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New record number of senior casualties in road traffic accidents

A quarter of them was seriously injured or killed between January and September 2023

Vienna, 2024-01-31 – According to Statistics Austria, 4 992 people over the age of 65 were injured or killed in road traffic accidents in Austria from January to September 2023. This is the highest figure since digital records began in 1992. An all-time-high was also reached in the number of cyclist casualties (injuries and fatalities; e-scooters included). Among these, the high proportion of e-scooter riders under the influence of alcohol stood out.

“Although the number of accidents on Austria’s roads has fallen significantly by 7% in the first three quarters of the past ten years, the number of senior citizens injured or killed has risen sharply by 22% in the same period. An all-time-high was recorded from January to September 2023 – every seventh person involved in an accident during this period was over 65 years old. In addition, over 65-year-olds also had more serious accidents: a quarter of seniors involved in accidents were seriously injured or killed, while this proportion was significantly lower for other age groups at 16%,” explains Tobias Thomas, Director General of Statistics Austria.

Senior citizen casualties in accidents, i.e. those who were injured or killed, were most frequently riding by bike (37%), car (35%) or as pedestrians (11%). They not only had, but also caused more serious accidents: 18% of all accidents caused by passenger car drivers over the age of 65 were serious road traffic accidents (with more than one traffic unit involved), compared to 13% of accidents caused by car drivers in other age groups. In terms of the **causes of accidents**, failure to observe the priority (45%) and inattention/distraction (24%) dominated among car drivers over 65, while inappropriate speeding (5%) and alcohol, drugs or medication (3%) were significantly less common than among other passenger car drivers.

New all-time-high in bike and e-scooter casualties

9 293 riders of bicycles or e-scooters were injured or killed on Austria's roads in the first nine months of 2023 (see table 2). This is the highest number since digital records began in 1992. More than a quarter of cyclists were travelling on an electrically powered bike when the accident occurred. The **average age** of the e-bike riders involved in accidents was 55 years, 46 years for cyclists without electric drive and remarkably lower for e-scooter riders at 34 years. In addition to age, there were also major differences in the rate of **helmets** used at the time of the accident: 55% of e-bike riders involved in accidents were wearing a helmet, 47% of cyclists without an electric drive and only 8% of e-scooter riders.

One in eight e-scooter riders involved in an accident under the influence of alcohol

A comparably high proportion of e-scooter riders involved in road accidents were under the influence of alcohol, namely one of eight e-scooter riders (12%). In comparison, the same figure was at 4% for car drivers and at 3% for motorbike drivers. 90% of alcoholised e-scooter drivers with measured alcohol levels had a blood alcohol level of more than one per mille at the time of the accident, 28% even had a blood alcohol level of more than two per mille.

More detailed results are available on our [website](#).

Table 1: Injuries, fatalities and casualties in Q1 to Q3 2019–2023

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Change 2022/23 in %
Injuries	34 988	30 298	31 864	33 716	34 408	+2.1
Fatalities	323	265	276	304	316	+3.9
Casualties in total	35 311	30 563	32 140	34 020	34 724	+2.1
thereof older than 65	4 697	4 205	4 283	4 864	4 992	+2.6

S: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, Road traffic accidents. – Preliminary results.

Table 2: Casualties (injuries or fatalities) from Q1 to Q3 2019–2023 by traffic unit

Traffic unit	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Pedestrians	2 525	1 934	2 037	2 225	2 395
Bikes ¹	6 839	8 033	8 243	9 087	9 293
thereof e-scooter ²	1 245
Mopeds	3 029	2 639	2 833	2 499	2 492
Motorcycles	3 679	3 287	3 336	3 451	3 743
Passenger Cars	17 236	13 066	13 839	14 655	14 551
Trucks ³	883	731	922	1 023	951
Other	1 120	873	930	1 080	1 299
All traffic units	35 311	30 563	32 140	34 020	34 724

S: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, Road traffic accidents. – Preliminary results. – 1) Incl. e-bikes and e-scooters. – 2) From 2023 onwards new category. – 3) Incl. articulated vehicles.

Information on methodology, definitions: Statistics Austria compiles and publishes 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 quarterly 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.

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.

The traffic unit **bicycle** also includes e-bikes and until the reporting year 2022 electric scooters as well. From 2023 onwards, they are also published separately.

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

Severe road traffic accidents are accidents with personal injury in which at least one person involved was seriously injured or killed.

If you have any questions on this topic, please contact:

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