

Paris, 15 September 2010

## A Record Decade for Road Safety

International Transport Forum at the OECD publishes  
road death figures for 33 countries

### Key facts:

- Steep decline in road deaths during first decade of 21<sup>st</sup> Century
- Spain, Portugal and France top list for the most pronounced reduction in road fatalities.
- US recorded its lowest death toll on the roads for more than sixty years in 2009.
- Motorcycle fatalities fell, but less than overall road deaths - some countries registered dramatic increases of 100% and more over 2000-2009 period.
- Tables and graphs with detailed figures and additional information attached

Latest figures on road fatalities in 33 countries published by the **International Transport Forum (ITF)** at the OECD show that the first ten years of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century were “*a record decade for road safety*”, as **Jack Short**, ITF Secretary General, said in Paris on Wednesday.

The **number of road fatalities fell in 30 of the 33 countries** analysed by the ITF’s International Traffic Safety Data and Analysis Group (IRTAD). In many countries, the average annual **drop in road deaths was dramatically higher than in previous decades** during the 2000-2009 period. Spain registered an average annual drop of 8.5%, as compared to 4.4 % in the 1990s and an actual increase of fatalities in the 1980s. The **UK** saw an annual reduction of 4.6% in the past decade, compared to 1.3% in the 1980s. In the **United States**, road fatalities fell by an annual average of 2.3% between 2000 and 2009. In the 1990s, they had dropped by a mere 0.6% p. a. and by 1.3% in the 1980s. “*In comparison to preceding decades, we have made a significant leap in the reduction of deadly road incidents during the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*”, said IRTAD chairman **Fred Wegman**, who nevertheless pointed out that “*trends are much more worrying in many developing countries*”.

The **largest drop in traffic-related deaths** occurred in **Portugal** (-55%) and **Spain** (-53%), where the number of road fatalities fell by more than half. France achieved a reduction of 47%. The US registered a drop of -19%; the UK of over a third (-35%). Three countries show an increase over the past ten years: Argentina, Cambodia, Malaysia (see Table 1). These three countries have only recently joined IRTAD and hope to benefit from the expertise of the group in designing road safety measures.

In 2009, some countries reached the **lowest number of road deaths since systematic records** began - among them the United States and Switzerland. Denmark had the lowest number of fatalities since 1932, Canada for almost 60 years.

Weighted by **road deaths per 100 000 inhabitants**, the UK (3.8) did best in 2009, followed by Sweden and the Netherlands (both 3.9) and Israel (4.2). The highest traffic death rates according to this measure were recorded in Malaysia (23.8), Argentina (18.4) and Greece (13.8 - 2008 data).

Measured as **road fatalities per billion kilometres driven**, the risk of dying in a road accident is smallest in Sweden (5.1), the UK (5.2) and Switzerland (5.6). At the other end of the spectrum, Korea recorded 20.1 deaths per billion kilometres, the Czech Republic 19.4 and Malaysia 17.7. However, not all countries systematically collect data on vehicle kilometres.

Despite the marked reduction in the number of overall road fatalities, the 2000-2009 decade saw a **significant rise of deaths associated with motorcycles** in many countries. Motorcycle deaths increased in 13 of 29 countries covered by IRTAD. While some countries recorded substantial advances in the past decade (led by Portugal with -45% and Korea with -39%), others saw dramatic increases, such as Finland (+170%) or Slovenia (+100%). *“This increase is only partly explained by the rise in the number of motorcycles”*, said **Véronique Feypell-de La Beaumelle**, road safety expert at the International Transport Forum. *“In the UK, for instance, motorcycle accidents were down 23%, despite a 45% increase in the number of motorcycles on the road.”* The International Transport Forum has set up a **Motorcycle Safety Working Group** to assess motorcycling mobility and safety issues of motorcyclists.

