



Road Safety Country Overview

Belgium

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Structure and Culture

Basic Data

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

Basic data of Belgium	EU average
- Population: 11,21 million inhabitants (2015)[2]	18,1 million (2015)
- Area: 30.528 km² (2015)[2]	159.663 km ² (2015)
(0,82% water) (2015)[4]	2,94% water (2015)
- Climate and weather conditions (capital city;	(2015)
2015) [3]:	6,5°C
- Average winter temperature (Nov. to April): 7°C	
 Average summer temperature (May to Oct.): 15,0°C 	17,8°C
- Annual precipitation level: 852 mm	651 mm
- Exposure: 99 billion vehicle km (2013) [1]	122,4 billion vehicle km (2014) ¹
- 0,63 vehicles per person (2014) [1]	0,62 (2014)
Sources: [1] OECD; [2] EUROSTAT; [3] national sources; [4] CIA	

Country characteristics

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

Characteristics of Belgium	EU average
- Population density: 367 inhabitants/km ² (2015)	114 inhabitants/km ²
[2]	(2015)
- Population composition (2015) [2]	
17% children (0-14 years)	15,6% children
65% adults (15-64 years)	65,5% adults
18% elderly (65 years and over)	18,9% elderly (2015)
- Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita:	
€34.100 (2015) [2]	€26.300 (2015)
- 97,9% of population lives inside urban area	73,3% (2015)
(2015)[4]	73,570 (2013)
- Special characteristics [4]: flat coastal plains in	
northwest, central rolling hills, rugged	
mountains of Ardennes Forest in southeast	
Sources: [1] IRTAD; [2] EUROSTAT; [3] national sources; [4] CIA	

Belgium has a high population density.

¹ Based on the average of 24 EU countries.

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Structure of road safety management

Belgium is a federal state. As a consequence, some issues are dealt with at the federal level (like the general road safety policy), while others are decentralised to the 3 regions: Flanders, Wallonia and Bruxelles - Capitale. The Federal Commission for Road Safety was created and it primary role is to advice the Minister for Mobility and Transport.

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

Table 3: Key actors per function in Belgium

Key functions	Key actors
 Formulation of national RS strategy Setting targets Development of the RS programme 	 Federal Minister for Mobility Inter Ministerial Committee (IMC) for Road Safety (formulating RS priorities) constituted by both national and regional ministers Federal Commission for Road Safety (advisory body) Regional Organisations (Conseil supérieur Wallor de Sécurité Routière; Bruxelles Mobilité; Vlaams Forum Verkeerseiligheid)
2. Monitoring of the RS development in the country	 Federal Minister for Mobility IMC Federal Commission for RS Regional Organisations (Conseil supérieur Wallor de Sécurité Routière; Bruxelles Mobilité; Vlaams Forum Verkeerseiligheid)
3. Improvements in road infrastructure	 Flemish Ministry of Mobility and Public Works (Flanders) Direction générale opérationnelle Routes et Bâtiments (DGO1) (Wallonia) Bruxelles Mobilité (Région de Bruxelles-Capitale)
4. Vehicle improvement	- Market, EU - Federal Minister for Mobility - NGOs
5. Improvement in road user education	 GOCA(group of companies undertaking car inspections and driving license at federal level) Federal states: responsible for educational measures and programmes Federal Minister for Mobility
6. Publicity campaigns	 - IBSR (Belgian Institute for Road Safety) - Regional Authorities - Federal states and other organization in charge of federal competences - NGO, associations, entreprises, etc.
7. Enforcement of road traffic laws	 Federal Police Local Police Regional authorities for certain competences Federal Ministry of Justice
8. Other relevant actors	 Belgian Road Safety Institute IBSR Transportation Research Institute (IMOB – Hasselt University)

In Belgium both federal and regional governments deal with road safety issues.



Attitudes towards risk taking

- Belgian 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 higher than the ESRAaverage paired with lower police checks.

