

An Urgent Call to Action for Europe, North America, Australasia

RATIONALE

The world suffers an estimated 1.19 million road traffic deaths (2021), corresponding to a rate of 15 road traffic deaths per 100,000 population¹. Without serious action, road crashes will cause an estimated 13–17 million more deaths and 500 million more injuries in the current decade².

UN Member States have adopted a resolution 74/299 *Improving Global Road Safety*³ and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (target 3.6)⁴ and are therefore mandated to reduce road deaths and injuries by 50% by 2030. We know what works to achieve this target: the actions needed are set out in the Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021–2030⁵.

Every person must be guaranteed safe, affordable, accessible, sustainable mobility using the road system. It ensures access to education, work, and the choices that enable any individual to achieve their maximum potential, leaving no one behind. This is fundamental to creating a fair, healthy, prosperous society.

Safe mobility is our right.

1 - [World Health Organization. \(2023\). Global status report on road safety 2023. WHO, Geneva. Licence: CC BY-NC-SA](#)

2 - WHO & UN Regional Commissions. (2021). Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021–2030. <https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/global-plan-for-the-decade-of-action-for-road-safety-2021-2030>; Job, RFS. (2019). Development of a Safe System Approach, Transportation Research Board Annual Meeting, 13 January 2019, Washington DC.

3 - United Nations General Assembly. (2020). Resolution A/74/L86 Improving Global Road Safety. <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N20/226/30/PDF/N2022630.pdf?OpenElement>

4 - United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2015). 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

5 - WHO & UN Regional Commissions. (2021). Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021–2030. <https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/global-plan-for-the-decade-of-action-for-road-safety-2021-2030>



REGIONAL CONTEXT⁶

While countries in Europe, North America, and Australasia⁷ at the city, state and/or national levels adopt Vision Zero⁸, the region is still far from zero deaths and serious injuries. According to the WHO, the European region accounts for 5% of global deaths and recorded the most significant decline in road deaths globally, with a 36% reduction since 2010⁹. However, over 68,000 people still lose their lives annually on European roads¹⁰, and many Member States of the European Union (EU) fall short of the EU and UN targets¹¹. The WHO Western Pacific Region (which includes Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Islands) accounts for 25% of all road traffic fatalities and is estimated to have a death rate of 15.4 per 100,000 population¹². According to the Pan-American Health Organization, the region of the Americas (which includes Canada and the United States) represents 12% of global road traffic deaths¹³. The United States alone reported 42,795 deaths in 2022 with a death rate of 14 per 100,000 population¹⁴—marking a 10% increase since 2020 and the highest number of fatalities since 2005¹⁵. Canada also experienced the second-highest count in the last decade with a 6% rise in road deaths in 2022 from 2021¹⁶.

Pedestrians and cyclists remain vulnerable in Europe, North America, and Australasia despite a growing emphasis on promoting walking and cycling as sustainable modes of transport¹⁷. Re-

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8 - Vision Zero is a strategy to eliminate all traffic fatalities and serious injuries in road traffic crashes, while increasing safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all. [Vision Zero Network. \(n.d.\). What is Vision Zero? Retrieved January 23, 2025](#)

9 - [World Health Organization. \(2023\). Global status report on road safety 2023. WHO, Geneva. Licence: CC BY-NC-SA](#)

10 - [WHO Regional Office for Europe. \(29 June 2023\). Home/Newsroom/Fact sheets/Transport, health and environment](#)

11 - [European Commission. \(2024\). Press release: 2023 figures show stalling progress in reducing road fatalities in too many countries](#)

12 - [World Health Organization. \(2023\). Global status report on road safety 2023. WHO, Geneva. Licence: CC BY-NC-SA](#)

13 - [Pan American Health Organization. \(2025, January 22\). New PAHO report on road safety highlights slow and uneven progress in reducing traffic fatalities. Pan American Health Organization.](#)

14 - [World Health Organization. \(2023\). Global status report on road safety 2023. WHO, Geneva. Licence: CC BY-NC-SA](#)

15 - [United States Department of Transportation. \(2024, February\). 2024 progress report on the National Roadway Safety Strategy.](#)

