

Road Safety in Austria

Annual Report 2020

Road Safety Measures and Activities

Implementation of the Road Safety Programme



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For reasons of transparency and comprehensibility, some parts of this report follow the wording used in previous editions. All efforts have been made thereby to incorporate and make use of gender-inclusive language.

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Foreword

The first Austrian Road Safety Programme (RSP) was published in 2002 and was followed in 2011 by the start of the Road Safety Programme 2011 - 2020. The Austrian Federal Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology (BMK) has been publishing an “Annual Report on Road Safety in Austria” since 2007. The report offers an overview of road safety work carried out in Austria in the reporting year as well as information on current trends in Austrian road accident statistics. Throughout the duration of the Road Safety Programme 2011 - 2020, the report served as a basis for achieving the defined targets, setting corresponding measures and adapting the programme as and when required.

The year 2020 was dominated by the COVID-19 pandemic. It was also the year that marked the end of the Austrian Road Safety Programme 2011 - 2020. At the start of this programme, the following targets were set: 50 % fewer fatalities, 40 % fewer serious injuries and 20 % fewer personal injury accidents on Austria’s roads than the corresponding averages for the period from 2008 to 2010. These targets were not fully achieved. While the number of fatalities decreased in 2020 by around 44 %, although this was presumably also attributable to the reduced traffic volumes due to the COVID 19 restrictions and lockdowns, the targeted decrease in serious injuries was clearly missed. The target for the total number of road accidents was met in 2020, but the corresponding figures in the years up to 2019 were well below target.

Road safety work is an ongoing process. Continued efforts are required after the Road Safety Programme 2011 - 2020 to further reduce the numbers of accidents, fatalities and injuries on Austria’s roads. The Austrian Road Safety Strategy for the years 2021 to 2030 that has been developed in recent years builds on the two previous Austrian Road Safety Programmes. In doing so, it develops the previous policy further and adopts an innovative approach based on the “Safe System” method and the current mobility trends. The intention thereby is to enable and ensure a regular adaptation of the strategy to new developments through the implementation of specific measures.

“Road safety can only be achieved if we all continue to work together in Austria to pursue common goals.” — Leonore Gewessler, Federal Minister for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology

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1 Road Safety Work

Improving road safety is a matter of national and international concern. This section details the activities that are being carried out in Austria to improve road safety as well as the contributions that Austrian organisations make to international endeavours in this field.

1.1 Road Safety Work in Austria

Road safety in Austria is a joint task that is shared by various institutions including, for example, local and regional authorities, political parties, research institutes and non-governmental organisations. The figure below provides an overview of these institutions and how they interact.



Figure 1: Road safety institutions in Austria

From 2002 onwards, the Austrian Road Safety Programmes stood at the core of the country's road safety work. A first national Road Safety Programme was enacted in 2002 for the period from 2002 to 2010. This was followed directly by the Austrian Road Safety Programme 2011 – 2020, two editions of which were subsequently published: the first in February 2011, and the second in 2016 following a comprehensive interim evaluation in 2015. The Austrian Road Safety Strategy 2021 - 2030 builds on the two previous Austrian Road Safety Programmes.

Figure 2: Austrian Road Safety Programme 2011 - 2020



A copy of the Austrian Road Safety Programme 2011 - 2020 can be downloaded at https://www.bmk.gv.at/themen/verkehr/strasse/verkehrssicherheit/publikationen/programme_berichte.html. A copy of the new Austrian Road Safety Strategy can also be found on this webpage.

The entry into force of the Austrian Accident Investigation Act (Unfalluntersuchungsgesetz) in 2006 led to the establishment of the Austrian Road Safety Advisory Council as a forum for decision makers in matters relating to road safety. The Advisory Council's primary tasks lie in the preparation, evaluation and development of road safety programmes for all modes of transport. Its members include the transport spokespersons for the parliamentary political parties, transport safety experts as well as representatives of government ministries, local and regional authorities, mobility clubs, chambers of commerce and industry, trade and labour associations, interest groups and research institutions. The Road Safety Advisory Council's Roads Task Force was actively involved in the preparation of the Austrian Road Safety Programme 2011 - 2020, supported the programme throughout its duration and evaluated it at regular intervals.

1.2 International Institutions

Austria is an active participant in international road safety organisations and working groups. The table below contains a list of international institutions with Austrian participation.

Table 1: International organisations and working groups

Organisation	Website
CARE European Road Accident Database	ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety
CEDR Conference of European Directors of Roads	cedr.eu
ECTRI European Conference of Transport Research Institutes	ectri.org
ECR Euro Contrôle Route	euro-controle-route.eu
ERSC European Road Safety Charter	erscharter.eu
ERTRAC European Road Transport Research Advisory Council	ertrac.org
ETSC European Transport Safety Council	etsc.eu
European Commission	ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety
FEHRL National Road Research Centres in Partnership	fehrl.org
FERSI Forum of European Road Safety Research Institutes	fersi.org
GRSP Global Road Safety Partnership	grsproadsafety.org
ITF International Transport Forum	itf-oecd.org
IRTAD Accident Database of OECD	itf-oecd.org/IRTAD
JTRC Joint Transport Research Centre of OECD and ITF	itf-oecd.org/research-centre
La Prévention Routière Internationale	lapri.org
OECD Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development	oecd.org
PIARC World Road Association	piarc.org
ROADPOL European Roads Policing Network	roadpol.eu
UNECE Global Forum for Road Traffic Safety	unece.org/transport
WHO World Health Organisation	who.int

1.3 Awareness-Raising Measures and Campaigns

The year 2020 was dominated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The first lockdown in Austria was imposed in March, and numerous temporary restrictions were introduced throughout the year, which limited or prevented the holding of events. Nevertheless, a number of awareness-raising measures and campaigns were still implemented in 2020. These are described in brief in the sections below.

1.3.1 International Activities

The European Commission and the EU Member States have set themselves the target of reducing both the number of fatalities and the number of people who suffer serious injuries on Europe's roads by 50 % by the year 2030. Austria is actively participating in many of the different activities that are being undertaken to achieve this target.

EU Road Safety Exchange

As part of its efforts to reduce the number of fatalities and serious injuries on Europe's roads, the European Commission has launched a transnational project known as the "EU Road Safety Exchange". Managed by the European Transport Safety Council (ETSC), the project brings together road safety experts from across Europe to learn from each other by sharing experiences and best practices. The goal and purpose of this learning initiative is to tackle key dangers on the roads more effectively using smart ideas and measures and thus ultimately further improve the safety of road users. To achieve this goal, Austria has joined forces with eleven other Member States in the three-year EU Road Safety Exchange project to share expertise on the topics of "Particularly Vulnerable Road Users and Infrastructure" and "Infrastructure – Construction and Maintenance", with particular emphasis being placed on joint efforts. Although Europe's roads are among the safest in the world, and road safety in Europe has improved greatly in recent years, the number of people seriously or fatally injured in road accidents nevertheless remains far too high: in recent years, around 20,000 people lost their lives annually on Europe's roads. Road safety performance varies greatly across the individual EU Member States. Sharing best practices in reducing speed, building safe infrastructure, improving enforcement, collecting data or raising the safety of pedestrians, cyclists and other vulnerable road users in urban areas will serve to tackle the disparities and thus also to further close the current road safety gap in Europe.

