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Fewer deaths and injuries in road accidents in 2020; inappropriate speed number one cause of fatal accidents

Vienna, 2021-05-12 – Due to the lower traffic volume during the corona-related lockdowns from March to May and in November and December 2020, road traffic accidents with personal injury in Austria decreased significantly: 38 074 people were injured or killed in road traffic accidents in 2020, according to Statistics Austria. This represents a decrease of 16% or 7 482 people compared to 2019 (45 556).

Lockdowns had a significant influence on the occurrence of accidents

The number of injuries and fatalities fell significantly, especially during the "hard" lockdowns: Between 16 March and 26 April 2020, the number of casualties and fatalities fell by 61% compared to the average value for the same period of the past three years; between 16 November and 6 December 2020, the number of casualties fell by 47%. Also during the "light" lockdowns – in April/May as well as in November/December – the number of people involved in accidents decreased significantly, namely by about 30% (27.4.–31.5.: -32%; 2.11.–15.11.: -29%, 7.12.–27.12.: -28%). In contrast, in August and September 2020 (calendar weeks 32 to 39), there was an increase of 6% in injuries and fatalities compared to the average value of the years 2017 to 2019 (see chart).

Inappropriate speed was the main cause of fatal accidents in 2020

A total of 344 people were fatally injured in road accidents in 2020 (see table 1). The number of fatalities decreased by 17% compared to the previous year and was significantly below 400 for the first time. The main cause of fatal road accidents in 2020 was inappropriate speed, which killed 110 people (2019: 103, 2018: 98). This is 32% of all fatally injured people, which is significantly higher than in 2018 (24%) and 2019 (25%). Between 16 March and 31 May 2020, the proportion even rose to 39% (mean 2017–2019: 25%), 23 people were fatally injured during this period caused by inappropriate speed.

Highest number of single-vehicle accidents in the last 30 years

139 people died in single-vehicle accidents on Austria's roads in 2020. This means that in 40% of all fatalities no other road user was involved in the accident apart from possible passengers. In general, the share of single-vehicle accidents also increased in 2020, namely by 5 percentage points to a share of 36% of the total accidents (2019: 31%), reaching the highest value in almost 30 years. While the proportion of cars in single-vehicle accidents halved from 62% to 30% during this period, the proportion of bicycles tripled from 11% to 39%. In 2020, the proportion of bicycle accidents in single-vehicle accidents rose by 8 percentage points (2019: 31%). For the first time, bicycles are the dominant mode of transport in single-vehicle accidents.

Never before so many injured cyclists

For almost all road users, a decrease in the number of injured or fatally injured persons was recorded in 2020. Only the number of injured or fatally injured cyclists rose in 2020, by 14% (see table 2). This corresponds to an increase of three injured or fatally injured cyclists per day. In the last 30 years, there were never as many cyclists injured as in 2020.

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: The road traffic accidents with personal injury are electronically recorded by the police 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.

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

Casualties (injured or fatally injured people) in road traffic accidents, 2017-2020 (calendar weeks)

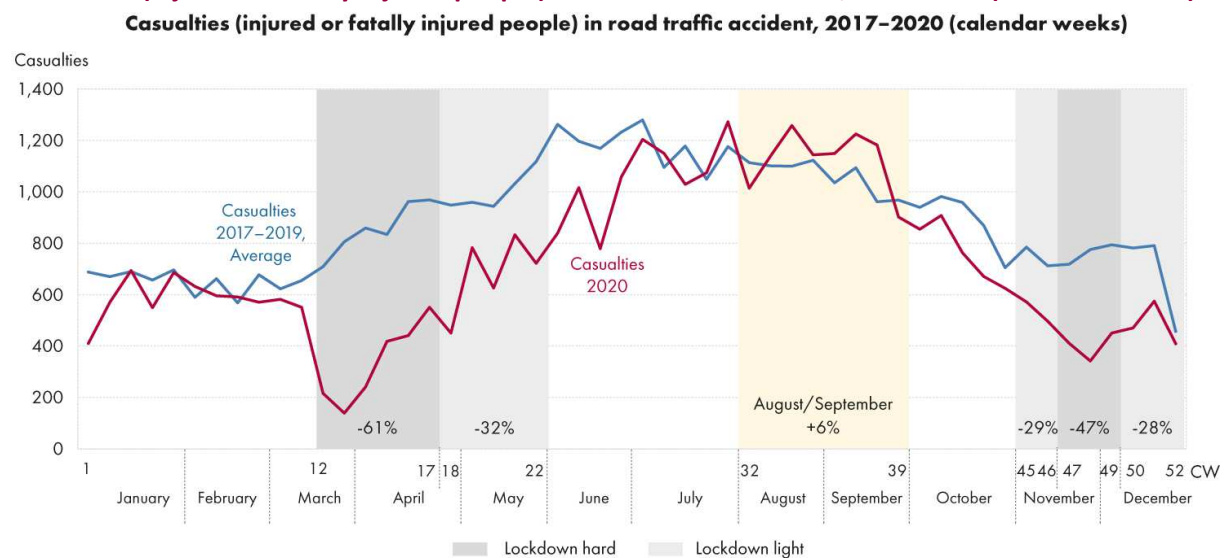


Table 1: Road traffic accidents and casualties (injuries or fatalities), 2016–2020

Road traffic accidents and casualties	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Changes 2019 to 2020 in %
Accidents	38 466	37 402	36 846	35 736	30 670	-14.2
Casualties	48 825	47 672	46 934	45 556	38 074	-16.4
thereof injuries	48 393	47 258	46 525	45 140	37 730	-16.4
fatalities	432	414	409	416	344	-17.3

S: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, road traffic accidents.

Table 2: Casualties (injuries or fatalities) by mode of transport, 2020

Casualties	Pedestrian	Bicycle ¹⁾	Moped	Motorcycle	Car	Truck ²⁾	Other transport mode	Total
Casualties	2 661	9 348	3 165	3 627	17 189	982	1 102	38 074
Changes 2019 to 2020 in %	-27.0	+14.5	-15.9	-12.7	-25.7	-15.9	-28.1	-16.4
thereof injuries	2 610	9 308	3 161	3 553	17 043	962	1 093	37 730
Changes 2019 to 2020 in %	-27.0	+14.4	-15.8	-12.8	-25.7	-16.7	-28.0	-16.4
fatalities	51	40	4	74	146	20	9	344
Changes 2019 to 2020 in %	-26.1	+21.2	-60.0	-6.3	-27.0	+66.7	-30.8	-17.3

S: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, road traffic accidents. - 1) Incl. electric bicycle, electric scooter. - 2) Incl. articulated vehicles.

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