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Fewer road fatalities in 2021, but all-time-high figures for injured cyclists

Vienna, 2022-04-28 – In 2021, 362 people were killed in road accidents, according to Statistics Austria. Thus, the number of traffic fatalities was significantly lower than in the years before the Corona pandemic, although 5% higher than in 2020 (344) with the lowest figure since records began in 1961 due to the pandemic. A further 40 889 people were injured in road accidents in 2021 (see Table 1). This is the equivalent of an average of 112 people injured per day, of which 19 people were seriously injured. In 2021, both the number of injured cyclists and the proportion of traffic fatalities attributable to truck accidents reached the highest level in the past 30 years.

Lockdowns also had a significant influence on road traffic accidents in 2021

During the lockdown at the beginning of 2021 (calendar weeks 1 to 5), the number of road traffic casualties decreased by 39% compared to the average of the comparable weeks in the pre-pandemic years 2017 to 2019. There were also measurably fewer casualties (-27%) during the "hard" lockdown in November and December (calendar weeks 47 to 49), as well as in calendar weeks 45 to 46 and 50 to 52, during the "lockdown for unvaccinated" (-24%). In contrast, the number of casualties in September 2021 increased by 12% compared to the average of September values from 2017 to 2019.

Highest number of injured cyclists in 30 years; twice as many e-bike fatalities as in 2019

50 cyclists were killed on Austria's roads in 2021. This is a quarter more than in 2020 (40 fatalities) and 52% more than in 2019 with 33 fatalities. A further 9 617 cyclists were injured (see Table 2), 3% more than in 2020, when already a peak was recorded. This means that never before in the past 30 years have so many people been injured while cycling as in 2021. More than a quarter of those injured while cycling in 2021 and half of all fatalities on the road by bicycle (24 fatalities) were on an **e-bike**. Compared to the pre-pandemic year 2019 (11 fatalities), the number of e-bike fatalities increased by 118%. 46% of all cyclist casualties occurred in single-vehicle accidents in which cyclists were also presumed as the main accident originators. The proportion of single vehicle accidents in e-bike accidents was even higher at 51%.

47% of the cyclists involved in accidents were wearing a **helmet**, with this proportion increasing in recent years (2018: 41%). The proportion varied greatly between the federal provinces (see Table 3) and the age groups. In Styria, 63% of cyclists involved in accidents were wearing a helmet, while the proportion was the lowest in Vorarlberg at only 32%. The age group over 85 was the least likely to use a helmet (27%), closely followed by 15 to 19 year olds (28%). This compares to 49% among 20 to 64 year olds.

Share of road fatalities in truck accidents higher than ever before

88 people died in accidents involving trucks in 2021, which means that a total of 24% of all traffic fatalities occurred in truck accidents. Never before in the past 30 years had this proportion been so high. The highest value was recorded in Vorarlberg with 62% (8 out of 13 fatalities), the lowest proportion with 16% in Carinthia (6 out of 38 fatalities). Of the total of 31 fatal accidents between a truck and a passenger car, 25 were caused by the driver of the passenger car (81%). In contrast, 70% of all fatal accidents between a truck and a bicycle or a pedestrian were caused by the driver of the truck. Ten pedestrians and ten cyclists were killed in these accidents.

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.

The traffic unit "**bicycle**" also include e-bikes and electric scooters.

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

The information on the "**presumed main accident originator**" is provided according to the estimation of the police bodies carrying out the registration of the accident.

When analysing the accident figures in the course of the **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. For the period in September, calendar weeks 36-38 were included in the evaluation.

Table 1: Accidents and casualties (injured or fatally injured) 2017 to 2021

Accidents and Casualties	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Change 2021/2020 in %
Accidents	37 402	36 846	35 736	30 670	32 774	+6.9
Casualties	47 672	46 934	45 556	38 074	41 251	+8.3
Of which injured	47 258	46 525	45 140	37 730	40 889	+8.4
Fatally injured	414	409	416	344	362	+5.2

S: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, Statistics of Road Traffic Accidents.

Table 2: Accidents and casualties (injured or fatally injured) 2021 by traffic unit

Casualties	Pedestrians	Bicycle ¹⁾	Mopeds	Motor-cycle	Passenger cars	Trucks ²⁾	Other	Total
Casualties	2 854	9 667	3 372	3 759	19 111	1 262	1 226	41 251
Of which injured	2 817	9 617	3 359	3 684	18 950	1 243	1 219	40 889
Fatally injured	37	50	13	75	161	19	7	362

S: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, Statistics of Road Traffic Accidents. – 1) incl. E-Bike, E-Scooter 2) incl. lorries

Table 3: Bicycle casualties, share of helmets used by federal province

	Burgenland	Carinthia	Lower Austria	Upper Austria	Salzburg	Styria	Tyrol	Vorarlberg	Vienna	Austria
Bicycle casualties	154	808	1 516	1 280	988	1 376	1 373	732	1 440	9 667
Of which used helmet	88	388	675	655	447	869	678	236	520	4 556
Helmet used in %	57.1	48.0	44.5	51.2	45.2	63.2	49.4	32.2	36.1	47.1

S: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, Statistics of Road Traffic Accidents.

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