While high income countries are looking back on a record decade in reducing road fatalities, **90% of global road deaths occur in low and middle income countries** (estimates put annual global road fatalities at least 1.3 million, with 50 million injuries). The United Nations have thus declared 2011 to 2020 the **Decade of Action for Road Safety**, with the aim of stabilising and then reducing global road deaths by 2020. *“Reducing fatalities around the world will be accelerated by rapid and effective transfer of knowledge, good practice and information from the best performing countries”*, said **Jack Short**: *“The IRTAD data base and network is one way for countries to share experiences and innovations, and we want to continue to strengthen its role.”*

**Please also note the attached tables and charts with additional information!**

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*The International Transport Forum is a strategic think tank for the transport sector. Each year, it brings together Ministers from over 50 countries, along with leading decision-makers and actors from the private sector, civil society and research, to address transport issues of strategic importance. An intergovernmental organisation linked to the OECD, the Forum's goal is to help shape the transport policy agenda, and ensure that it contributes to economic growth, environmental protection, social inclusion and the preservation of human life and wellbeing. The 2011 International Transport Forum, to be held on 25-27 May in Leipzig, Germany, will focus on Transport and Society.*

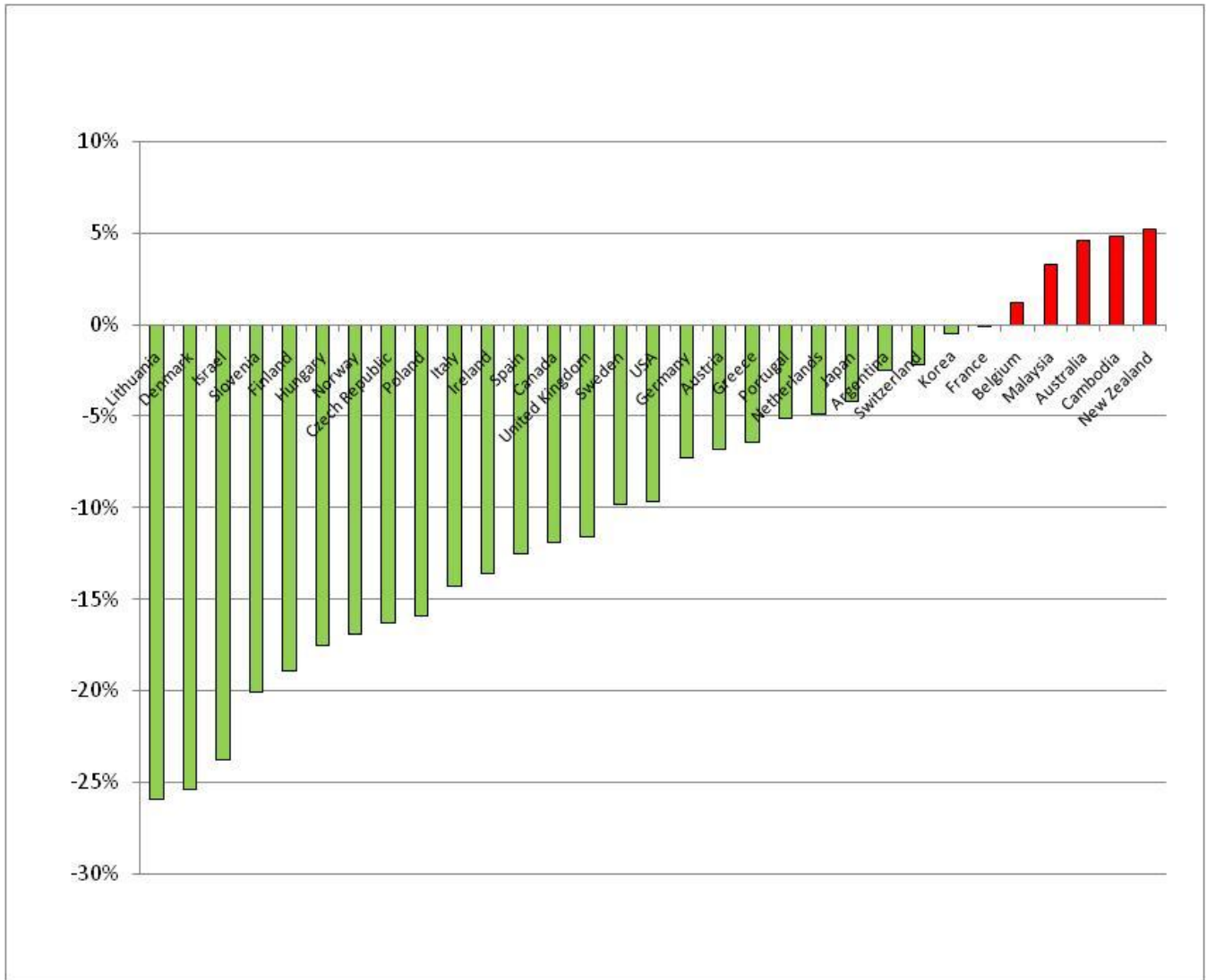
**Table 1: ROAD SAFETY DEVELOPMENT**

Road Fatalities <sup>1</sup>								
Recent data				Long-term trends - Average annual change				
Country	2009	2008	Evolution 2008-2009	Evolution 2000-2009 <sup>3</sup>	2000-2009 <sup>3</sup>	1990-1999	1980-1989	1970-1979