In 2020, Austria took part in two online workshops organised by the EU Road Safety Exchange project. In October 2020, experts from Poland, France and Austria shared their experience in safe road infrastructures and measures to reduce driving speeds. In December, a Bulgarian-Austrian online roundtable discussion focused on safety standards in the planning and operation of major roads, road maintenance and the safety management procedure for traffic infrastructure.

Further information on the EU Road Safety Exchange project can be found on the following webpage: ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/road-safety-exchange-twelve-eu-member-states-team-improve-road-safety_en.

1.3.2 National Activities and Events

As a result of the COVID-19 restrictions, only a few road safety conferences were held at national level in 2020. Many face-to-face events and activities were cancelled from March onwards, with some of them replaced, for example, by video conferences. Awards ceremonies were likewise increasingly held as online events. A selection of these events and activities are described below.

14th Pedestrian Symposium 2020 – Walk-space.at

More than 120 national and international experts took part in person or via Livestream in this symposium, which was held in Freistadt on 14 and 15 October 2020. During the event in the Salzhof event centre, delegates attended nine keynote speeches and 30 presentations on the theme of “Walkability for Residents and Tourists” in three workshops and three sessions. A further 25 “speed dating” project presentations provided additional opportunities to share and discuss related initiatives and strategies. Two guided tours (“Walk Shops”) of Freistadt city centre and an excursion to Linz rounded off the comprehensive programme. Road safety aspects also featured on the agenda in, for example, the discussions on car-free school streets and e-scooters or the International Charter for Walking, one of the aims of which is to reduce the barriers that limit walkability in public spaces.



Figure 3: 14th Pedestrian Symposium 2020; Photo: Walk-space

KFV Research Awards 2020 – Austrian Road Safety Board

The KFV Research Awards recognise innovative methods and solutions with the potential to make our roads safer. Due to the COVID-19 restrictions, the 2020 awards ceremony took the form of a live online gala instead of a face-to-face event. The 5,000 euro top prize went to Horst Possegger from Graz University of Technology, who, together with his colleagues Christian Ertler, Michael Opitz and Horst Bischof at the Institute of Computer Graphics and Vision, developed a fully automatic, image-based control system for pedestrian traffic lights. The intelligent camera system automatically recognises a person's intent to cross the road and enables the lights to react more quickly to waiting pedestrians. This reduces waiting times both for pedestrians and motorists and thus improves road safety.

Figure 4: The presentation of the top prize at the KFV Research Awards 2020; Photo: KFV (Austrian Road Safety Board/APA-Fotoservice/Schedl)



Ö3 Road Safety Awards: “Heroes of the Roads” – Hitradio Ö3, Federal Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology, Federal Ministry of the Interior

In May 2021, the Ö3 Road Safety Awards were presented for the 19th time in six categories: “Ö3ver of the Year”, “Emergency Services”, “Police”, “Fire Service”, “Motorway Maintenance” and “Public Transport”. The awards recognise real-life “Heroes of the Roads”, i.e. people and institutions who have made an outstanding contribution to road safety. The 2020 “Ö3ver of the Year” was Hubertus Kimmel. After having had a serious motorcycle accident in the 1990s in which no one provided him with first aid, Kimmel vowed that he would never turn his back on an accident victim. He went on to complete extensive first aid training and has since helped to save lives on Austria’s roads on 20 occasions.

The award in the category “Police” went to the Motorway Police in Trieben. Responding to a life-threatening incident, two police officers succeeded in diverting and stopping a confused motorist who was driving in the wrong direction on the motorway. Further awards went to the Vienna Fire Service, the Lesachtal Mountain Rescue Service, the ASFINAG Tunnel Management Department and the Österreichische Verkehrsverbünde transport associations.



Figure 5: The presentation of the Ö3 Road Safety Awards; Photo: Hitradio Ö3/Martin Krachler

1.3.3 Selected National Awareness-Raising Measures and Campaigns

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, efforts were also made in 2020 at both national and provincial level to draw the attention of road users to various aspects of road safety. This section provides an overview of some of the corresponding campaigns and awareness-raising measures.

Seeing What's Ahead Protects Lives – Federal Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology

Pedestrians and cyclists are often seen too late by motorists in the dark, in the rain or when it is snowing. The “Seeing What's Ahead Protects Lives” (“Auf Sicht fahren schützt Leben”) media campaign by the Federal Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology draws attention to aspects that are of particular relevance for motorists driving in adverse conditions and when visibility is poor. Detailed tips on how best to proceed when driving in fog, rain or snow as well as recommendations for cyclists and information on stopping distances can all be found on the Ministry's website at www.bmk.gv.at/themen/verkehr/strasse/verkehrssicherheit/unfallpraevention/auf-sicht-fahren.html

Figure 6: Poster for the BMK Initiative “Seeing What's Ahead Protects Lives”; Photo: BMK



Making Austria's Tunnels Safe – ASFINAG

As part of its “Making Austria's Tunnels Safe” (“Tunnelfit”) initiative, ASFINAG launched a safety in tunnels campaign in 2020. The campaign focused on various aspects of road safety in tunnels such as keeping a safe distance, driving at appropriate speeds and paying attention to the traffic signs and signals on the approach roads to tunnels. Over 100 billboards on the approaches to tunnels, newsletters, blog posts and online banners on the websites of high-impact media websites as well as corresponding information on ASFINAG's own website and social media were used to draw attention to these important aspects of road safety in tunnels. A quiz was also published on asfinag.at in which road users could test their own knowledge of tunnel safety.



Figure 7: ASFINAG “Making Austria's Tunnels Safe” campaign; Photos: ASFINAG

“Close to” – Risk Prevention for Novice Drivers – Province of Burgenland

The “Close to” prevention project draws schoolchildren's attention to the risks of drink driving through first-hand accounts of real-life drink-driving accidents. Volunteers who have been involved in such accidents visit schools to talk to pupils about their drink-driving experiences as well as the consequences of their actions in later life – both for themselves and for those close to them. They volunteer to participate in the “Close to” project to ensure that young people learn about the dangers and consequences of drink driving not only in theory but also from personal experience. Their authentic stories and descriptions leave a lasting impression on their young audiences.

In 2020, “Close to” volunteers visited a total of 17 schools and driving schools across Burgenland. 336 people attended these risk prevention sessions.

Road Safety Tips from HELMI – Province of Carinthia, Kronen Zeitung, Austrian Road Safety Board

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, HELMI, the Austrian Road Safety Board's road safety mascot, was not able to celebrate his 40th birthday in style in 2020 as originally planned. However, he remained as active as ever – spending 10 weeks working with the Province of Carinthia to give valuable road safety tips in the *Kronen Zeitung Carinthia* newspaper. The highlight of this road safety campaign was A HELMI activity day at the primary school in Völkermarkt.

Figure 8: An example of HELMI's road safety tips: "The Right Way to Cross a Road"; Photo: Kronen Zeitung/Uta Rojsek-Wiedergut



Road Safety through SUSAS – Province of Lower Austria, Austrian Road Safety Board

The goal of the SUSAS "Getting to School Safely" ("Schüler und Sicherheit am Schulweg") project is to promote active mobility and road safety among youngsters in the 6-14-year-old age group. The focus thereby lies on those areas of road safety which children and young people can consciously influence and specifically improve through their own actions. In the SUSAS project, a series of road safety days are organised and held directly in schools. The agenda for each event is customised to the actual level (primary/secondary) of the school, the accident statistics in the district as well as the interests of the school itself. The Province of Lower Austria and the Austrian Road Safety Board are supported in the SUSAS project by a number of partner organisations from the road safety sector, thus allowing them to offer an exciting and varied programme of activities. These partners include the police force, the Red Cross, ARBÖ, the Postbus and Dr. Richard bus companies and the Easy Drivers driving school.