Table 4: Road safety attitudes and behaviour of drivers

	Belgium	ESRA average
Self-reported driving behaviour		vers that show r 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?	58%	60%
In the past 12 months, as a road user, how often did you talk on a hand-held mobile phone while driving?	29%	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		rs that disagree ne 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	65%	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	91%	87%
Do you support the following measure?: Zero tolerance for alcohol (0,0‰) for all drivers	45%	41%
Perceived probability of being checked		s with answers in 19 categories
In the past 12 months, have you been stopped by the police for a check? (once or more) On a typical journey, how likely is it that you (as a	22%	31%
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)	43%	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) Source: ESRA 2016	17%	19%

Legend

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



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



Belgium has set road safety targets that fit into the goal of reducing fatalities by 50% of the EC.

Programmes and measures

National strategic plans and targets

- The latest national strategy was released in 2011 for the period 2011-2020.
- Targets (referred to 2010):

Table 5: Road safety targets for Belgium

Year	Fatalities
2020	-50%
2020	Max. 420

Targets are set at the federal level as well as for the different regions.

- Priority topics: In order to reach the target in 2020, federal minister for mobility announced the following actions:
 - better coordination of road safety efforts in Belgium
 - regulation of electrical bikes use
 - simplifying traffic rules
 - a BAC of 0,0‰ for young drivers
 - introducing new (quicker) testing devices for drugs
 - strategical action plan for better co-ordinated traffic controls
 - legal implementation of cross border prosecution
 - improving the link between registered offenses and actually paid fines
 - legalising the use of APNR camera's for automatic license plate recognition
 - improvement of database for offenders
 - mandatory fitting of alcohol interlocks in vehicles for person transport
 - review of rules for application of alcohol interlocks for recidivists
 - alternative punishments have to be paid by offenders
 - enabling in-depth accident studies in Belgium (access to accident scenes)
 - mandatory installation of event data recorder
 - code of practice for testing (semi)automatic vehicles on public roads

(Source: IRTAD, 2016)

Road infrastructure

Table 6: Description of the road categories and their characteristics inBelgium

Road type	General speed limits for passenger cars (km/h)
Urban roads	30/50
Rural roads	70/90
Motorways	120
Source: IRTAD, 2016	

In Belgium the speed limit on urban roads in the vicinity of schools has been reduced from 50km/h to 30km/h.



- Special rules for:
 - Mopeds A: 25km/h
 - Mopeds B: 45km/h for mopeds
 - 30km/h near schools and in few city centres
- Guidelines and strategic plans for infrastructure are not available in Belgium. Infrastructure management is highly decentralised.

Table 7: Obligatory parts of infrastructure management in Belgium andother EU countries

Obligatory parts in Belgium:	EU countries with obligation	
Safety impact assessment: yes [2]	32%	
Road safety audits: no [1]	81%	
Road safety inspections: no [1]	89%	
High risk site treatment: no [2]	74%	
Sources: [1] DG-TREN, 2010; [2] national sources		

- Recent infrastructural actions have been addressing:
 - Alternate merging is mandatory in case of congestion
 - At some intersections, cyclists are allowed to turn right on red

(Source: IRTAD, 2016)

Traffic laws and regulations

Table 8: Description of the regulations in Belgium in relation to the mostcommon regulations in other EU countries

Regulations in Belgium [1]	Most common in EU (% of countries)
Allowed BAC ² levels:	
- General population: 0,5‰ - Novice drivers: 0,5‰ - Professional drivers: 0,2‰	0,5‰ (61%) 0,2‰ (39%) and 0,0‰ (36%) 0,2‰ (36%) and 0,0‰ (36%)
Phoning:	
- Hand held: not allowed - Hands free: allowed	Not allowed (all countries) Allowed (all countries)
Use of restraint systems:	
- Driver: obligatory - Front passenger: obligatory - Rear passengers: obligatory - Children: obligatory	Obligatory (all countries) Obligatory (all countries) Obligatory (all countries) Obligatory (all countries)
Helmet wearing:	
 Motor riders: Obligatory Moped riders: Obligatory Cyclists: not obligatory 	Obligatory (all countries) Obligatory (all countries) Not obligatory (46%)
- A demerit point system is in place. [3]	
Sources: [1] EC DG-Move,2016; [2] WHO, 2013	

² Blood Alcohol Concentration

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Alcohol limit for novice drivers in Belgium is higher than the most common limits in the EU.



Seat-belt, child restraint and drink-driving law enforcement in Belgium are assessed as less effective than in other EU countries.

