

LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR ROAD SAFETY

United Nations (UN) road safety legal instruments provide a strong foundation for countries to build domestic legal frameworks and systems that contribute to road safety and facilitate international road traffic. They include the following:

01

1968 Convention on Road Traffic, and its predecessor, the 1949 Convention on Road Traffic, which facilitate international road traffic and increase road safety through the adoption of uniform road traffic rules

02

1968 Convention on Road Signs and Signals, which establishes a set of commonly agreed road signs and signals.

03

1958 Agreement concerning the Adoption of Harmonized Technical United Nations Regulations for Wheeled Vehicles, Equipment and Parts which can be Fitted and/or be Used on Wheeled Vehicles and the Conditions for Reciprocal Recognition of Approvals Granted on the Basis of these United Nations Regulations, which provides the legal framework for adopting uniform United Nations Regulations for all types of wheeled vehicles manufactured, specifically related to safety and environmental aspects.

04

1997 Agreement concerning the Adoption of Uniform Conditions for Periodical Technical Inspections of Wheeled Vehicles and the Reciprocal Recognition of Such Inspections which provide the legal framework for the inspection of wheeled vehicles and for the mutual recognition of inspection certificates for cross-border use of road vehicles.

05

1957 Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR) which provide standards including requirements for operations, driver training and vehicle construction, that can be applied to prevent and mitigate the impact of crashes involving dangerous goods.

To fully realize their benefits, implementation of UN road safety conventions must go beyond accession. The vital next step is for the conventions to be transposed into national or regional legislation and systems to ensure their effective application, and thereafter be enforced through traffic police and inspection bodies.

There are 59 United Nations legal instruments in the area of inland transport which are administered by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).

[Learn more here.](https://roadsafetyfund.un.org/)

ROAD SAFETY KEY FACTS

World Health Organization

01



One person dies on the road every 24 seconds.

02



Every day, approximately 500 children lose their lives.

03



Road crashes are the biggest global killer of young people aged 5 – 29 years old.

04



93% of the world's fatalities on the roads occur in low- and middle-income countries, even though these countries have approximately 60% of the world's vehicles.

05



More than half of all road traffic deaths are among vulnerable road users: pedestrians, cyclists, and motorcyclists.

06



Road traffic crashes cost most countries 3% of their gross domestic product.

07



Road crashes take up much needed health care resources in communities that often suffer from other severe health issues, including in the context of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

08



Road traffic injuries causes considerable economic losses to individuals, families, and nations.

09



Approximately 1.3 million people die each year as a result of road traffic crashes.

ROAD SAFETY WHO IS AT RISK?

World Health
Organization

People from lower socioeconomic backgrounds

- More than 93% of road traffic fatalities occur in low- and middle-income countries.
- Road traffic fatalities rates are highest in the African Region.
- All over the world, people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are more likely to be involved in road crashes.



Age

Road traffic injuries are the leading cause of death for children and young adults aged 5-29 years.



Vulnerable road users

Pedestrians, cyclists, and motorcyclists the most vulnerable on the roads, representing more than the half of fatalities. Young and poor people without other transportation options are more at risk.



Gender

Men are more likely to be involved in road traffic crashes than women. However, women are 47% more likely to be injured from car crash and 17 times more likely to be killed compared to men involved in a car crash.



ROAD SAFETY AND THE PLANET



Road traffic is a global challenge for the planet. Transport is the fastest growing sector among all sources of CO2 emissions. The transport sector is responsible for approximately 23% of total energy-related CO2 emissions and is set to increase if current trends continue.



- Using safe public transport is cheaper and much less taxing on the environment compared to private vehicles.
- UNRSF promotes projects encouraging the transition to a safe and a zero-emission form of transport, such as walking and cycling. Many of used cars emit dangerous fumes, exposing people to high levels of air pollution, and they are often not roadworthy, resulting in more road crashes.



ROAD SAFETY AND THE SDGs

Addressing the risk of fatalities and injuries in road traffic is fundamental to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically those affecting

Health security

SDG 3.6 To halve road traffic deaths by 2030



Sustainable cities

SDG 11.2 To access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all



Accessing to quality education

SDG 4



Accessing decent work

SDG 8



Climate change

SDG 13



Gender equality

SDG 5



Partnerships for development

SDG 17



Reducing inequalities among countries

SDG 10



Health and Road Safety

An investment in strong public health systems and safe road use and infrastructure are mutually reinforcing. Safer roads means decreased road deaths and injuries and less of a burden on public health systems already overstretched by COVID-19.