In the 2019/2020 school year, around 2,200 children and young people participated in a total of 26 road safety days at schools across Lower Austria. The participating schools were located in the Tulln, Korneuburg, Waidhofen/Thaya and Neunkirchen dis-

tricts. A new set of districts is selected each year to ensure that each district is included on a regular and repeat basis. The statistics for accidents involving children and young people on the journey to school constitute a further selection criterion.



Figure 9: A road safety day at the primary school in Ternitz-Pottschach; Photo: Province of Lower Austria

AUVA Bicycle Workshop – AUVA, Province of Lower Austria

When the Federal Government introduced the first COVID-19 lockdown in Austria in March 2020, all schools in the country switched to distance learning. From then on, the ready-to-go AUVA bicycle workshops, which are normally held from April to early July, went into standby mode. The Ministry of Education recommended outdoor classes for the return to school in autumn, which meant that the workshops could finally go ahead. Fresh air, outdoor lessons and exercise: the bicycle season was moved to the autumn for the first time in the 16-year history of the AUVA bicycle workshops. One third of the 320 workshop days that had been planned nationwide were subsequently held in the period from September to mid-October 2020.

Special exercises in a skills training course and professional bicycle and helmet checks prepared the schoolchildren for the demands of everyday cycling. In autumn 2020, 104 bicycle workshops were held at 62 primary schools across Austria. Over 8,500 schoolchildren – around 2,900 of them from Lower Austria – benefited from this prevention measure, which was provided at schools free of charge. The active cycling experience was funded by the Province of Lower Austria and the Austrian Workers' Compensation Board (AUVA).

A new addition in 2020 was the “Bicycle Detectives in the Classroom” exercise in which two young detectives – Rada and Konrad – set off on a rally on their bikes, solving a series of puzzles as they go. The “puzzle rally” introduces exciting cycling-related topics in a child-friendly manner, and the accompanying materials and handout – which can be downloaded free of charge by all participating schools – can be used to prepare for and follow-up on the workshop.

Figure 10: AUVA bicycle workshop; Photo: CAP-Kindersicherheit GmbH



Measures to Raise Awareness of Visibility, Alcohol and Drugs – Province of Upper Austria

The limited visibility of pedestrians wearing dark clothing often makes it difficult for motorists to react in time in precarious situations. This issue was addressed in a series of short films intended to encourage pedestrians to dress in a way that makes them clearly visible to motorists. The films were broadcast on various commercial TV stations in Upper Austria from October to December 2020. Three additional cinema and television infomercials on alcohol and drugs were also produced to raise awareness of this topic particularly among young people.

Campaigns to Raise Awareness of Indicating and Distraction – Province of Upper Austria

“Indicating”, i.e. the signalling of a change in the direction of travel, is the symbolic form of communication on the roads and thus a prerequisite for smooth interaction between road users. The greater the number of road users who indicate reliably and correctly, the greater the number of road accidents that can be prevented. To draw greater attention to this topic among motorists, the Province of Upper Austria launched an awareness-raising campaign in 2020. The campaign also addressed the topic of distraction at the wheel, focusing thereby in particular on the use of mobile phones while driving.

The campaign posters were mounted on the rear windows of 150 buses in the Upper Austrian Transport Association fleet as well as on over 1,500 lorries registered to companies in Upper Austria. The message was also communicated on billboards, in various print media publications and through short infomercials on the radio.

“Even minor traffic rules have a major effect. Every single road user who follows the rules can make a big contribution to improving road safety.” — Günther Steinkellner



Figure 11: Posters for the “indicating and distraction” road safety campaign in Upper Austria; Photos: Province of Upper Austria, Reichl und Partner Werbeagentur GmbH



Moped Training Courses – Province of Salzburg, ARBÖ

Moped riders have a far higher risk of being involved in a road accident than the occupants of other motor vehicles. Showing off, overestimating one’s own capabilities and lack of driving experience also have an impact on the number of accidents among young moped riders. To address this problem, ARBÖ organises moped training courses for schoolchildren in grades 8 to 10 (14-16-year-olds) with the financial support of the Province of Salzburg. The four-hour workshops focus on various practical aspects of riding a moped such as the right clothing to wear, vehicle, mechanical and road safety,

braking (including emergency braking), maintaining balance on low-speed sections of road, where to look when turning a corner, safety distances and blind spots, all of which can be practiced on specially designed skills training courses.

The goal of these courses is to teach and encourage moped riders to drive their vehicles responsibly and provide them with the opportunity to improve their driving skills in a safe environment. This, in turn, should serve to reduce the number of moped accidents and thus make a valuable contribution to road safety.

Figure 12: Moped training course; Photo: Province of Salzburg



“Eyes on the Road” Campaign for Schools – Preventing Distraction on the Roads – Province of Styria

Distraction is one of the main causes of road accidents. Since 2017, the Province of Styria has been running its “Eyes on the Road” (“Augen auf die Straße”) road safety campaign, backed by a range of corresponding measures. In 2020, the campaign focused particularly on vulnerable road users.

The “Eyes on the Road” project for schools drew children’s attention to their own actions, taught them about the dangers and showed them what can happen when they behave carelessly on the roads. A pair of eyes as big as an adult discussed distraction on the way to school with primary schoolchildren in grades 3 and 4 (8-10-year-olds). In an interactive exercise with the larger-than-life eyes, the children were encouraged to talk about their own experiences, observations and habits. In a humorous yet thought-provoking manner, they learned not only how quickly we can become distracted but also that we are the ones who are responsible when this happens.



Figure 13: “Eyes on the Road” project for schools; Photos: Province of Styria

“White Crosses” Awareness-Raising Campaign for Motorcyclists – Province of Styria

In the Styrian Road Safety Programme 2020 - 2025, motorcyclists are one of the main target groups for road safety work. Despite the measures that have already been introduced, accident numbers in this sector have still risen slightly in recent years. In 2020, there were also concerns that the COVID-19 restrictions would lead motorcyclists in particular to live their regained feeling of liberty and self-determination to the full by seeking that feeling of pure freedom on two wheels. The “White Crosses” awareness-raising campaign was thus also intended to react in good time to this psychological phenomenon.

In the last 20 years, 312 motorcyclists lost their lives on Styria’s roads. In this campaign, white crosses were placed symbolically at all sites on open country roads across the Province – 245 sites in total – where a motorcyclist had been fatally injured in this period.

The “White Crosses” campaign was not an awareness-raising measure in the “what could happen” sense, but an awareness-raising measure in the “what did happen” sense. The aim thereby was to consciously demonstrate that if people fail to pay attention or to recognise a danger, a road accident can have fatal consequences.



Figure 14: The “White Crosses” Campaign; Photo: Province of Styria

Cycling Proficiency Courses for Senior Citizens and Migrants – Province of Tyrol, Klimabündnis Tirol

This project offers cycling proficiency courses that can be booked by local authorities, companies or clubs and associations. These include basic cycling proficiency courses for female and young migrants, each of which consists of ten 90-minute training units, as well as a three-hour e-bike training course targeted especially at senior citizens.

