



Road safety in the Eastern Mediterranean Region

Highlights from the *Global status report on road safety 2013: supporting a decade of action*

Information for the media

Road traffic injuries continue to claim thousands of lives in the Eastern Mediterranean Region every year. Data from the *Global status report on road safety 2013: supporting a decade of action* show that the Region is responsible for 10% of the world's road traffic deaths and ranks second among WHO regions in terms of high road traffic fatality rate. The report, launched on 14 March 2013, also shows that high-income countries in the Region have the highest fatality rate among similar countries across the world. This makes road traffic injuries a concern for all countries of the Region, not only in low-income and middle-income countries.

The problem

Road traffic crashes continue to claim about 1.24 million lives globally every year, out of which about 127 260 are in the Eastern Mediterranean Region. Some progress has been made in the Region in some aspects such as road safety management and the adoption of needed laws. However, much remains to be done. Although laws are in place, they are not comprehensive in most countries and enforcement needs to be strengthened. Addressing the needs of vulnerable road users is a clear challenge. While existing data systems clearly show this problem, policies to address it remain inadequate.

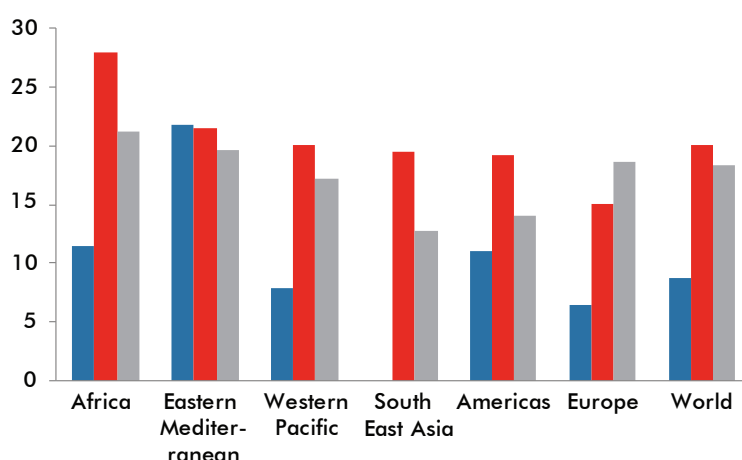
Young people are the hardest hit by road traffic injuries



Ten key facts

- In 2010, road traffic deaths in the Eastern Mediterranean Region constituted 10% of the world's estimated deaths.
- The Eastern Mediterranean Region has the second highest road traffic fatality rate in the world, 21.3 per 100 000 population, after the African Region.
- Road traffic deaths, injuries and disabilities are usually under-reported in the Region.
- Young males in their prime productive age group of 15–44 years are at higher risk of road traffic injury.
- 45% of road traffic deaths in the Region are among vulnerable road users. The highest toll is among pedestrians followed by motorcyclists and bicyclists.
- Legislation on key risk factors is available in the majority of countries, but most laws are not comprehensive. This, together with inadequate enforcement, limits their effectiveness.
- Although most countries have post-crash care systems, these need strengthening.
- 84% of countries have a lead agency overseeing road safety efforts. 95% of countries have a national strategy for road safety with measureable targets in some countries.
- Approximately half of countries regularly inspect the safety of all their roads.
- International or regional vehicle safety standards are applied in only 68% of countries in the Region.

Estimated road traffic fatalities per 100 000 population by income and region, 2010



NA Not applicable

■ High income	11.42	21.68	7.79	NA	11.02	6.34	8.71
■ Middle income	27.84	21.43	20.05	19.46	19.21	15.02	20.09
■ Low income	21.21	19.62	17.19	12.7	13.97	18.55	18.25

Improvement is possible

Between 2007 and 2010, 88 countries successfully reduced the number of deaths on their roads by adopting proven effective interventions. These interventions are simple and are within the reach of every country in the Region, regardless of income level.

Risk factor addressed by law	Definition of comprehensive law	% of countries with comprehensive law
Speed	A national speed limit law with urban speed limits of ≤ 50 km/h and the ability of local authorities to reduce speed limits where appropriate	11%
Drink-driving	A national drink-driving law based on blood alcohol concentration (BAC), and where the BAC limit for the general population is ≤ 0.05 g/dl	37%
Motorcycle helmet non-use	A national motorcycle helmet law that covers all riders, on all roads and all engine types, and requires an international or national helmet standard	21%
Seat-belt non-use	A national seat-belt law that applies to all private car occupants (front and rear seats)	26%
Child car restraint non-use	A national law requiring the use of child car restraints	11%



Actions needed

Road safety management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strengthen or establish the lead agency for road safety and ensure adequate funding to enable it to fulfil its responsibilities.• Upgrade national strategies based on the Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011–2020.• Improve data quality on road traffic deaths, injuries and disabilities.
Road infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review the road safety audit component within national strategies.• Develop national guidelines for road safety auditing.• Strengthen the capacity of national road safety inspectors.• Submit periodic evaluation reports to the road safety lead agency to identify strengths and gaps and to coordinate action.
Vehicle safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adopt and enforce international or regional standards or features for vehicle safety.
Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adopt comprehensive legislation related to the major risk factors.• Raise public awareness on the importance of compliance with legislation and the application of individual protective measures for personal safety.• Regularly measure risk and protective factors as an indicator of the success of law enforcement and related interventions.
Post-crash response	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Periodically assess different aspects of national trauma care systems.• Develop or strengthen data systems that enhance post-crash response.• Establish one universal emergency access number.• Strengthen the capacity of all emergency staff, including doctors and nurses.



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