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60 years of road accident statistics: 3.5 million people killed or injured on Austria's roads

Vienna, 2021-11-19 – Since Statistics Austria began recording road accidents with personal injury in 1961, a total of about 3.5 million people injured or killed in those accidents have been registered. This corresponds approximately to the current population of Vienna and Lower Austria. More than 85 000 people have lost their lives in road accidents over the past 60 years, although the number of people killed and injured each year has fallen significantly. Whereas in 1972 nearly 3 000 people were killed in road accidents, more than eight fatalities per day, in 2020, 344 people were killed on the roads, which is less than one person per day for the first time. The number of people injured or killed in traffic accidents fell from 205 per day in 1972 to about half that number (104) in 2020.

Despite increasing number of vehicles, remarkable decrease in fatalities

On the occasion of the World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims on 21 November, the development of fatalities in comparison to the respective motor vehicle population was analysed in more detail. While the number of motor vehicles registered in Austria rose continuously, the development of traffic fatalities has been pointing steadily downwards since the 1970s. Compared to the record year 1972 with 2 948 road fatalities, the number in 2020 was 88% lower at 344. Due to measures such as speed limits, compulsory seat belts and crash helmets, child restraints and the lowering of the alcohol limit, as well as improvements in traffic and vehicle technology, emergency medicine and driver training as well as the elimination of accident accumulation points, in combination with increased surveillance a reduction in road accidents was caused.

At the same time, the number of registered motor vehicles in 2020 was 7.1 million and thus significantly above the level of 1972 (2.5 million). The number of registered passenger cars has risen particularly sharply here, from around 500 000 in 1961 to over 5 million in 2020, a tenfold increase in this period.

Significantly more pedestrians killed 60 years ago

The distribution of fatalities among the different types of traffic units has also changed considerably over the past 60 years. In 1961, 33% of all traffic fatalities were still pedestrians (540 fatalities), 30% were on a single-track motorbike (485 fatalities) and only 23% were on a car (370 fatalities). In contrast, in 2020, 15% were pedestrians (51 fatalities), 23% were single-track motorbikes (78 fatalities) and 42% were passenger car occupants (146 fatalities).

Number of child fatalities dropped sharply from 240 (1968) to two (2020)

The decline in traffic fatalities is particularly noticeable among children (0-14 years), with the peak of 240 children killed being recorded in 1968. In comparison, 16 children died on Austria's roads in 2019 and in 2020 the number reached its lowest point with two children killed, although a similarly low figure was already recorded in 2018 with three children killed. Thus, this number decreased by 99% within more than 50 years.

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.

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.

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

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

For further inquiries please contact Directorate Spatial Statistics, Statistics Austria:
Brigitte ALLEX, Tel.: +43 1 71128-7553 resp. brigitte.allex@statistik.gv.at and
Stefan ORTNER, Tel.: +43 1 71128-8037 resp. stefan.ortner@statistik.gv.at

Media owner, producer and publisher:
STATISTICS AUSTRIA, Federal Institution under Public Law
1110 Vienna, Austria, Guglgasse 13, Tel.: +43 1 71128-7777
presse@statistik.gv.at
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