Education and Road Safety

Education and awareness is crucial to building a culture of safe road user behavior. With safer roads, more children and young people will be safeguarded to ensure safe access to quality education.

Gender Equality and Road Safety

The characteristics of men and women need to be considered when improving road safety. Women are often traveling by foot or as passive passengers which increases their vulnerability on unsafe roads. Men are often the primary driver or rider and should be encouraged to use safe road user behaviour.

Decent Work & Economic Growth and Road Safety

Investing in road safety is an economic imperative that is both important and urgent given the heavy cost to individuals, families and up to 3 percent of most countries' GDP. There are also significant job creating opportunities which can be had from investing in road safety.

Reduced Inequalities

Poor road safety conditions affect the world's poorest people the most. With 93% of road crash fatalities occurring in low- and middle-income countries, the devastation of road crashes disproportionately affects society's poorest and most vulnerable members.

Partnerships for development

Multi-stakeholder networks and ecosystems are crucial to advocate for, and catalyze, financing for road safety in low- and middle-income countries to shape the future of mobility in a safer and more sustainable way for people, planet and prosperity.

Sustainable Cities and Road Safety

Urban mobility is at the heart of the future of safe and sustainable mobility. Ensuring city road systems are designed and built in a safe way will deliver the streets for life we all want.

Climate Action and Road Safety

Transport-related emissions are a major cause of global warming. Road safety initiatives, including public and non-motorized transport ensures that environmental impacts from increased mobility are reduced.

ROAD SAFETY AND UN MEMBER STATES

International Institutions and Country Donors to the UNRSF

- Russian Federation
- France via AFD
- The European Commission
- The Kingdom of Bahrain
- Monaco
- Hungary
- Slovakia
- Cyprus
- Mauritius

Hosts of Global Ministerial Conferences on Road Safety

- Russian Federation (2009)
- Brazil (2015)
- Sweden (2020)

Hosts of UN High-Level Meeting on Road Safety

- At the UN Headquarters in NYC in July 2022, with the support of the Russian Federation and Côte d'Ivoire



UN Member States have also collectively:

2015-2018

Supported Global Status Report

2004

Launched the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration (UNRSC), coordinated by the WHO. (2004)

2010-2020

Launched a 1st Decade of Action on Road Safety, accompanied by a Global Plan of Action (2010 – 2020)

2015

Adopted 2 road safety Sustainable Development Goals in 2015 (SDG 3.6: halve road fatalities & SDG 11.2: improve access to sustainable transport).

2015

Appointed the United Nations Secretary General's Special Envoy on Road Safety, Mr. Jean Todt. (2015)

2018

Established the United Nations Road Safety Fund to help unlock financing for road safety in low- and middle-income countries. (2018)

2021

Adopted a 'Vision for Everyone' resolution which, inter alia, addresses importance of good vision to road safety (2021)

2021-2030

Launched a 2nd Decade of Action on Road Safety accompanied by a Global Plan of Action (2021 – 2030)

ROAD SAFETY LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND



**Poor road safety
conditions affect
the world's
poorest people
the most.**

01

Safe roads and affordable transportation are fundamental conditions for people to access education, healthcare, employment, food for the family, and social and recreational services.

02

Road traffic injuries strike harder the working-age group, with enormous social and economic consequences, especially for poor households, making their poverty worse.

03

93% of road crash fatalities occur in low- and middle-income countries, even though these countries have approximately 54% of the world's vehicles.

04

Road traffic injuries have a strong association with health inequality.

05

Road traffic injuries place a tremendous toll on society's poorest and most vulnerable members. The victims are not usually the drivers of cars (as in high-income countries), but are pedestrians, motorized two and three-wheelers and cyclists, and passengers in buses, minibuses, and trucks.

06

Women living in low- and middle-income countries face more risks of road traffic incidents than women in high-income countries.