The cycling proficiency courses contribute to promoting this environmentally friendly mode of transport, giving women with a migrant background greater independence when it comes to local mobility, promoting health and strengthening social cohesion at the community level. In the basic courses, skilled trainers use balance, cycling and braking exercises to teach and practice the basics of riding a bike. The students then practice and improve their bike-riding skills on a special training circuit. Group games and exercises in pairs on bicycles complement the basic skills units. The students also learn the highway code, are taught how to ride a bike correctly in traffic and receive information on the necessary bicycle equipment required by law.

The students are supplied with brochures from the Austrian Red Cross for the cycling proficiency test, which repeat and reinforce the key elements covered in the course in picture format with accompanying texts in German, Arabic, Farsi and English. One of the courses was held in full in 2020, a second had to be postponed after two training units due to the implementation of new COVID-19 restrictions.

Figure 15: Graduates of the basic cycling proficiency course with their two trainers; Photo: Province of Tyrol



“Vorarlberg Bike Cavaliers” – Province of Vorarlberg

The “Vorarlberg Bike Cavaliers” (“Ländle Rad-Ritter”) is a special cycling proficiency programme for primary schools that has been designed specifically for children in grades 1 to 4 (6-10-year-olds). The goal thereby is to improve children’s balance and bike-handling skills by teaching and training them in good cycling techniques. The programme also encourages young cyclists to wear helmets and teaches them about the required bicycle equipment. Due to the special situation in 2020, some of the “Vorarlberg Bike Cavaliers” courses had to be shifted from schools to local authority sites, where they were included in school holiday activity programmes.



Figure 16: The “Vorarlberg Bike Cavaliers”; Photo: Sicheres Vorarlberg

Safebike – City of Vienna

It is crucial for riders of single-track motor vehicles to continually improve their driving skills – especially when it comes to braking manoeuvres or driving round bends. The Safebike Initiative, a free training programme offered by the City of Vienna, has been providing motorcyclists with the opportunity to do so for many years. Safebike training events were also able to be held in 2020: a total of six one-day courses were organised at the driving skills training centre in Pachfurth in Lower Austria.

Figure 17: Safebike; Photo: Motorradreporter



Further Awareness-Raising Measures and Campaigns

Further examples of road safety measures, activities and campaigns carried out in 2020 in Austria include:

- Burgenland: AUVA Co-pilot training courses
- Carinthia: Speed enforcement using mobile speed measurement devices
- Lower Austria: “Be Mobile – Stay Mobile” project
- Upper Austria: Bicycle training courses in schools
- Salzburg: Continuation of the “RespekTier” campaign to encourage respect on the roads
- Tyrol: Overhaul of accident hotspots
- Vorarlberg: Bicycle helmet play day, reflective safety jackets campaign
- Vienna: Reconfiguration of accident hotspots

2 Implementation of the Road Safety Programme

The Austrian Federal Government and, in particular, the Federal Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology as the main government body responsible for road safety, have set themselves the target of making Austria's roads among the safest in the EU. To achieve this, and following on from the Road Safety Programme 2002 - 2010, a further Road Safety Programme was developed for the period from 2011 to 2020. The sections below provide information on the implementation of the Austrian Road Safety Programme 2011 - 2020.

2.1 Road Safety Programme 2011 - 2020

While considerable progress was already achieved through the first Austrian Road Safety Programme 2002 - 2010, Austria nonetheless still only occupied a mid-range position in the EU road safety rankings. Accordingly, a further Road Safety Programme for the period from 2011 to 2020 was developed to continue the country's activities in this area.

The road safety philosophy adopted in the Austrian Road Safety Programme 2011 - 2020 was based on the "Safe System approach" in which "responsible cooperation, shared responsibility and joint action come together to create a safe environment for ALL road users". The following numerical targets compared to the corresponding average values for the years 2008 to 2010 were defined for road safety in Austria:

- 50 % fewer road fatalities by 2020
- 40 % fewer seriously injured road users by 2020
- 20 % fewer personal injury road accidents by 2020

The philosophy behind the Road Safety Programme 2011 - 2020: working together to create a safe system for all road users in Austria.

To achieve these targets, a catalogue of over 250 measures in 17 fields of action was drawn up. Responsibility for each measure was assigned to one or more organisations and/or levels of jurisdiction. The measures were broken down further into the following four categories:

1. Accident prevention
2. Mitigation of the consequences of accidents
3. Groundwork as basis for further measures
4. Lobbying at EU level

Each measure was also assigned an implementation timeframe (start package/short term/medium term/long term). The ten areas of intervention listed below were assigned top priority, since they hold the greatest potential for reducing the number of fatalities on Austria's roads:

- Specific road user groups (e.g. pedestrians, young drivers)
- Alcohol and drugs
- Motorcycle accidents
- Seat belts
- High accident concentration sections and integrated road network safety management
- Fatigue and distraction/lack of due care and attention
- Speed management on rural roads
- Accidents on level crossings
- Enforcement
- Driver education

The Road Safety Programme was monitored and adapted throughout its duration by the Austrian Road Safety Advisory Council's Roads Task Force. The Austrian Road Safety Fund established at the Federal Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology, in turn, finances key research activities that support road safety work in Austria and funds road safety campaigns and initiatives. Throughout its lifespan, as many as possible of the measures in the Road Safety Programme were to be accompanied by appropriate evaluations.

The numerical targets formulated for the Austrian Road Safety Programme for the period from 2011 to 2020 were as follows: 50 % fewer road fatalities than the average for the years 2008 to 2010 (target: 311), 40 % fewer seriously injured road users (target: 5,354) and 20 % fewer personal injury road accidents (target: 32,543) by 2020. Despite some clear reductions in 2020, which were however presumably attributable largely to the COVID-19 restrictions and lockdowns, the targets were not fully achieved.

The largest reduction was recorded in the number of fatalities. This figure lay in 2020 at just over 44 % below the average for the years 2008 to 2010. Up to 2019, a

decrease of around 33 % had been achieved. The number of seriously injured road users fell by around 25 % compared to the baseline figure, thus clearly missing the target decrease of 40 %. Indeed, in 2019 only around 17 % fewer seriously injured road users were recorded compared to the average for the years 2008 to 2010. The target for the reduction in the total number of personal injury road accidents was nominally achieved: in 2020, this lay at around 24 % below the baseline figure. Up to 2019, the year before the COVID-19 pandemic, this figure had only decreased by around 12 %, well below the targeted reduction.

