



ROAD ACCIDENT FACTS IRELAND 2000

*THIS REPORT IS BASED ON
ROAD ACCIDENT INFORMATION
RECORDED BY
AN GARDA SÍOCHÁNA*

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CONTENTS

	<i>Page No.</i>
Summary	v
Notes and Definitions	vii
Section 1 Accidents	1
Section 2 Date and Time	8
Section 3 Location	10
 TABLES	
Table A Accident Rate per Thousand Population (1996), per Thousand Registered Vehicles (2000) and per 10 Million vehicle-kilometres of Travel (1996), for each county	11
 Section 1 Trends in Road Traffic Accidents	
Table 1 Accidents Classified by Type and Vehicles Licensed, 1991-2000	12
Table 2 Persons Killed and Injured, 1991-2000	13
Table 3 Persons Killed by Road User Type, 1991-2000	13
Table 4 All Casualties by Road User Type, 1991-2000	13
Table 5 Persons Killed and Injured in Each County, 1996-2000	14
 Section 2 General Tables	
Table 6 Traffic Accidents and Casualties Classified by Month of Year	15
Table 7 Fatal and Injury Accidents and Casualties by Hour of Day	16
Table 8 Fatal and Injury Accidents and Casualties by Day of Week	17
Table 9 Fatal and Injury Accidents and Casualties Classified by Light Condition	17
Table 10 Fatal and Injury Accidents Classified by Primary Weather Conditions	18
Table 11 Fatal and Injury Accidents Classified by Road Surface Conditions	18
Table 12 Fatal and Injury Accidents Classified by Road Character	18
Table 13 Accidents Classified by Road Surface Condition and by Occurrence of Skidding	19
Table 14 Accidents on Wet Roads Classified by Road Character and by Occurrence of Skidding	19
Table 15 Fatal and Injury Accidents Inside and Outside Built-up Areas by Accident Type	19
Table 16 Single Vehicle Accidents not Involving Pedestrians Classified by Type of Collision	20
Table 17 Fatal and Injury Accidents by Possible Contributory Factor Where Specified	20
 Section 3 Casualties	
Table 18 All Casualties Classified by Road User Type	21
Table 19 All Casualties Classified by Road User Type and by Age	22
Table 20 Male Casualties Classified by Road User Type and by Age Where Specified	23
Table 21 Female Casualties Classified by Road User Type and by Age Where Specified	24
Table 22 All Casualties Classified by Age and Sex	25
Table 23 All Casualties Classified by Age, Inside and Outside Built-up Areas	25
Table 24 Casualties by Road User Type Inside and Outside Built-up Areas	26
Table 25 Pedestrian Casualties Classified by Light Condition and by Location Type	26
Table 26 Pedestrian Casualties by Pedestrian Action, Age of Pedestrian and by Darkness or Daylight	27

Section 4 Drivers and Vehicles

Table 27	Drivers Involved in Fatal and Injury Accidents Classified by Vehicle Type	28
Table 28	Male Drivers Involved in Fatal and Injury Accidents Classified by Vehicle Type	28
Table 29	Female Drivers Involved in Fatal and Injury Accidents Classified by Vehicle Type	29
Table 30	Drivers of Cars Involved in Fatal and Injury Accidents by Age and by Sex	29
Table 31	Motorcycle Drivers Involved in Fatal and Injury Accidents by Age and by Sex	30
Table 32	Drivers of Other Vehicles Involved in Fatal and Injury Accidents by Age and by Sex	30
Table 33	Users of Cars Involved in Fatal and Injury Accidents Classified by Seat Belt Usage	31
Table 34	Users of Motor Cycles Involved in Fatal and Injury Accidents Classified by Crash Helmet Usage	31
Table 35	Cars and Goods Vehicles Involved in Fatal and Injury Accidents Classified by Driver's Country of Residence	32
Table 36	Two-Vehicle Accidents: Contributory Action, Where Specified	32
Table 37	Vehicles Involved in Fatal and Injury Accidents Classified by Vehicle Type and by Location Type	33
Table 38	Single-Vehicle Accidents, With or Without Pedestrians, Classified by Vehicle Type	33
Table 39	Two-Vehicle Accidents Classified by Vehicle Type	34

