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Fewer road traffic accidents in the first quarter of 2020, but number of fatalities increased

Vienna, 2020-07-29 – In the first quarter of 2020, a total of 69 persons died in road traffic accidents in Austria. According to Statistics Austria, this means an increase in fatalities of 8% compared to the first quarter of 2019 (64 fatalities). During the COVID-19 exit restrictions, which applied in Austria from 16 March and affected calendar weeks 12 and 13 in the first quarter, the number of road deaths fell by 42% to seven compared with calendar weeks 12 and 13 in 2019.

An average of 75 fewer injuries per day during the COVID-19 restrictions in March

A decline of 17% year-on-year was recorded in the first quarter of 2020 in both the number of accidents (5 096) and the number of injured (6 668 persons; see table 1). The decrease in the number of accidents (-73%) and injured people (-76%) was particularly marked in calendar weeks 12 and 13, in which an average of 21 accidents with 24 injuries per day were recorded (2019: 78 accidents with 99 injuries per day; see table 2).

Main cause of fatal accidents is inappropriate speed

There was a significant increase of fatal accidents caused by inappropriate speed in the first quarter of 2020 (27 fatalities). 39% of all fatal accidents were a result of inappropriate speed (2019: 23%), followed by accidents caused by inattention or distraction (21%, 2019: 31%). In calendar weeks 12 and 13, 71% of fatal accidents were caused by inappropriate speed.

More fatalities in Burgenland and Carinthia

Lower Austria (20 deaths, +33%), Upper Austria (11 deaths, -21%) and Styria (10 deaths, ±0%) recorded the most fatalities in the first quarter of 2020. The most significant increase in fatalities was seen in Burgenland (7 deaths, +250%) and Carinthia (5 deaths, +150%).

No fatally injured children in the first three months of 2020

In the first quarter of 2020, no children (0–14 years) were fatally injured and no fatal accidents on the way to school of six to 15-year-olds were reported. However, 334 children were injured in traffic accidents; this is a decrease of 25% compared to the same quarter last year. In calendar weeks 12 and 13, ten children were injured in traffic accidents, a decrease of 89% compared to the same period of the previous year.

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

Information on methods, definitions: In 2012, a change in the survey method took place. The survey based on paper questionnaires was replaced by electronic police reports. Since then, the results also include accidents which become known later as well as additional injury reports. Another change in the structure of the survey took place in 2018. Due to these changes in the data collecting method, a break in time-series from the years 2016–2018 (final results) towards 2019–2020 (preliminary results; additional injury reports are possible) has to be considered.

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.

Table 1: Road traffic accidents, injuries and fatalities, first quarter 2016–2020

Road traffic accidents, injuries and fatalities	2016 ¹⁾	2017 ¹⁾	2018 ¹⁾	2019 ²⁾	2020 ²⁾	Changes 2019 to 2020 in %
Road traffic accidents, injuries and fatalities in total						
Accidents	6 789	6 797	6 227	6 169	5 096	-17.4%
Injuries	8 753	8 802	8 267	8 020	6 668	-16.9%
Fatalities	79	71	79	64	69	+7.8%
Injured and fatally injured children (0–14 years)						
Injured children	505	490	488	445	334	-24.9%
Fatally injured children	-	1	1	4	-	.

S: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, road traffic accidents. – 1) Final results. – 2) Preliminary results.

Table 2: Road traffic accidents, injuries and fatalities, calendar weeks 12 and 13 (during COVID-19 exit restrictions) 2020 compared to 2019

Road traffic accidents, injuries and fatalities	2019 ¹⁾	2020 ¹⁾	Changes 2019 to 2020 in %
Accidents	1 098	297	-73.0%
Injuries	1 383	338	-75.6%
Fatalities	12	7	-41.7%

S: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, road traffic accidents. – 1) Preliminary results.

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