Table 2: Road accident statistics for 2020, Source: Statistics Austria

Indicator	Total
Fatalities	344
Seriously injured road users	6,650
Injured road users	37,730
Personal injury road accidents	30,670

Notes:

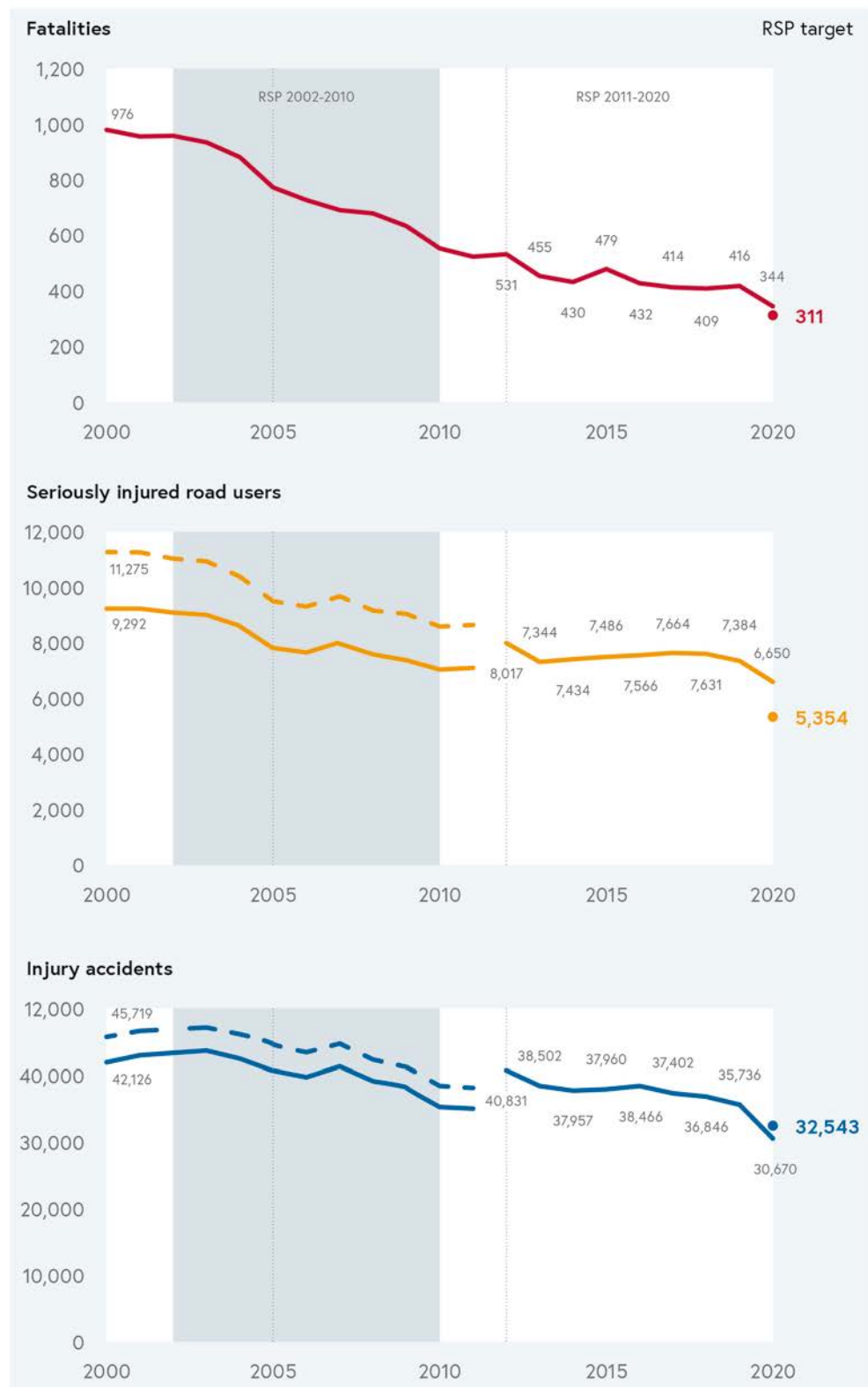
The term “accident” refers to road accidents that result in injuries to road users. A road accident is deemed to have occurred when one or more road users are killed, injured or sustain some other form of damage to their health on public roads as a result of a sudden traffic-related incident involving at least one moving vehicle.

Injured road users are persons who sustain serious or minor injuries in a road accident. In general, a health impairment that lasts longer than 24 days is classed as “serious”. Until 31.12.2011, injuries to road users were classified into three categories: serious injuries, minor injuries and non-discernible injuries. The “non-discernible injuries” category was dropped with effect from 1.1.2012. Since then, all injuries have been explicitly assigned to a specific category.

In Austria, road accident fatalities are persons who die as a result of a road accident, either immediately or within 30 days of the accident.

Road accident victims are persons who are killed or suffer injuries (serious or minor) as a result of a road accident.

Figure 18: Road accident trends in Austria since 2000; Sources: Statistics Austria, Federal Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology



Note:
 In 2012, the previous system of filling out accident reports by hand was replaced by an electronic Data Management System (ADM). In order to permit a statistical comparison

of accident numbers prior to and after 2012 despite the change in the data collection method, the data pertaining to personal injury road accidents and the numbers of seriously injured road users prior to 2012 have been adjusted by a factor of 1.085 and 1.213 respectively and are shown on the graph using a dotted line.

2.2 Legal Changes Pertaining to Road Safety in Austria

In light of the frequently changing parameters and framework conditions relating to road safety, the corresponding legislation is also constantly amended and supplemented. The relevant changes to laws pertaining to road safety in Austria that came into effect in 2020 are outlined below.

Changed Test Interval for Motorcycles/Motor Vehicles (Category L) (37th Amendment to the Austrian Motor Vehicles Act (Kraftfahrgesetz); Federal Law Journal I No. 78/2019)

A new test interval for motorcycles/motor vehicles (category L) came into force from the beginning of March 2020. Such vehicles must now be tested for the first time three years after their initial registration, two years after the first test and one year after the second and every subsequent test. The intervals correspond to those for passenger vehicles (category M1, with the exception of taxis, emergency vehicles and ambulances).

2.3 Areas of Intervention

The Austrian Road Safety Programme identifies specific areas of intervention that hold the greatest potential for reducing the number of fatalities on Austria's roads. This section of the Annual Report outlines the measures that have been implemented in these individual areas. In comparison to 2019, reductions in the numbers of accidents and accident victims were reported in many of these areas. A not insignificant portion of these reductions can, however, presumably be attributed to the reduced volumes of traffic as a result of the restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic. Accordingly, the information provided below also indicates the corresponding shares of individual indicators in the areas of intervention in the total number of accidents.

2.3.1 Specific Road User Groups

Some groups of road users have been identified for particular consideration in the various areas of intervention. The trends and measures implemented for these specific road user groups are described below first by age group and then for selected modes of transport.

Figure 19: Children as road users; Photo: stock.adobe.com/Dariusz T. Oczkowicz



Children (0 - 14 years of age)

In 2020, 2,179 children were injured on Austria's roads. This corresponds to a decrease of around 20 % compared to the previous year. After the high number of child fatalities (16) reported in 2019, this figure fell again appreciably in 2020 to 2 child fatalities, thus returning to the 2018 level (3 fatalities). The share of child fatalities among all road fatalities thus returned to below 1 %.

Around 35 % of the children injured in road accidents in Austria in 2020 were travelling in motor vehicles at the time of the accident, the lowest number in recent years. In contrast, the share of children injured while riding a bicycle rose sharply to 32 %, over 10 % more than in the previous years. Around 18 % of the children injured were on foot, a decrease of around 5 % compared to the previous years.

Table 3: Children (0 - 14 years of age); Source: Statistics Austria

Indicator	2020
Road accidents	2,043
Injured road users	2,179
Seriously injured road users	242
Fatalities	2
Share of total fatalities	0.6 %

Measures implemented in 2020:

The Federal Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology's "Safely to School" awareness-raising campaign addressed the road safety aspects of journeys to and from school. The materials and documentation for this campaign were updated and given a fresh look.



Figure 20: Young road users;
Photo: iStock/Georgijevic

Young road users (15 - 24 years of age)

8,984 young road users between the ages of 15 and 24 were injured on Austria's roads in 2020, 52 of them fatally. The share of young road users among total road accident fatalities lay at around 15 % and thus rose slightly (by 1 %) for the second year in a row.