Enforcement

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

Issue	Score for Belgium	Most common in EU (% of countries)
Speed legislation enforcement	7	7 (43%)
Seat-belt law enforcement	6	7 (25%) and 8 (25%)
Child restraint law enforcement	5	8 (39%)
Helmet legislation enforcement	9	9 (50%)
Drink-driving law enforcement Source: WHO, 2015	5	8 (43%)

Road User Education and Training

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

Education and training in Belgium	Most common in EU (% of countries)
General education programmes:	
- Primary school: compulsory (not in French- speaking community)	Compulsory (71%)
- Secondary school: voluntary (not in French- speaking community)	Compulsory (43%) -
- Other groups: none Driving licences thresholds:	
 Passenger car: 18 years Motorised two wheeler: 16 years: ≤45km/h; ≤50cm3 18 years: ≤11kW; ≤125cm3; 0,1 kW/kg 20 years: ≤35kW; ≤0,2kW/kg 24 years: >35kW (or 22 years with progressive access) 	18 years (79%) 18 years (low categories) and higher ages (32%)
- Buses and coaches: 21 years - Lorries and trucks: 21 years Sources: [1] ROSE25, 2005; [2] ETSC; [3] national sources	21 years (86%) 21 years (75%)



Public Campaigns

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

Lo countries			
Campaigns in Belgium	Most common issues in EU (% of countries)		
Organisation:			
 Regional authorities Federal states and other organisations in charge of federal competences NGO, associations, entreprises, etc 			
Main themes:			
 Drink-driving Seat-belts Speed Children Motorcyclist campaign Novice drivers Young drivers Distraction Fatigue Seasonal behaviour Sources: IRTAD, 2016; national sources 	Drink-driving (96%) Speeding (86%) Seat-belt (79%)		

Vehicles and technology (national developments)

Table 12: Developments of vehicles and technology in Belgium compared tothe 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	-

The periods for mandatory vehicle inspections are similar to the periods most common in other EU countries.



The number of speed tickets per population in Belgium increased over the last years and was higher than the EU average in 2014.

The percentage of speed offenders on rural roads and motorways has decreased over time.

Road Safety Performance Indicators

Speed

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

Measure	2007	2014	Average annual change	EU average (2014)
Number of speed tickets/ 1.000 population	195	300	6,3%	91
Sources: [1] FTSC 2010: [2] FTSC 201	6			

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

Table 14: Percentage of speed offenders per road type in Belgium comparedto the EU average

Road type	2004 [1]	2012 [2]	Average annual change	EU average
Motorways	39%	27%	-4,5%	n/a
Rural roads	41% (90km/h) 70% (70km/h)	27% (90km/h) 52% (70km/h)	-5,1% (90km/h) -3,6% (70km/h)	n/a
Urban roads	50%	56%	1,4%	n/a

Sources: [1] ETSC, 2010; [2] national sources

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

Road type	2004 [1]	2012 [2]	Average annual change	EU average
Motorways	120 km/h	118 km/h*	-0,2%	n/a
Rural roads	88,3 (90km/h) 78,1 (70 km/h)	82,1 (90 km/h) 71,9 (70 km/h)	-0,9% (90km/h) -1% (70 km/h)	n/a
Urban roads	51,3 km/h	55,6 km/h	1%	n/a

Sources: [1] ETSC, 2010; [2] national sources *Data from 2011

Alcohol

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

Measure	2009	2015	Average annual change	EU average (2015)
Amount of tests/1.000 population	n/a	n/a	-	209
% tested over the limit	n/a	n/a	-	2,2%

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



The vehicle fleet in Belgium is newer than the EU average.

In Belgium, seat-belt wearing rates are higher than the EU average.

Vehicles

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

 Vehicles

Vehicles	EU average
Cars per age group (2012):	Passenger cars (2012)
- ≤2 years: 24%	≤2 years: 9%
- 3 to 5 years: 24%	3 to 5 years: 13%
- 6 to 10 years: 27%	6 to 10 years: 28%
- >10 years: 25%	>10 years: 49%
EuroNCAP occupant protection score of cars	
(new cars sold in 2013):	
- 5 stars: 51,0%	5 stars: 52,5%
- 4 stars: 3,3%	4 stars: 4,5%
- 3 stars: 3,3%	3 stars: 2,9%
- 2 stars: 0,6%	2 stars 0,5%
- not tested: 41,8%	not tested: 39,6% ³
Sources: [1] Eurostat; [2] ETSC, 2016	