Section 5 Location

Table 40	Traffic Accidents and Casualties in Each County	36
Table 41	Fatal and Injury Accidents and Casualties by Garda Division	37
Table 42	Fatal and Injury Accidents at or near Pedestrian Crossings	37
Table 43	Fatal and Injury Accidents Inside and Outside Built-up Areas where Road Works were in Progress at the Accident Scene	37
Table 44	Fatal and Injury Accidents Classified by Junction Type	38
Table 45	Fatal and Injury Accidents at Intersections Classified by Control Type	38
Table 46	Fatal and Injury Accidents Classified by Road Type	38
Table 47	Traffic Accidents and Casualties in the Main Centres of Population	39
Table 48	Road Users Killed and Injured in the Main Centres of Population	39
Table 49	Vehicles Involved in Fatal and Injury Accidents in the Main Centres of Population	40
Table 50	Fatal and Injury Accidents in Towns	41
Table 51	Fatal and Injury Accidents on National Routes Classified by Route and by Location Type	43
Table 52	Material Damage Accidents Classified by Month and by County	45
Table 53	International Comparisons	46

SUMMARY

Persons Killed

A total of 415 persons were killed in 362 fatal accidents on Irish roads in 2000. This represents an increase of two fatalities on the 1999 situation. This increase was due to a rise in the number of fatalities among car users, which increased by 24 to 260. In 2000, car user fatalities comprised 63% of total, as opposed to 44% in 1995. The number of fatalities declined amongst all other road user types (i.e. pedestrians, pedal cyclists, motor cyclists and 'other road users').

A total of 55 young car drivers (18-24) lost their lives in 2000. Fifty of these drivers were male.

Persons Injured

The number of reported injury accidents (7,395) and the number of persons injured in 2000 (12,043) fell by one per cent and two per cent, respectively. This is the fourth successive decrease in the number of injury accidents and injuries, and is reflected in a decrease in the numbers of pedestrian, car user and pedal cyclist injuries. The number of injuries to motor cyclists and 'other road users' increased in 2000.

The number of reported serious injury accidents (1,189) decreased by approximately nine per cent in 2000, maintaining the general downward trend of recent years.

Road User Category

The number of pedestrians killed fell by 7 to 85 in 2000. This represents the fewest killed in over 40 years. Pedestrian fatalities accounted for only 20% of all fatalities in 2000 compared with 41% in 1970. Pedal cyclist fatalities fell by 4 to 10 in 2000. Pedal cyclists accounted for a little under two and a half per cent of all road accident fatalities. The number of motor cyclist fatalities fell from 43 in 1999 to 39 in 2000. The number of car user fatalities rose by ten per cent to 260 in 2000. Other road user fatalities (including goods vehicle and public service vehicle users) fell from 28 in 1999 to 21 in 2000.

There were a total of 1,332 pedestrian casualties in 2000 compared with 1,398 in 1999. The number of pedal cyclist casualties fell by 24 to 451 in 2000. Casualties sustained by motor cyclists rose by 20% in 2000. The number of casualties sustained by car users decreased by six per cent in 2000. The number of 'other road user' (representing, for the most part, users of goods vehicles or public service vehicles) casualties increased by 15% to 1,101 in 2000.

Date and Time

The worst month for fatalities in 2000 was April when 42 persons died in 37 fatal accidents. March recorded the fewest fatalities with 23 in 22 fatal accidents.

The number of fatal accidents between 9.00 pm and 3.00 am (the hours most strongly associated with drinking and driving), at 104, remains unchanged from 1999. The number of fatalities that occurred during these hours rose by 6 to 121. The number of fatal accidents and fatalities during these hours accounts for approximately 29% of all fatal accidents and persons killed, representing an increase of approximately one per cent on the 1999 situation.