There were no major changes in the distribution of young road accident victims across modes of transport in 2020. Once again, the majority of young road accident victims were driving or travelling in a car (around 48 %). Around 28 % were riding a moped. Of these, almost 60 % were male. 962 young cyclists (slightly more than 10 % of all young road accident victims) were involved in road accidents, with young males making up a larger share (around 68 %) of the victims in this group than their female counterparts.

Table 4: Young road users (15 - 24 years of age); Source: Statistics Austria

Indicator	2020
Road accidents	9,678
Injured road users	8,984
Seriously injured road users	1,137
Fatalities	52
Share of total fatalities	15.1 %

Figure 21: Older road users;
 Photo: stock.adobe.com/
 Daniel Myjones



Older road users (65+)

106 people over the age of 65 – around 31 % of all road accident fatalities – were killed on Austria’s roads in 2020. This percentage share thus remained the same as in the previous year. Members of the 65+ generation were fatally injured above all in motor vehicle accidents but also in pedestrian or cyclist accidents. The shares of older road users among pedestrian (around 24 %) and motor vehicle (around 37 %) fatalities in 2020 lay below the averages for the previous years (pedestrians: 7 %; motor vehicles: 3 %). Increases were recorded for cyclist (around 20 %; up by around 3 %) and motorcyclist (around 9 %; up by around 4 %) fatalities.

Table 5: Older road users (65+); Source: Statistics Austria

Indicator	2020
Road accidents	6,760
Injured road users	5,083
Seriously injured road users	1,332
Fatalities	106
Share of total fatalities	30.8 %



Figure 22: Pedestrians;
Photo: iStock/Voenny

Pedestrians

In 2020, 2,661 pedestrians were injured in road accidents in Austria, 51 of them fatally. The high share of pedestrians among total road accident fatalities recorded in 2019 (around 17 %) thus fell in 2020 to around 15 %.

As in the previous years, more women (around 55 %) than men (around 45 %) were injured as pedestrians in Austria in 2020. Pedestrian fatalities were highest in the 65+ age group, whereby this figure was somewhat lower than in the previous years (2020: 49 %; average for the previous years: around 55 %). In contrast, the share of 25-34-year-olds among total road accident fatalities rose from around 8 % in the previous years to around 12 % in 2020.

Table 6: Pedestrians; Source: Statistics Austria

Indicator	2020
Road accidents	2,694
Injured road users	2,610
Seriously injured road users	552
Fatalities	51
Share of total fatalities	14.8 %

Measures implemented in 2020:

- The 6th Road Safety Fund Call for Tenders in 2020 was dedicated to problems relating to “heavy transport”. A key focus was placed on ways to improve the equipment on lorries and buses, in particular the development of new, innovative approaches to increase the safety of vulnerable road users.
- To make Austria’s roads more pedestrian-friendly, an Amendment to the Road Traffic Act (Straßenverkehrsordnung) that gives increased consideration to pedestrian aspects of road use was prepared in 2020.

Figure 23: Cyclists; Photo: stock.adobe.com/Alex



Cyclists

The COVID-19 restrictions in 2020 led to a notable increase in the use of the bicycle as a mode of transport. The corresponding rise in bicycle traffic and boom in the use of e-bikes and pedelecs are also reflected in the accident statistics. In 2020, there were 9,187 accidents involving cyclists on Austria’s roads, thus continuing the growing trend observed in recent years. Indeed, the number of bicycle accidents in 2020 was the highest recorded throughout the duration of the Austrian Road Safety Programme 2011 – 2020 – by way of comparison, the average annual number of accidents involving cyclists for the period 2008 to 2010 lay at 5,340.

30 % of all personal injury road accidents in Austria in 2020 involved cyclists, around 10 % more than in the previous years. Similar rises were also seen for accident victims. Around 35 % of all seriously injured road users received their injuries in bicycle accidents, again around 10 % more than in the previous years. The share of fatally injured cyclists among total road accident fatalities rose by around 3 % compared to the previous years to around 12 % in 2020.

The number of people fatally injured while cycling increases with age. In 2020, 75 % of all cyclist fatalities on Austria’s roads were 50 years of age or over, and more than 50 % were in the 65+ age group. The number of fatally injured male cyclists (29) was more than double that of their female counterparts (11). Likewise, around 61 % of all bicycle accident victims were male and around 39 % female. Around 25 % of cyclists involved in road accidents suffered serious or fatal injuries.

Table 7: Cyclists; Source: Statistics Austria

Indicator	2020
Road accidents	9,187
Injured road users	9,308
Seriously injured road users	2,295
Fatalities	40
Share of total fatalities	11.6 %

Measures implemented in 2020:

- The 6th Road Safety Fund Call for Tenders in 2020 was dedicated to problems relating to “heavy transport”. In addition to the focus on ways to improve the equipment on lorries and buses (see Pedestrians), raising awareness of the specific situations faced by drivers of heavy vehicles when it comes to seeing other road users (blind spots in front of and to the side of lorries or buses) was also a topic in the Call, since related accidents involving cyclists have become more frequent in recent years.
- A step towards making Austria’s roads bicycle friendly is to be taken through an Amendment to the Road Traffic Act (Straßenverkehrsordnung). Preparations for this Amendment were started in 2020.

Figure 24: Mopeds; Photo: iStock/Willie B. Thomas



Moped riders

In 2020, 497 moped drivers were seriously injured and 2,280 suffered minor injuries in road accidents in Austria. Moped passengers were also injured in the 2,847 accidents involving mopeds (38 seriously and 346 with minor injuries). Around 79 % of the moped riders involved in road accidents in 2020 were between 15 and 24 years of age. The share of moped fatalities among total road accident fatalities in 2020 lay at just under 1 % and thus at about half the average figure for the previous years. 2 of the 3 moped drivers killed in Austria in 2020 were young road users between the ages of 16 and 17.

Young males have the most accidents while riding a moped: around 48 % of all moped accident victims in Austria in 2020 were young men in the 15-19-year-old age group. The corresponding figure for girls lay at around 30 %. In contrast, the majority of injured moped passengers are female (240 women, 145 men).

Note:

The term “rider” here refers both to the drivers of single-track vehicles as well as to the passengers on such vehicles.

Table 8: Moped accidents: Source: Statistics Austria

Indicator	2020
Road accidents	2,847
Injured road users	2,777
Seriously injured road users	497
Fatalities	3
Share of total fatalities	0.9 %

2.3.2 Alcohol and Drugs

In 2020, the share of alcohol-related accidents among all personal injury road accidents in Austria lay at 6.8 % and was thus slightly lower than in the previous year, when the highest figure in recent years was reached (7.1 %). Only marginal changes were recorded in this figure in the last decade: from 2010 to 2019, it lay consistently at between 6 % and 7.1 %.

In 106 road accidents in Austria in 2020, the roadworthiness of the persons involved was determined to have been impaired by the use of drugs/addictive substances. 3 people were killed and 156 injured in these accidents. These figures thus lie at a similar level to those reported in 2019. Figures issued by the Federal Ministry of the Interior show that 5,519 motorists were charged by the police in 2020 with driving under the influence of drugs, a clear rise of 26.5 % compared to the previous year (2019: 4,364).