16 - [Transport Canada. \(2024\). Canadian Motor Vehicle Traffic Collision Statistics: 2022.](#)

17 - [European Commission. \(2018\). Walkable cities offer cleaner, safer spaces. Buehler, R., & Pucher, J. \(2023\). Overview of Walking Rates, Walking Safety, and Government Policies to Encourage More and](#)

cent data showed that pedestrians and cyclists accounted for 28% of road traffic deaths in the EU¹⁸. Between 2010 and 2021, deaths in the UNESCAP Pacific subregion declined slightly, but pedestrians and cyclists accounted for 31% of total road deaths¹⁹. In Canada and the United States, pedestrian and cyclist deaths account for 18 and 21% of the national deaths respectively²⁰.

Speed is commonly cited as a major contributor to road deaths in Europe, North America, and Australasia. Speed is the number one killer on Europe's roads²¹. Speeding is a factor in 60% of fatal crashes in New Zealand²² and roughly one-third in Australia²³. In Canada, speeding contributed to 25% of fatal crashes, marking a 6.5% increase from previous years²⁴. In the United States, speeding was responsible for 29% of road traffic deaths²⁵.

The need for transformative investments in sustainable transport is also apparent in the region. The European Green Deal and Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy emphasizes the use of resource-efficient public transport and reducing reliance on cars to meet climate targets²⁶. Australia's Climate Council advocates for sustainable public transit investments²⁷ and New Zealand introduced a Sustainable Public Transport Framework to improve environmental and health outcomes²⁸. The U.S. Department of Transportation's 2024 report to Congress emphasized investments in public transportation as pivotal strategies for decarbonizing the transportation sector²⁹. Canada's Action Plan for Clean On-Road Transportation prioritizes ze-

[Safer Walking in Europe and North America. Sustainability, 15\(7\), 5719.](#)

[U.S. Department of Transportation. \(n.d.\). Encourage and promote safe bicycling and walking. Retrieved January 24, 2025](#)

[Government of Canada. \(2021\). National active transportation strategy 2021–2026 \(Catalogue No. T94-27/2021E-PDF; ISBN: 978-0-660-39815-0\).](#)

[Austroads. \(2024\). Prioritising active transport \(Report No. AP-R711-24\).](#)

18 - [European Commission. \(2024\). Annual statistical report on road safety in the EU, 2024. European Road Safety Observatory. Brussels: European Commission, Directorate-General for Transport.](#)

19 - [UN ESCAP. \(2024\). Road Safety in the Asia-Pacific Region.](#)

20 - [Transport Canada. \(2024\). Canadian Motor Vehicle Traffic Collision Statistics: 2022.](#)

[TRIP. \(2024, July 2\). Addressing America's traffic safety crisis: Examining the Causes of Increasing U.S. Traffic Fatalities and Identifying Solutions to Improve Traffic Safety](#)

21 - [European Transport Safety Council. \(2022\). Reducing speeding in Europe: PIN Flash 36.](#)

22 - [New Zealand Ministry of Transport. \(2024\). New Zealand's road safety objectives 2024.](#)

23 - [International Transport Forum. \(2021\). Australia: Road safety. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development \(OECD\).](#)

24 - [International Transport Forum. \(2023\). Canada: Road safety country profile 2023. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development \(OECD\).](#)

25 - [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. \(2024, July\). Traffic safety facts 2022 data \(Report No. DOT HS 813 582\). U.S. Department of Transportation.](#)

26 - [European Commission. \(2024\). Sustainable and smart mobility strategy.](#)

27 - [ITS Australia. \(2023\). Sustainable transport futures 2023.](#)

28 - [New Zealand Ministry of Transport. \(n.d.\). Public transport operating model.](#)

29 - [U.S. Department of Transportation. \(2024\). Decarbonizing U.S. transportation: A report to Congress.](#)



ro-emission vehicles and public transport improvements³⁰.

The existing plans and initiatives in the region provide a framework to address road safety; Countries in Europe, North America, Australasia must fully leverage them and take concrete actions. By doing so, we will not only save lives but also improve public health, stimulate economic growth, and promote environmental sustainability.