The number killed during the later hours of darkness (that is between 3.00 am and 6.00 am), at 53, increased by 9 from the 1999 level. Fatalities that occur during these hours accounted for 13% of all road accident fatalities in 2000, an increase of about two percentage points on the same period in 1999.

The worst days of the week for fatalities during 2000 were Saturdays and Sundays. These two days together accounted for 165 fatalities, or 40% of all fatalities. The days of the week with the fewest associated fatalities were Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, which together accounted for 128 fatalities - 31% of all fatalities.

Location

Thirty-two per cent of all fatal accidents in 2000 occurred on urban roads. The proportion of fatal accidents occurring on rural roads fell by two percentage points to 68%. Forty-three per cent of all fatalities in 2000 occurred on national roads, a fall of one per cent over the 1999 figure.

On a county basis, Carlow experienced the highest accident rate (3.0) per county per 1,000 population. Louth recorded the greatest number of accidents per 1,000 vehicles (7.1).

Dublin recorded the highest accident rate per vehicle kilometer in 2000.

International Comparisons

On the basis of road deaths per 100,000 population, Ireland's rate at 11.0 in 1999, the latest date for which international comparative data are available is ranked joint seventh out of the 15 member states of the European Union.

Coverage of the report

This report covers all road or traffic accidents reported to the Garda Síochána involving fatalities, personal injury or material damage which occurred on public roads in Ireland (exclusive of Northern Ireland) in 2000.

Accidents on private property, such as railway station approaches or private lanes, are excluded.

All Road Accidents

By 'all reported road accidents' is meant all accidents investigated by or brought to the notice of the Garda Síochána where the exact location of the accident can be determined.

Accidents and Casualties

Road accidents are classified as fatal, personal injury or material damage; casualties are classified as either killed or injured.

Fatal Accident:

Where at least one person is killed as a result of the accident and death occurs within 30 days.

Serious Injury Accident:

Where there are no deaths, but a person or persons are seriously injured.

The definition of "serious injury" is an injury for which the person is detained in hospital as an 'in-patient', or any of the following injuries whether or not detained in hospital: fractures, concussion, internal injuries, crushings, severe cuts and lacerations, severe general shock requiring medical treatment.

Minor Injury Accident:

Where there are no deaths or serious injuries. The definition of a "minor injury" is: an injury of a minor character such as a sprain or bruise.

Material Damage Accident:

Where no deaths or injuries occur but damage is caused to a vehicle or property.

Learner Driver

A learner driver is a driver holding a provisional licence.

Vehicles

Vehicles are classified as follows -

1. Pedal Cycle

A pedal cycle is a two or three-wheeled road vehicle fitted with pedals deriving its sole means of propulsion from human power.

2. Motor Cycle

A motor cycle is any mechanically propelled two-wheeled machine and includes mopeds and motor scooters.

3. Car

A passenger road motor vehicle, other than a motor cycle, seating not more than eight passengers (excluding the driver).

4. Public Service Vehicle (P.S.V.)

A passenger road motor vehicle having seating accommodation for more than eight passengers (excluding the driver), and used for the carriage of passengers for reward.

5. Goods Vehicle

A road motor vehicle designed, exclusively or primarily, to carry goods.

6 Other Motor Vehicles

Other motor vehicles are miscellaneous types of motor vehicle not falling into any of the main categories.

Rural Area

A rural area is defined as an area where the speed limit zone is greater than 40 m.p.h.

Urban Area

An urban area is defined as an area where the speed limit zone is less than or equal to 40 m.p.h.

Built-up Area

A built-up area means an area within a 30 to 40 m.p.h. speed limit zone.

Dark

By 'dark' is meant the hours of darkness which begin half an hour after sunset and end half an hour before sunrise.