Argentina <sup>4)</sup>	7,364	7,552	-2.5%	12%	2.2%	-	-	-
Australia	1,507	1,441	4.6%	-17%	-2.1%	-3.0%	-1.7%	-0.9%
Austria	633	679	-6.8%	-35%	-4.7%	-4.0%	-2.7%	-1.8%
Belgium <sup>2</sup>	955	944	1.2%	-35%	-4.7%	-3.8%	-2.0%	-3.0%
Cambodia <sup>4</sup>	1,717	1,638	4.8%	328%	17.5%	-	-	-
Canada	2,130	2,419	-11.9%	-27%	-3.4%	-3.1%	-2.8%	1.6%
Czech Republic	901	1,076	-16.3%	-39%	-5.4%	1.3%	-1.7%	-4.0%
Denmark	303	406	-25.4%	-39%	-5.4%	-2.3%	-0.3%	-5.4%
Finland	279	344	-18.9%	-30%	-3.8%	-4.4%	3.2%	-5.2%
France	4,273	4,275	-0.05%	-48%	-6.9%	-0.7%	-1.8%	-2.1%
Germany	4,152	4,477	-7.3%	-45%	-6.4%	-3.8%	-4.7%	-3.4%
Greece <sup>2</sup>	1,456	1,553	-6%	-29%	-3.7%	0.4%	3.7%	3.4%
Hungary	822	996	-17.5%	-32%	-4.1%	-6.7%	3.2%	0.8%
Iceland	17	12	41.7%	-47%	-6.8%	-1.5%	1.3%	3.4%
Ireland	239	279	-14.3%	-42%	-5.9%	-1.6%	-2.2%	1.4%
Israel	314	412	-23.8%	-31%	-4.0%	1.2%	1.0%	0.8%
Italy <sup>2</sup>	4,050	4,731	-14.4%	-43%	-6.0%	-0.7%	-3.1%	-2.3%
Japan	5,772	6,023	-4.2%	-45%	-6.3%	-3.7%	2.7%	-7.3%
Korea <sup>2</sup>	5,838	5,870	-0.5%	-43%	-6.0%	-3.0%	9.4%	7.7%
Lithuania <sup>4</sup>	370	499	-25.9%	-42%	-5.9%	-3.2%	-2.9%	-2.0%
Luxembourg <sup>2</sup>	47	35	34.3%	-38%	-5.2%	-2.2%	-4.1%	-4.2%
Malaysia <sup>4</sup>	6,745	6,527	3.3%	12%	1.2%	-	-	-
Netherlands	644	677	-4.9%	-40%	-5.6%	-2.6%	-3.4%	-5.1%
New Zealand	384	365	5.2%	-17%	-2.0%	-3.9%	2.7%	-1.8%
Norway	212	255	-16.9%	-38%	-5.1%	-1.0%	0.6%	-2.7%
Poland	4,572	5,437	-15.9%	-27%	-3.5%	-0.9%	1.3%	5.9%
Portugal	840	885	-5.1%	-55%	-8.5%	-3.1%	0.5%	4.9%
Slovenia	171	214	-20.1%	-46%	-6.5%	-4.7%	-0.1%	1.9%
Spain	2,714	3,100	-12.5%	-53%	-8.0%	-4.9%	4.1%	2.4%
Sweden	358	397	-9.8%	-39%	-5.4%	-3.1%	0.7%	-3.8%
Switzerland	349	357	-2.2%	-41%	-5.7%	-5.0%	-3.3%	-3.2%
United Kingdom	2,337	2645	-11.6%	-35%	-4.6%	-4.5%	-1.2%	-1.7%
United States	33,808	37,423	-9.7%	-19%	-2.4%	-0.7%	-1.3%	-0.3%

Source: International Transport Forum (IRTAD Database).

