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Trucks involved in almost every second fatal road accident in the first quarter of 2021

Vienna, 2021-07-29 – According to Statistics Austria, 48 people died in road traffic accidents in Austria in the first quarter of 2021, and 6 064 others were injured. This means that the number of people killed or injured in road traffic accidents was lower than in any other first quarter in the past 30 years (see Table 1).

959 casualties in the first quarter of 2021 were due to accidents **involving a truck**. This corresponds to 16% of all casualties. In the previous years, the share was 12% to 13%. Of these 959 casualties, 22 people were killed, which is almost one in two road deaths (46%). In March 2021, the number of casualties in accidents involving trucks increased (389 people) and is not only significantly higher than in 2020 (214 casualties, +82%) but also higher than in 2019 (306 casualties, +27%).

Lockdowns had a significant influence on the occurrence of accidents

The decrease in casualties in the first quarter of 2021 is mainly due to the lower traffic volume during the corona-related lockdowns, with the number of people injured and killed falling significantly, especially during the "hard lockdown" in calendar weeks 1 to 5. Between 4 January and 7 February 2021, the number of people killed fell by 48% and the number of people injured by 29% compared to the same period last year.

In contrast, during the "lockdown light" and first opening steps in Vorarlberg in March 2021, the number of casualties increased by 57% compared to March 2020 (from mid-March 2020, a "hard lockdown" applied throughout Austria) and, with 2 447 injured or killed persons, almost reached the values of March 2019 again (2 862 casualties, -15%).

Never before so many cyclists injured or killed

After the percentage of cyclists involved in accidents had already risen in the individual quarters in 2020 compared to the corresponding quarter of the previous year, the rising trend in the number of cyclists injured or killed continued: 893 cyclists were either killed or injured in accidents in the first quarter of 2021, the highest figure in the past 30 years (first quarter 2020: 738, first quarter 2019: 726 people). This means that 15% of all people involved in accidents in the first quarter of 2021 were on a bicycle. Of the total of 893 cyclists involved in road traffic accidents, six were killed (first quarter 2020: three deaths). More than half of them, namely four persons, were riding an e-bike.

All-time low in passenger car and pedestrian fatalities

In the past 30 years, the number of car occupants and pedestrians who died in traffic accidents in the first quarter has never been lower than in 2021. 26 people in a car were killed in road traffic accidents in the first quarter of 2021, compared to 39 in both 2020 and 2019, resulting in a decline by one third in 2021. The number of fatally injured pedestrians fell by more than half, from 16 people in the first quarter of 2020 to seven people in 2021 (see Table 2).

Most traffic fatalities in Upper Austria

In the first quarter 2021, Upper Austria recorded the most fatalities (15), ahead of Lower Austria (12 fatalities, see Table 3) for the first time in the last 15 years. While there was a decrease in all federal states in January and February (except Burgenland in February +/-0%) and an increase in traffic accidents in March compared to 2020, Carinthia (+17%) and Vorarlberg (+2%) were even above the level of March 2019 in the number of accidents in 2021.

Every second fatality due to inappropriate speed

The main cause of fatal accidents in the first quarter of 2021 was inappropriate speed. This resulted in the deaths of 24 people, which corresponds to 50% of all traffic deaths and again exceeds the shares of the previous quarters (2020: 4th quarter: 24%, 3rd quarter: 32%, 2nd quarter: 34%, 1st quarter: 39%).

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: 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 quarterly results of 2021 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. Since no comparable preliminary quarterly results are available for the reporting years 2017 and 2018, the final results from these years are presented and the preliminary results from 2019 to 2021. A comparison of the preliminary and final results is only possible to a limited extent.

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.

Trucks refer to articulated vehicles "up to 3.5t" ("light trucks") and "over 3.5t" ("heavy trucks").

When analysing the accident figures in the course of the "**hard**" and "**light**" lockdowns - in order to be able to achieve comparability with previous years - the calendar weeks were used as comparison periods, even if the lockdowns did not always fall exactly into a calendar week.

Table 1: Road traffic accidents and casualties (injuries or fatalities), first quarter 2017–2021

Road traffic accidents and casualties	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Changes 2020 to 2021 in %
Accidents	6 797	6 227	6 169	5 096	4 739	-7.0
Casualties	8 873	8 346	8 084	6 737	6 112	-9.3
Thereof injuries	8 802	8 267	8 020	6 668	6 064	-9.1
fatalities	71	79	64	69	48	-30.4

S: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, road traffic accidents.

Table 2: Casualties (injuries or fatalities) by mode of transport, first quarter 2021

Casualties	Pedestrian	Bicycle ¹⁾	Moped	Motorcycle	Car	Truck ²⁾	Other transport mode	Total
Casualties	548	893	289	204	3 716	281	181	6 112
Changes 2020 to 2021 in %	-26.3	+21.0	+15.1	+39.7	-15.3	+26.0	-27.3	-9.3
thereof injuries	541	887	289	200	3.690	276	181	6 064
Changes 2020 to 2021 in %	-25.7	+20.7	+15.1	+37.0	-15.1	+27.8	-26.1	-9.1
fatalities	7	+6	-	4	26	5	-	48
Changes 2020 to 2021 in %	-56.3	+100.0	±0.0	.	-33.3	-28.6	-100.0	-30.4

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

Table 3: Casualties (injuries or fatalities) by federal states, first quarter 2021

Casualties	Burgenland	Carinthia	Lower Austria	Upper Austria	Salzburg	Styria	Tyrol	Vorarlberg	Vienna	Austria
Casualties	118	447	1 169	1 294	391	1 001	495	318	879	6 112
Changes 2020 to 2021 in %	-18.6	-4.7	-12.0	+2.0	-25.1	+1.3	-31.0	-5.4	-8.7	-9.3
thereof injuries	117	444	1 157	1 279	385	995	493	317	877	6 064
Changes 2020 to 2021 in %	-15.2	-4.3	-11.5	+1.7	-25.5	+1.7	-30.9	-4.5	-8.6	-9.1
fatalities	1	3	12	15	6	6	2	1	2	48
Changes 2020 to 2021 in %	-85.7	-40.0	-40.0	+36.4	+20.0	-40.0	-50.0	-75.0	-33.3	-30.4

S: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, road traffic accidents.

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