Table 9: Alcohol-related accidents; Source: Statistics Austria

Indicator	2020
Road accidents	2,081
Injured road users	2,575
Seriously injured road users	484
Fatalities	27

Note:

In Austria, an alcohol-related road accident is one in which at least one of the persons involved (motorist or pedestrian) is determined to have been under the influence of alcohol pursuant to Section 5 (1) of the Road Traffic Act (Straßenverkehrsordnung) or to have exceeded the maximum permissible blood/breath alcohol level as defined in Article 14 (8) of the Driving Licence Act (Führerscheingesetz) or for whom “reduced fitness to drive/alcohol” or “alcotest refused” was recorded.

Measures implemented in 2020:

Use of new roadside saliva screening tests: the new screening device tests saliva for the presence of chemical drug groups such as opioids, cocaine, methamphetamines or amphetamines. The rise in the number of motorists charged with driving under the influence of drugs can be attributed in part to the enhanced training provided to police officers in preparation for the use of these devices to enable them to identify potential drug-drivers as well as the deployment of public health officers in extensive roadside testing operations. The screening devices themselves had previously been tested in a pilot project.

2.3.3 Motorcycle Accidents

In 2020, 2,147 people were injured in road accidents in Austria while riding a motorcycle, 58 of them fatally. There were no major changes in the shares of motorcycle accidents or injuries in the overall accident statistics compared to the previous years. Men continued to be involved in motorcycle accidents far more frequently than women: 86 % of injured motorcyclists and just over 98 % of motorcycle fatalities in Austria in 2020 were male.

In terms of age, the highest figures in 2020 were once again to be found among motorcyclists over the age of 50. The 50-54 and 55-59-year-old age groups each accounted for 14 % of all motorcyclists injured in road accidents. Around 47 % of the motorcyclists injured on Austria's roads in 2020 were between 40 and 59 years of age.

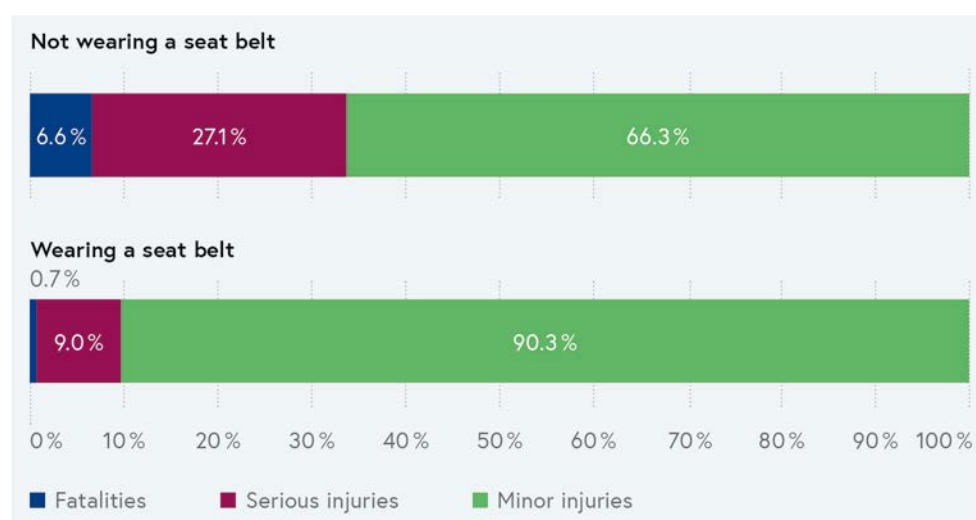
Table 10: Motorcycle accidents; Source: Statistics Austria

Indicator	2020
Road accidents	2,100
Injured road users	2,147
Seriously injured road users	947
Fatalities	58

2.3.4 Seat Belts

Wearing a seat belt is an important road safety measure and contributes significantly to reducing injury severity in the event of an accident. The comparison of the severity of the injuries sustained by car occupants who were wearing seat belts and those who were not clearly illustrates this fact. In 2020, 6.6 % of the car occupants fatally injured in road accidents in Austria were not wearing a seat belt. This figure lay at under 1 % for car occupants who were wearing a seat belt. The share of people who suffered serious injuries in car accidents was likewise far higher for those who were not wearing a seat belt (just over 27 %) than for those who were (just under 9 %).

Figure 25: Injury severity for car occupants wearing/not wearing seat belts in 2020; Source: Austrian Road Safety Board



The Austrian Road Safety Board observes and records the seat belt wearing rate in Austria each year. In 2020, as in the previous years, 97 % of drivers wore a seat belt. The seat belt wearing rates for front-seat and back-seat passengers were likewise similar to those observed in the previous year: in 2020, 98 % of front-seat passengers (2019: also 98 %) and 95 % of back-seat passengers (2019: 96 %) wore a seat belt.

Slight differences in the seat belt wearing rates for men and women have been observed for many years. In 2020, 99 % of female drivers and 96 % of male drivers wore seat belts. The difference in the seat belt wearing rate remains particularly striking between car (98 %) and small van (91 %) drivers. A further correlation can regularly be seen between the use of seat belts by drivers and passengers: the observations in 2020 showed that if the driver was wearing a seat belt, 98 % of passengers did so as well; if the driver was not wearing a seat belt, only 53 % of passengers wore a seat belt.

2.3.5 High Accident Concentration Sections and Integrated Safety Management

A quarter of all road accidents each year occur at sites with a high concentration of accidents. Section 96 (1) of the Austrian Road Traffic Act (Straßenverkehrsordnung) stipulates that the authorities must introduce countermeasures to reduce accidents at such sites. Based on an analysis of the accident causes and an inspection of the accident site, these can take the form of police enforcement, traffic infrastructure or construction measures.

Measures implemented in 2020:

- The Graph Integration Platform (GIP) is currently being integrated into the electronic logging and file management system (PAD) as an innovative technology for recording accident data.

2.3.6 Fatigue and Distraction/Lack of Due Care and Attention

According to the road accident statistics compiled by Statistics Austria, distraction or lack of due care and attention – and, in particular, the factors “lack of attention”, “lack of concentration” and “failure to notice other road users” – was the presumed main cause of 21.1 % of fatal road accidents in Austria in 2020. This figure is lower than those for the years 2018 (28.9 %) and 2019 (24.7 %).

Fatigue was the presumed main cause of around 2 % of fatal road accidents in Austria in 2020, a slight decrease compared to the previous year (2019: 2.6 %). Fatigue is also frequently the cause of serious or fatal road accidents. Yet driver fatigue and the corresponding drop in attention and concentration levels is a vastly underestimated cause of accidents on Austria’s roads and on its motorways in particular. The number of unreported/undetected cases is estimated to be far higher, also on an international

level. Indeed, international studies suggest that the share of road accidents caused by fatigue lies at up to 33 % of all road accidents and up to 35 % of fatal road accidents.

Figure 26: Distracting activity at the wheel; Photo: stock.adobe.com/NDABCRE-ATIVITY



Measures implemented in 2020:

Turning assistant systems will become mandatory in the EU for newly registered heavy goods vehicles in 2022. These systems are obligatory for new type-approvals from 6 July 2022 and for all first-time registrations of category M2, M3, N2 and N3 vehicles from 7 July 2024. At a “Heavy Goods Vehicle Road Safety Summit” in 2019, it was agreed that the voluntary fitting of new heavy goods vehicles and retrofitting of existing vehicles with right-turn assistance systems should be promoted and subsidised to raise road safety levels. Freight companies who voluntarily retrofit their heavy goods vehicles should receive financial support to do so. These subsidies for the voluntary retrofitting of heavy goods vehicles with turning assistant systems have been available since September 2019. A total of 1 million euros is being made available for this purpose, with companies receiving up to 25 % of the retrofitting costs or a maximum of 900 euros per vehicle. These retrofits continued to be subsidised in 2020.

