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Record low in traffic fatalities in the first half of 2021; historic maximum in cyclist casualties

Vienna, 2021-11-11 – In the first half of 2021, 151 people were killed and 17 585 people were injured in road traffic accidents in Austria according to Statistics Austria. The number of road fatalities was thus lower than in any other first half of the past 60 years. Even in the "Corona year" 2020, the number was slightly higher (first half of 2020: 152 killed, first half of 2019: 196 killed; see Table 1). In contrast, the number of cyclists injured or killed in accidents peaked at just over 4 000.

Lockdown effects visible in newest accident figures

In April 2021, during the "hard lockdown" in Vienna and Lower Austria, the number of people injured or killed in accidents fell by 37% in both provinces compared to April 2019, i.e. compared to the pre-crisis level. In the remaining federal states, where only "lockdowns light" were imposed, the decreases were between 7% and 30%. In contrast, in the "lockdown-free" June 2021, the number of casualties rose sharply to 5 338, the highest since 2007.

New high in cyclist casualties; almost half of them in single-vehicle accidents

After record numbers of cyclist casualties in 2020, this trend continued: In the first half of 2021, 4 079 cyclists were injured or killed in road traffic accidents, the highest figure in the past 30 years (first half of 2020: 3 640, first half of 2019: 3 352 persons, see Table 2). Of these 4 079 cyclist casualties, 23 were killed (first half 2020: 17 deaths, first half 2019: 16 deaths). This means that 15% of all people killed in road traffic accidents were riding a bicycle, which is also the highest proportion in the past 30 years (first half of 2020: 11%, first half of 2019: 8%). 61% of the cyclists who were killed in accidents, 14 people, were riding an e-bike.

The average age of e-bike riders injured or killed in accidents was 50 years, with this falling steadily in recent years from 58 years in the first half of 2018 to 54 years in the first half of 2020. In comparison, the average age of non-powered cyclists injured or killed in accidents was 44 years in the first half of 2021 (see Table 3).

44% of cyclists injured or killed in accidents in the first half of 2021 were due to single-vehicle accidents. In addition to the six cyclists killed in single-vehicle accidents, a further seven cyclists were responsible for their respective accident. Thus, a total of 57% of the cyclists killed were the main originator of the accident.

257 riders of bicycles who were involved in road traffic accidents were under the influence of alcohol in the first half of 2021. This means that 5.8% of all cyclists involved in an accident were intoxicated by alcohol; for e-bikes, the proportion was even higher at 7.6%. The percentage was thus significantly higher than for other types of traffic units (passenger cars: 3.8%, motorbikes: 1.7%).

For more detailed results and further information concerning statistics of road traffic accidents please refer to our [website](#).

Information on methods, definitions: Statistics Austria has been compiling and publishing statistics on road traffic accidents with personal injury since 1961. The traffic accidents are recorded electronically by the police authorities and transmitted to Statistics Austria via a web service. The currently published half-year results are to be regarded as provisional until the final annual results are available, as changes to the accident data (e.g. subsequent injury reports) that subsequently become known are still possible by the Federal Ministry of the Interior or the police authorities.

Injury accident: Any accident involving at least one road vehicle in motion on a public road, resulting in at least one injured or killed person.

Person killed: Any person killed immediately or dying within 30 days as a result of an injury accident.

Casualties: include persons injured or killed in and as a result of an accident.

The traffic unit "**bicycle**" also include e-bikes and electric scooters.

A **rider of a bicycle** is considered to be under the **influence of alcohol** if he has been found to be impaired by alcohol according to the Road Traffic Act (StVO) (degree of alcoholisation greater than or equal to 0.8 per mille in blood).

The information on the **presumed main originator** of the accident is provided according to the assessment of the police authorities who carry out the registration of the accident.

Table 1: Road traffic accidents and casualties (injuries or fatalities), first half 2018–2021

	2018	2019	2020	2021	Changes 2020 to 2021 in %
Accidents	17 145	16 187	12 525	14 065	12.3
Casualties	22 018	20 798	15 676	17 736	13.1
Injuries	21 821	20 602	15 524	17 585	13.3
Fatalities	197	196	152	151	-0.7

S: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, road traffic accidents. - Preliminary results.

Table 2: Injured or killed cyclists by type of drive, first half 2018–2021

	2018	2019	2020	2021	Changes 2020 to 2021 in %
Casualties	3 625	3 352	3 640	4 079	12.1
Electrically	433	524	679	995	46.5
Non-powered	3 192	2 828	2 961	3 084	4.2
Injuries	3 610	3 336	3 623	4 056	12.0
Electrically	425	521	670	981	46.4
Non-powered	3 185	2 815	2 953	3 075	4.1
Fatalities	15	16	17	23	35.3
Electrically	8	3	9	14	55.6
Non-powered	7	13	8	9	12.5

S: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, road traffic accidents. - Preliminary results.

Table 3: Average age of injured or killed cyclists by type of drive, first half 2018–2021 (in years)

Type of drive	2018	2019	2020	2021
Electrically	58	55	54	50
Non-powered	44	44	45	44

S: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, road traffic accidents. - Preliminary results.

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