07

Take the case of Africa. The continent has the highest regional fatality rate with 26.6 deaths for every 100,000 people, while the European Region has the lowest fatality rate with 9.3 per 100,000 people.

08

70% of drivers who die on our roads are men but women have 47% higher risk of serious injury in a car crash than men.

ROAD SAFETY RISK FACTORS

1/2

World Health Organization

The Safes System approach to road safety aims to ensure a safe transport system for all users. This approach includes adequate law enforcement of traffic law, safe roads, safe speeds, safe vehicles and safe road users, all of which must be addressed in order to eliminate fatal crashes and reduce serious injuries.

Unsafe vehicles



There are a number of UN regulations on vehicle safety that, if applied to countries' manufacturing and production standards, would potentially save many lives. These include requiring vehicle manufacturers to meet front and side impact regulations, to include electronic stability control and to ensure airbags and seat-belts are fitted in all vehicles.

Inadequate post-crash care



Delays in detecting and providing care for those involved in a road traffic crash increase the severity of injuries. Post-crash care requires ensuring access and improving the quality of both prehospital and hospital care.

Inadequate law enforcement of traffic laws



Effective enforcement includes establishing, regularly updating, and enforcing laws at the global, regional national, municipal and local levels that address the other mentioned risk factors. It includes also the definition of appropriate penalties.

Unsafe road infrastructure



This includes the design of the roads keeping in mind the safety of all road users. Measures such as footpaths, cycling lanes, safe crossing points, and other traffic calming measures are critical to reducing the risks on the road.

Road safety users



It concerns road user behaviour. It includes public awareness/education to address:



Speed



Seatbelt and child restraint wearing rates



helmet wearing rate



drinking and under influence driving



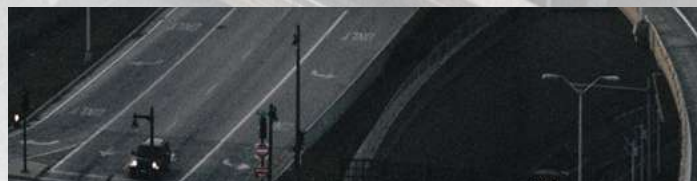
ROAD SAFETY RISK FACTORS

2/2



Speeding

- An increase in average speed is directly related both to the likelihood of a crash occurring and to the severity of the consequences of the crash. For example, every 1% increase in mean speed produces a 4% increase in the fatal crash risk and a 3% increase in the serious crash risk.
- The death risk for pedestrians hit by car fronts rises rapidly (4.5 times from 50 km/h to 65 km/h).
- In car-to-car side impacts the fatality risk for car occupants is 85% at 65 km/h.



Non-use of motorcycle helmets, seat-belts, and child restraints

- Correct helmet use can lead to a 42% reduction in the risk of fatal injuries and a 69% reduction in the risk of head injuries.
- Wearing a seat-belt reduces the risk of death among drivers and front seat occupants by 45 - 50%, and the risk of death and serious injuries among rear seat occupants by 25%.
- The use of child restraints can lead to a 60% reduction in deaths.



Driving under the influence of alcohol and other psychoactive substances

- Driving under the influence of alcohol and any psychoactive substance or drug increases the risk of a crash that results in death or serious injuries.
- In the case of drink-driving, the risk of a road traffic crash starts at low levels of blood alcohol concentration (BAC) and increases significantly when the driver's BAC is ≥ 0.04 g/dl.
- In the case of drug-driving, the risk of incurring a road traffic crash is increased to differing degrees depending on the psychoactive drug used. For example, the risk of a fatal crash occurring among those who have used amphetamines is about 5 times the risk of someone who hasn't.