2.3.7 Speed Management on Rural Roads

Driving speed has a major impact on road safety. Excessive speed is a frequent cause of road accidents in Austria. According to the road accident statistics compiled by Statistics Austria, driving at an inappropriate speed was the presumed main cause of 32 % of fatal road accidents in Austria in 2020. In 2019, this figure lay at 24.4 %. The speed management measures in the Austrian Road Safety Programme 2011 - 2020 focus

on rural roads and are aimed at reducing driving speeds and the maximum speed limits on such roads.



Figure 27: Speeding; Photo: stock.adobe.com/yellowj

2.3.8 Level Crossings

Accidents on railway level crossings always attract increased public attention. Given the severity of their consequences, such accidents also attract increased attention in the media.

Table 11: Fatalities in accidents on level crossings; Source: Federal Safety Investigation Office; Federal Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology

Year	Fatalities
2011	21
2012	15
2013	18
2014	12
2015	21
2016	15
2017	8
2018	6
2019	9
2020	16

In accordance with the Austrian Level Crossings Act 2012 (Eisenbahnkreuzungsverordnung), all level crossings in Austria will be checked by the responsible authorities by 2024. Increased efforts are also being made to remove level crossings and replace them with bridges and underpasses. Pursuant to Section 19 of the Austrian Accident Investigation Act (Unfalluntersuchungsgesetz), the Federal Safety Investigation Office compiles a comprehensive report on its activities in the previous year which includes details of its latest safety recommendations and the measures taken to address earlier safety recommendations. The report can be downloaded (in German) at bmk.gv.at/ministerium/sub/sicherheitsberichte.html.

2.3.9 Enforcement

Enforcement by the police is crucial for improving road safety. Pursuant to Article 11 of the Austrian Federal Constitutional Law (Bundes-Verfassungsgesetz), traffic enforcement activities in Austria are carried out by the traffic police in the nine Federal Provinces. The goal of traffic enforcement is to increase the visible police presence on dangerous sections of the road network as a preventive measure and to use targeted spot checks to remove drivers who constitute a danger to other road users from the roads. The table below provides an overview of traffic enforcement measures by the Austrian police in the last five years.

Table 12: Overview of traffic enforcement measures for the years 2016 to 2020;
Source: Federal Ministry of the Interior

Violations/Charges Filed	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Speed	5,179,485	5,205,417	5,317,980	5,947,985	4,984,064
Alcohol	27,896	28,109	28,067	30,930	25,705
Failure to wear a seat belt	98,414	102,039	102,941	97,949	78,765
Safety distance	85,666	85,954	109,218	141,111	113,313
Child seat	5,243	5,918	6,769	6,576	5,641
Use of a mobile phone	105,589	113,770	115,470	123,888	121,211

The police also enforce the ban on the use of mobile phones while driving. In 2020, 121,211 motorists were prosecuted or issued with on-the-spot fines for using a mobile phone without a hands-free system while driving.

“Despite the reduced traffic volumes and accident statistics in 2020, the figures for traffic enforcement measures show that traditional tasks like traffic enforcement were not neglected and also cannot be neglected in future.” — Karl Nehammer, Federal Minister for the Interior (adapted)

Measures implemented in 2020:

Intensification of roadside drug checks. In 2020, a total of 5,519 motorists were charged by the police with driving under the influence of drugs, a clear rise in comparison to the previous years (2019: 4,364; 2018: 3,011). The rise can be attributed in part to the enhanced training provided to police officers in preparation for the use of new roadside saliva screening devices that had previously been tested in a pilot project to enable them to identify potential drug-drivers as well as the deployment of public health officers in extensive roadside testing operations.

2.3.10 Driver Education

The accident statistics show that most driver fatalities and injuries occur in the first four to five years in which a person holds a driving licence. In 2020, 8,984 road users in the 15-24-year-old age group were injured in road accidents in Austria. A further 52 road users in this age group were killed on Austria's roads in the same period. The shares of 15-24 year-olds among total injured road users or road accident fatalities were thus of the same order of magnitude as the previous years.

2.4 Other Measures Implemented in the Road Safety Programme 2011 - 2020

The Austrian Road Safety Programme 2011 - 2020 was organised into 17 fields of action, with the 10 areas of intervention constituting the main priorities (see Section 2.3). Additional measures were also set that could not be directly assigned to any specific area of intervention. Details of these measures are provided below.

Road Safety Strategy at EU Level

A road safety strategy for the years 2021 to 2030 (EU Road Safety Policy Framework 2021 - 2030) has been developed at EU level in cooperation with the Member States. A major new approach in this framework is the regular collection and analysis of road safety key performance indicators (KPIs) that should facilitate the improved measurement of the impact of road safety measures and observation of road safety trends in specific areas, e.g. speeding or drink driving.

The European Commission is funding an EU project in 19 Member States for the collection and analysis of baseline data. In this Baseline project, a methodology guideline will be developed for each KPI to serve as the basis for the data collection by 2020. The participating Member States will – where technically feasible – provide data on as many of the following KPIs as possible:

- Speeding: share of motorists who adhere to speed limits
- Seat belt wearing rates
- Helmet wearing rates for riders of motorised two-wheelers and bicycles
- Share of motorists who do not drive under the influence of alcohol
- Share of road users who are not distracted by using a mobile phone
- Vehicle safety
- Share of roads that conform to a certain quality level
- Time between calling the emergency services and their arrival at the accident site

Austria is represented in the Baseline project by the Federal Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology. Further information on the project can be found at: <https://baseline.vias.be/>.

Austrian Road Safety Strategy 2021 - 2030

On a national level, a new Federal Road Safety Strategy for the decade from 2021 to 2030 was prepared in 2019 and 2020. The comprehensive expertise available in Austrian road safety stakeholder circles and a thorough analysis of the fundamentals of road safety served as the basis for determining the current priorities, targets, solutions and measures to optimise road safety in Austria. The new Road Safety Strategy for the coming decade aims to raise greater awareness of the topic among the Austrian population and to foster and reinforce a national road safety culture that is characterised by mutual consideration and respect.

Emergency Calls using the “eCall” Service

The Federal Ministry of the Interior’s emergency services control centres across Austria have been being equipped for calls using the interoperable, Europe-wide “eCall” service since October 2017. In July 2020, the service went live at the new police control centre in Carinthia, thus completing the switch to the new ELKOS operations control and communication software across the whole of Austria.

Since the introduction of the new service, all incoming emergency calls are handled centrally. In other words, the calls are answered and responses organised (co-ordination of the emergency police personnel) in the new emergency services control centres. eCalls and the entry of approved police traffic reports (above all unplanned incidents) into EVIS.AT (the Real-Time Traffic Information System in Austria) are also handled in the traffic coordination offices in these new control centres. All vehicle models that have gained type-approval since 31 March 2018 must be equipped with the mandatory eCall service. A number of studies at EU level are currently investigating the possibility of extending the eCall service to other categories of vehicles such as motorised two-wheelers and heavy goods vehicles.

Definition of Seriously Injured Road Users

Work has been ongoing at EU level since 2016 to agree on a unified definition of serious road injuries based on the MAIS 3+ Scale (Maximum AIS – Abbreviated Injury Scale).

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