CALL TO ACTION

We call on governments in Europe, North America, Australasia to commit to act for people's right to safe mobility and a 50% reduction in road deaths and injuries by 2030, through the implementation of evidence-based interventions that put people at the center, protect the environment, and promote equity and inclusion.

We demand:

- 1 Evidence-Based Actions:** prioritize interventions that have been proven to save lives and reduce injuries, with a particular focus on those who are least protected on our roads, including pedestrians and cyclists.
 - a. Develop and implement national and local road safety plans that strive for Vision Zero and implement the Safe System approach.
 - b. Establish clear and measurable targets and improve data collection to improve policy implementation by:
 - i. Establishing unified, comprehensive data systems that produce timely, reliable, accurate, well-categorized data on road safety and the causes contributing to fatalities and serious injuries in crashes;
 - ii. Introducing key performance indicators (KPIs) for road safety data, defining a data collection program for this purpose, and making KPIs part of periodical monitoring activities.
 - c. Protect all road users and promote sustainable mobility for all by:
 - i. Prioritizing investments in 30 km/h limits or lower speed limits pedestrian facilities and traffic calming where people walk, cycle, live, and play;
 - ii. Implementing laws at national, state, provincial/territorial, and local levels, that create low speed people-centered environments via 30 km/h or lower speed limits, traffic calming and pedestrian facilities;
 - iii. Enforcing compliance to speed limits, demonstrating the benefit of reduced speeding and low-speed streets for people and planet;
 - iv. Improving public transportation in urban, semi-urban, and rural areas, including last-mile connectivity to get people to their destinations safely.
 - d. Ensure an effective judicial response:
 - i. based on thorough crash investigations and deterrence measures;
 - ii. by providing comprehensive support systems for victims and their families

³⁰ - [Transport Canada. \(2022\). Canada's action plan for clean road transportation.](#)

through psychological, social, rehabilitation, and judicial support, for as long as is needed, and, where appropriate, enabling and simplifying claims procedures;

- iii. Equipping and enabling first responders to treat crash victims quickly and efficiently and guaranteeing the rights of bystanders who provide assistance.

- 2 Transparent and accountable investment to make mobility safe:** demonstrate accountability by channeling funding into implementation of proven life and injury-saving interventions, recognizing that evidence-based interventions have a high return on investment and publicly report on road safety spending that incorporates the safety of all road users as a core element.
 - a. Allocate budgets for the full implementation of the above-mentioned actions;
 - b. Report annually on the budget and spending for the above-mentioned actions.
- 3 NGO involvement in decision-making processes:** work with NGOs and communities, enabling an environment where civil society and government can work together effectively, so that evidence-based road safety decisions that save lives and reduce injuries are made at every level of government.
 - a. Establish clear mechanisms for an enabling environment for NGOs to meaningfully participate in decision-making processes and support governments to fulfill their accountability for delivering the reduction in deaths and injuries from road crashes.
 - b. Promote constructive dialogue between civil society, private sector, and governments to enable better road safety governance and regulation for the benefit of people and communities.
 - c. Promote the role of NGOs and showcase how civil society can contribute to the implementation of Safe System approaches and active transportation policies.

OUR ROLE AND COMMITMENT

We, as civil society, have a role defined in the Global Plan. We commit to play our part in advocating for and enabling people's rights to safe mobility and achieve a 50% reduction in road deaths and injuries by 2030.

We commit to:

- 1. Stand up for people's right to be safe on the roads**

We empower people and communities. We show the reality of the roads they use and highlight the experiences of road victims and their loved ones who have been affected by crashes. We speak up on decisions that affect road safety.

- 2. Use data and evidence to show what needs to be done**

We amplify data, evidence, and best practices from around the world and we collect ground-level evidence that show the impact of safe and unsafe roads on people and communities.



3. Hold our governments accountable for people's right to be safe on the road and for the 2030 target

We keep road safety on the agenda until every person is guaranteed — through commitment and action — their right to safe mobility. We monitor progress and put a spotlight on action and inaction.