ROAD SAFETY SOLUTIONS

**A world where
roads are
safe for every
road user,
everywhere**

SOLUTIONS EXIST

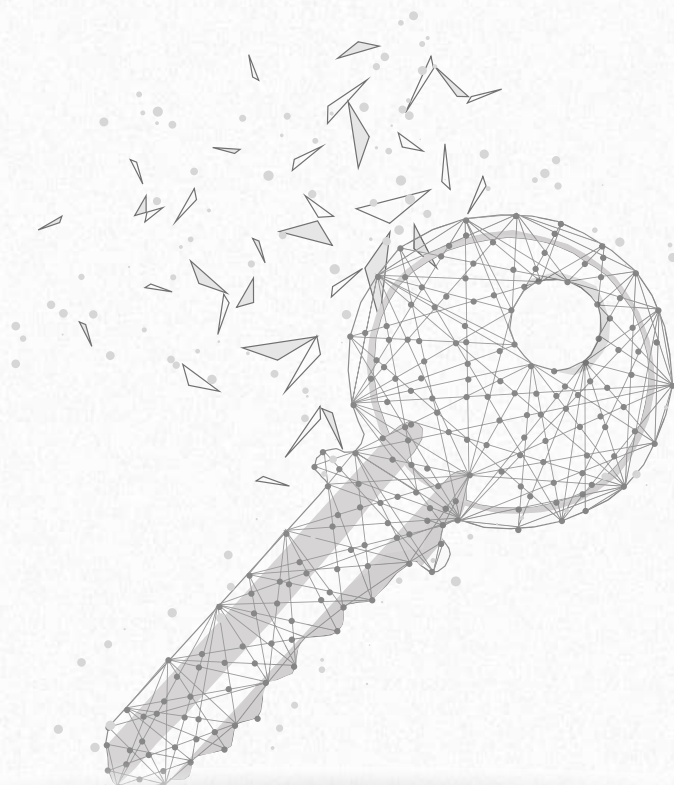
Road traffic deaths and injuries are predictable and preventable

Through a safe system approach, addressing the safer road safety management capacity; the safety of the road infrastructure; the safety features of vehicles, improving post-crash care for victims of road crashes; educating road users and raising public awareness for road safety.

Investing in road safety thanks to global tools such as the United Nations Road Safety Fund, through national, private or individual funding.

Through the adoption by countries of the United Nations Road Safety Conventions which serve as a foundation for stated to build national legal frameworks which prevent death and injuries from road traffic crashes. These conventions are hosted by the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).

Collaborating and working in partnerships with a multisectoral approach. The UNRSF partners with global partners, UN agencies and entities, international and national stakeholders from a variety of sectors coming from regional or governments authorities, private sector or civil society.



Reduce speed



People have a 90% chance surviving after being hit by a car going at 30km/h, but less than 50% at 50KM/h or higher.

Don't drive under influence



Driving under the influence of alcohol and any psycho-active substance or drug increases the risk of a crash that results in death or serious injuries.

Wear a child restraint



The use of child restraints can lead to a 60% reduction in deaths.

Stop distracted driving



Drivers using mobile phones are approximately 4 times more likely to be involved in a crash than drivers not using a mobile phone.

Wear a helmet



Correct helmet use can lead to a 42% reduction in the risk of fatal injuries and a 69% reduction in the risk of head injuries

Wear as seatbelt



Wearing a seatbelt reduces the risk of death among drivers and front seat occupants by 45 - 50%, and the risk of death and serious injuries among rear seat occupants by 25%.

ROAD SAFETY SOLUTIONS

A world where
roads are
safe for every
road user,
everywhere

UNRSF is part of the solution.

Established in 2018, the United Nations Road Safety Fund (UNRSF) aims at substantially reducing death and injuries from road crashes in low and middle-income countries.

Pursuant to the UN General Assembly resolutions 70/260 and 74/299 proclaiming a new Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030, the UNRSF is an innovative pooled fund gathering private, public and individual donors.

Anchored in a Global Framework Plan of Action for Road, the Fund can leverage and mobilize resources to address critical national road safety system gaps.



A New Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030

In August 2020, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 74/299 «Improving global road safety», proclaiming the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030, with the ambitious target of preventing at least 50% of road traffic deaths and injuries by 2030.

WHO and the UN regional commissions, in cooperation with other partners in the UN Road Safety Collaboration, have developed a Global Plan for the Decade of Action. It aligns with the Stockholm Declaration, by emphasizing the importance of a holistic approach to road safety, and calling on continued improvements in the design of roads and vehicles; enhancement of laws and law enforcement; and provision of timely, life-saving emergency care for the injured.

The Global Plan also reflects the Stockholm Declaration's promotion of policies to promote walking, cycling and using public transport as inherently healthy and environmentally sound modes of transport.