Protective systems

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

Protective systems	EU average ⁴
Daytime seat-belt wearing in cars and vans (2015) [1]:	(2015)
 92% front 92% driver 92% front passenger 86% rear 89% child restraint systems⁵ 	89,7% front not available not available 69,5% rear not available
Helmet use (2006) [2]:	
- 99% motor riders (2005) - 94% moped riders - 34% cyclists	not available

Sources: [1] IRTAD, 2015; [2] Vis & Eksler, 2008

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)

⁵ only one out of three children (35%) is correctly restrained (IRTAD, 2016)

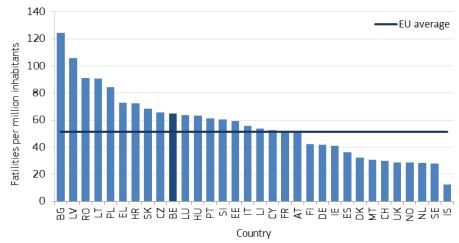


Road Safety Outcomes

General positioning

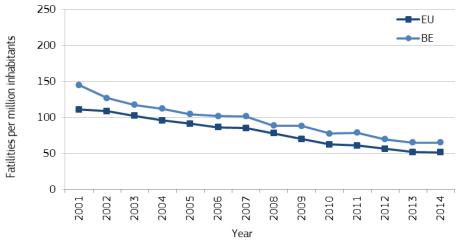
The fatality rate of Belgium is a bit higher than the EU average (around 65 fatalities per million population in 2014). Since 2001, the Belgian fatality rate and the EU average rate have shown similar developments.





Sources: CARE, Eurostat





Sources: CARE, Eurostat

The fatality rate of Belgium is higher than the EU average; the development was similar to the EU average between 2001 and 2014.



The share of car occupant fatalities is a bit higher compared to the EU average.

Belgium has a similar share of road fatalities by age and gender to the EU average. More than half of all fatalities are non-nationals.

Transport mode

The share of car occupant fatalities is a bit higher than the EU average. While the average annual reduction of motorcyclist fatalities between 2001 and 2014 was only 4%, it was 6% for car occupants and 10% for mopeds. In the same period, the annual reduction rates of pedestrian and cyclist fatalities were 3% and 4% respectively.

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

Transport mode	2001	2014	Average annual change	Share in 2014	EU average (2014)
Pedestrians	158	106	-3%	15%	22%
Car occupants	899	379	-6%	52%	45%
Motorcyclists	147	85	-4%	12%	15%
Mopeds	63	17	-10%	2%	3%
Cyclists	130	76	-4%	10%	8%
Bus/coach occupants	9	4	-6%	1%	1%
Lorries or truck occupants	76	41	-5%	6%	5%

Sources: CARE, national sources

Age, gender and nationality

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

versus the EU aver	aye					
Age and gender	2001	2014	Average annual change	Share in 2014	EU average (2014)	
Females						
0 - 14 years	28	3	-16%	0%	1%	
15 – 17 years	11	8	-2%	1%	1%	
18 – 24 years	59	16	-10%	2%	3%	
25 – 49 years	140	42	-9%	6%	6%	
50 – 64 years	46	36	-2%	5%	4%	
65+ years	97	59	-4%	8%	9%	
Males						
0 - 14 years	35	6	-13%	1%	1%	
15 – 17 years	35	14	-7%	2%	2%	
18 – 24 years	222	101	-6%	14%	12%	
25 – 49 years	492	213	-6%	30%	29%	
50 – 64 years	146	101	-3%	14%	15%	
65+ years	167	118	-3%	16%	16%	
Nationality of dri	ver or ride	er killed				
National	n/a	323	n/a	45%	n/a	
Non-national	n/a	404	n/a	56%	n/a	
Sources: CARE, national sources						



Location

Fatalities in rural areas and on motorways are over-represented in Belgium compared to the EU average.

