists	1.092	649	-4%	19%	15%
Mopeds	450	165	-7%	5%	3%
Cyclists	256	159	-4%	5%	8%
Bus/coach occupants	14	9	-3%	0%	1%
Lorries or truck occupants	222	198	-1%	6%	5%

Sources: CARE, national sources

Age, gender and nationality

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

Age and gender	2001	2014	Average annual change	Share in 2014	EU average (2014)
Females					
0 - 14 years	111	39	-8%	1%	1%
15 - 17 years	80	31	-7%	1%	1%
18 - 24 years	363	109	-9%	3%	3%
25 - 49 years	688	223	-8%	7%	6%
50 - 64 years	273	139	-5%	4%	4%
65+ years	530	302	-4%	9%	9%
Males					
0 - 14 years	162	73	-6%	2%	1%
15 - 17 years	244	85	-8%	3%	2%
18 - 24 years	1.445	473	-8%	14%	12%
25 - 49 years	2.593	1.032	-7%	30%	29%
50 - 64 years	722	408	-4%	12%	15%
65+ years	864	470	-5%	14%	16%
Nationality of driver or rider killed					
National	7.398	3.280	-6%	97%	n/a
Non-national	762	104	-14%	3%	n/a

Sources: CARE, national sources

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

Fatalities in rural areas are over-represented in France.

Location

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

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

Location	2001	2014	Average annual change	Share in 2014	EU average (2014)
Built-up areas	2.277	993	-6%	29%	38%
Rural areas	5.397	2.171	-7%	64%	54%
Motorways	486	220	-6%	7%	7%
Junctions	1.364	484	-8%	14%	19%

Sources: CARE, national sources

Lighting and weather conditions

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

Conditions	2001	2014	Average annual change	Share in 2014	EU average (2014)
Lightning conditions					
During daylight	4.399	2.003	-6%	59%	49%
During night-time	3.238	1.123	-8%	33%	30%
Weather conditions					
While raining	1.187	421	-8%	12%	9%

Sources CARE, national sources

The share of fatal single vehicle accidents is substantially higher than the EU average.

Single vehicle accidents

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

Accident Type	2001	2014	Average annual change	Share in 2014	EU average (2014)
Single vehicle accidents	3.019	1.209	-7%	36%	28%

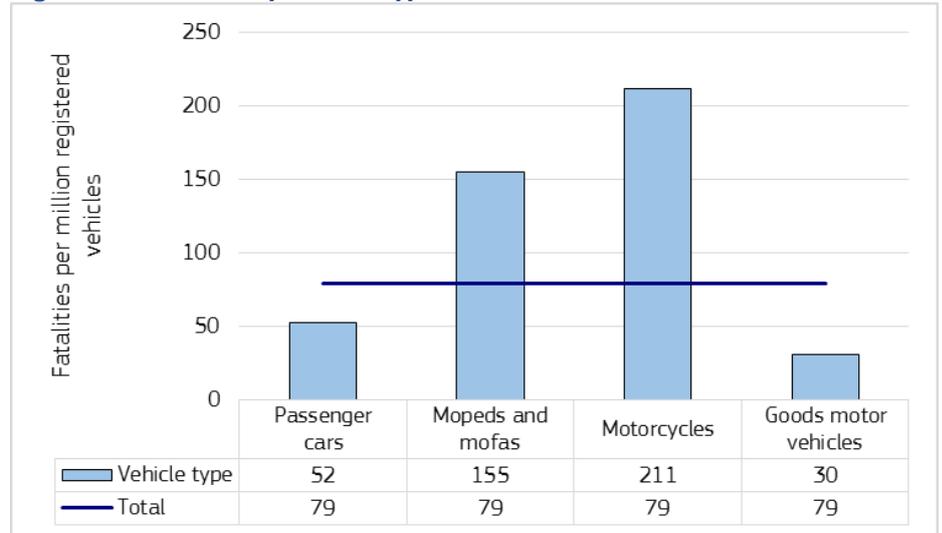
Sources: CARE, national sources

Under-reporting of casualties

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

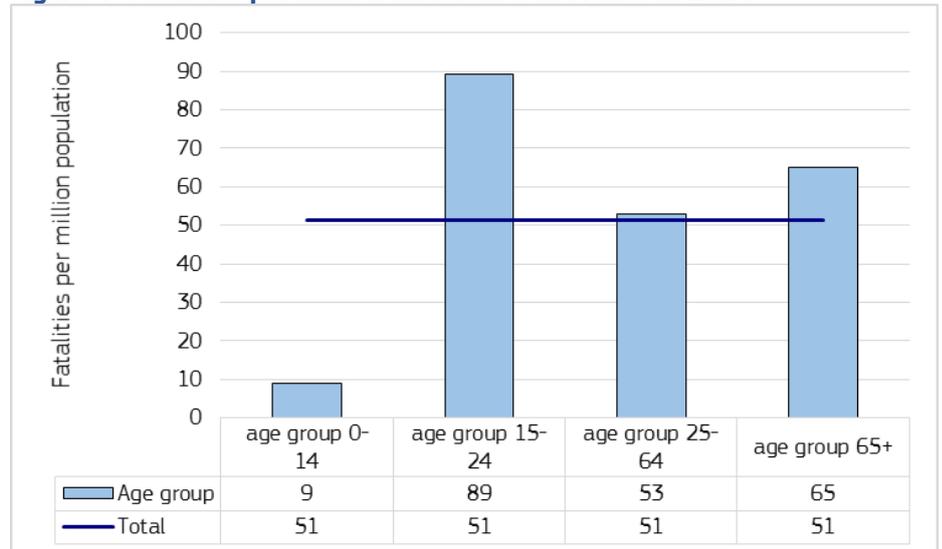
Risk Figures

Figure 3: Fatalities by vehicle type in France in 2014



Sources CARE, IRTAD

Figure 4: Fatalities per million inhabitants in France in 2014



Sources: CARE, EUROSTAT

In France, risk is highest for motorcyclists, drivers of mopeds and mofas, youngsters and the elderly.

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 (VSL⁵ 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 France 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

Estimated road safety costs are higher in France than in the EU on average.

⁵ Value of Statistical Life

France is a typical “average European country” on many characteristics. It also has an average position with respect to the annual amount of fatalities per million population.

Synthesis

Safety position

- France is a typical “average European country” on many characteristics. It also has an average position with respect to the annual amount of fatalities per million population.

Scope of problem

- The shares of car occupant and motorcyclist fatalities are a bit higher compared to the EU average, while the share of killed pedestrians is significantly lower.
- In France, fatalities in rural areas, as well as during daylight and under rainy conditions, are over-represented compared to the EU average.
- The amount of road side tests for drink-driving decreased between 2006 and 2015.

Recent progress

- Since 2009, the French fatality rate and the EU average rate have shown equal developments.
- The amounts of speed tickets increased between 2006 and 2015. The situation with respect to speeding has improved, most notably on motorways and rural roads.

Remarkable road safety policy issues

- France has a road safety plan updated every year.
- High risk site treatment, road safety audits and inspections are compulsory parts of the management of the road network in France.
- France has adopted a legal BAC level of 0,2‰ for novice drivers and professional drivers in the public transport (buses and coaches drivers).
- Effectiveness of speed and seat-belt enforcement is assessed as more effective than the EU average. Helmet and seat-belt wearing rates, as well as, child restraint use rates are quite high.

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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 2016.

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 2016 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 – France, European Commission, Directorate General for Transport, September 2016.