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

Location	2001	2014	Average annual change	Share in 2014	EU average (2014)
Built-up areas	453	188	-7%	26%	38%
Rural areas	841	420	-5%	59%	54%
Motorways	192	105	-5%	15%	7%
Junctions	357	94	-10%	13%	19%

Sources: CARE, national sources

Lighting and weather conditions

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

Conditions	2001	2014	Average annual change	Share in 2014	EU average (2014)	
Lightning conditions						
During daylight	735	366	-5%	50%	49%	
During night-time	663	201	-9%	28%	30%	
Weather conditions						
While raining	252	48	-12%	7%	9%	

Sources CARE, national sources

Single vehicle accidents

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

Accident Type	2001	2014	Average annual change	Share in 2014	EU average (2014)
Single vehicle accidents Sources: CARE, national sources	600	259	-7%	36%	28%

Under-reporting of casualties

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

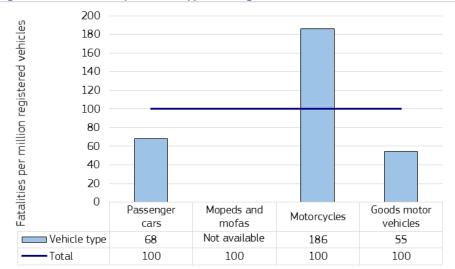
Fatalities in rural areas and on motorways are overrepresented in Belgium.

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



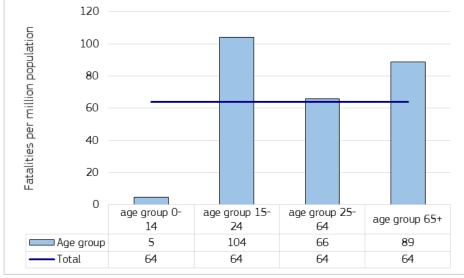
Risk Figures

Figure 3: Fatalities by vehicle type in Belgium in 2014



Sources CARE, IRTAD; Number of registered mopeds and mofas was not available, Total = all motor vehicles excluding mopeds and mofas

Figure 4: Fatalities per million inhabitants in Belgium in 2014



Sources: CARE, EUROSTAT

In Belgium risk is high for motorcyclists, the elderly and especially for youngsters.





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 (VSL⁶ 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:

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	

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

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

⁶ Value of Statistical Life

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Synthesis

Safety position

- The fatality rate of Belgium is a bit higher than the EU average (around 65 fatalities per million population in 2014).

Scope of problem

- The costs per injury type are estimated to be higher than the EU average.
- A large number of fatalities are car occupants, followed by pedestrians, motorcyclists and cyclists. However, the share of pedestrian fatalities is significantly lower compared to the EU average.
- The share of fatalities amongst men between 25 and 49 years is the highest among the different age groups of both genders.

Recent progress

- A steady decrease in road fatalities is observed in Belgium between 2001 and 2014.
- A significant annual decrease was recorded with regard to the number of child fatalities during 2001-2014.

Remarkable road safety policy issues

- In Belgium, the speed limit on urban roads in the vicinity of schools has been reduced from 50km/h to 30km/h.
- Seat-belt and child restraint law enforcement in Belgium are assessed as less effective than in most EU countries; however, seatbelt wearing rates in 2015 are higher than the EU average.
- The percentage of speed offenders on rural roads has decreased over time.

Seat-belt and child restraint law enforcement in Belgium are assessed as less effective than in most EU countries.; however, seat-belt wearing rates in 2015 are higher than the EU average.



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Notes

1. Country abbreviations

								
	Belgium	BE		Italy	IT		Romania	RO
	Bulgaria	BG		Cyprus	CY	9	Slovenia	SI
	Czech Republic	CZ		Latvia	LV	÷	Slovakia	SK
	Denmark	DK		Lithuania	LT		Finland	FI
	Germany	DE		Luxembourg	LU	_	Sweden	SE
	Estonia	EE		Hungary	ΗU		United Kingdom	UK
	Ireland	IE		Malta	MT			
<u>+</u>	Greece	EL		Netherlands	NL		Iceland	IS
<u>Å</u>	Spain	ES		Austria	AT		Liechtenstein	LI
	France	FR		Poland	PL		Norway	NO
	Croatia	HR	۲	Portugal	PT	÷	Switzerland	СН

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 <u>DaCoTA</u>.

7. Disclaimer

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8. Please refer to this Report as follows:

European Commission, Road Safety Country Overview - Belgium, European Commission, Directorate General for Transport, September 2016.