1. Police-recorded fatalities. Death within 30 days. Lithuania: Death within 7 days for 1990.
2. Provisional data for 2009.
3. 2000-2008 for Canada. 2002-2009 for Argentina.
4. Accession countries. Data are under review.

**Figure 1: SHORT-TERM DEVELOPMENT OF ROAD FATALITIES**  
(2009 in comparison to 2008)

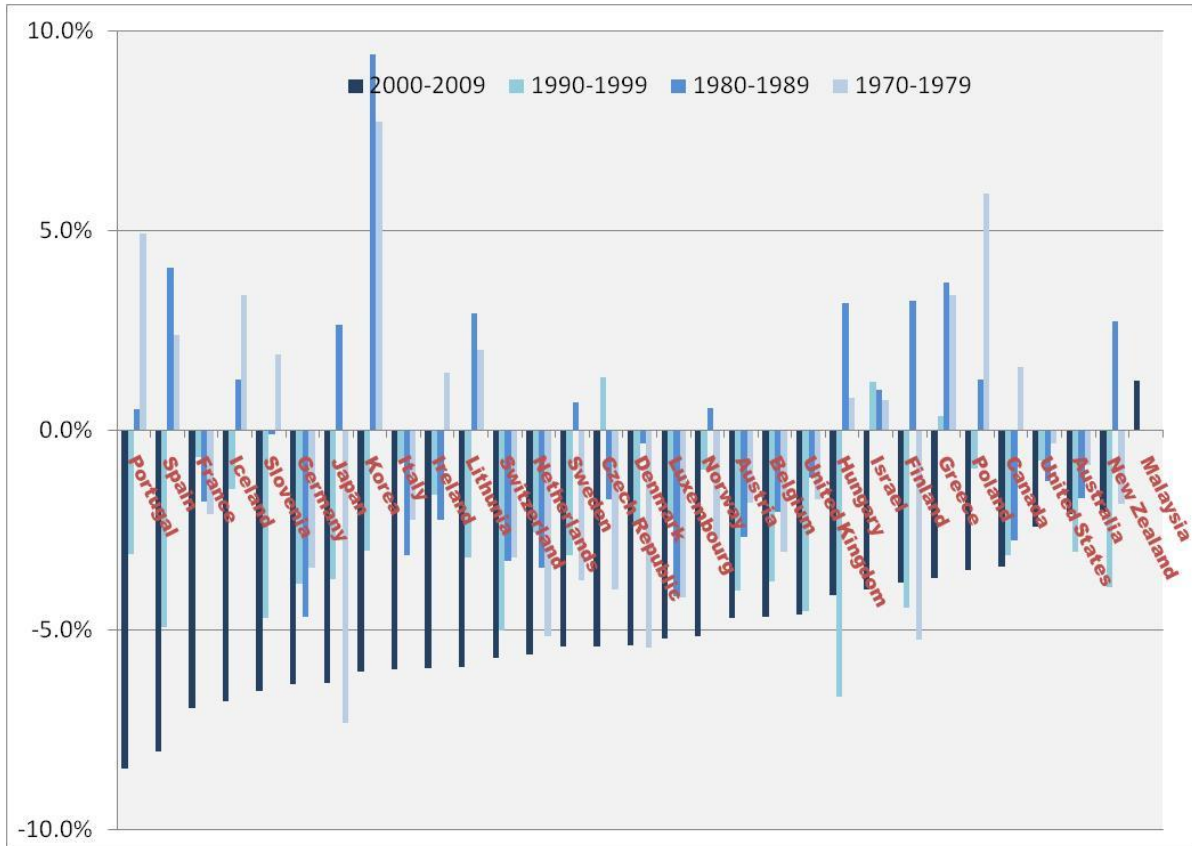


Source: International Transport Forum (IRTAD Database).

Notes: Iceland and Luxemburg are not included.

Footnotes see Table 1.

**Figure 2: AVERAGE ANNUAL CHANGE IN ROAD FATALITIES**



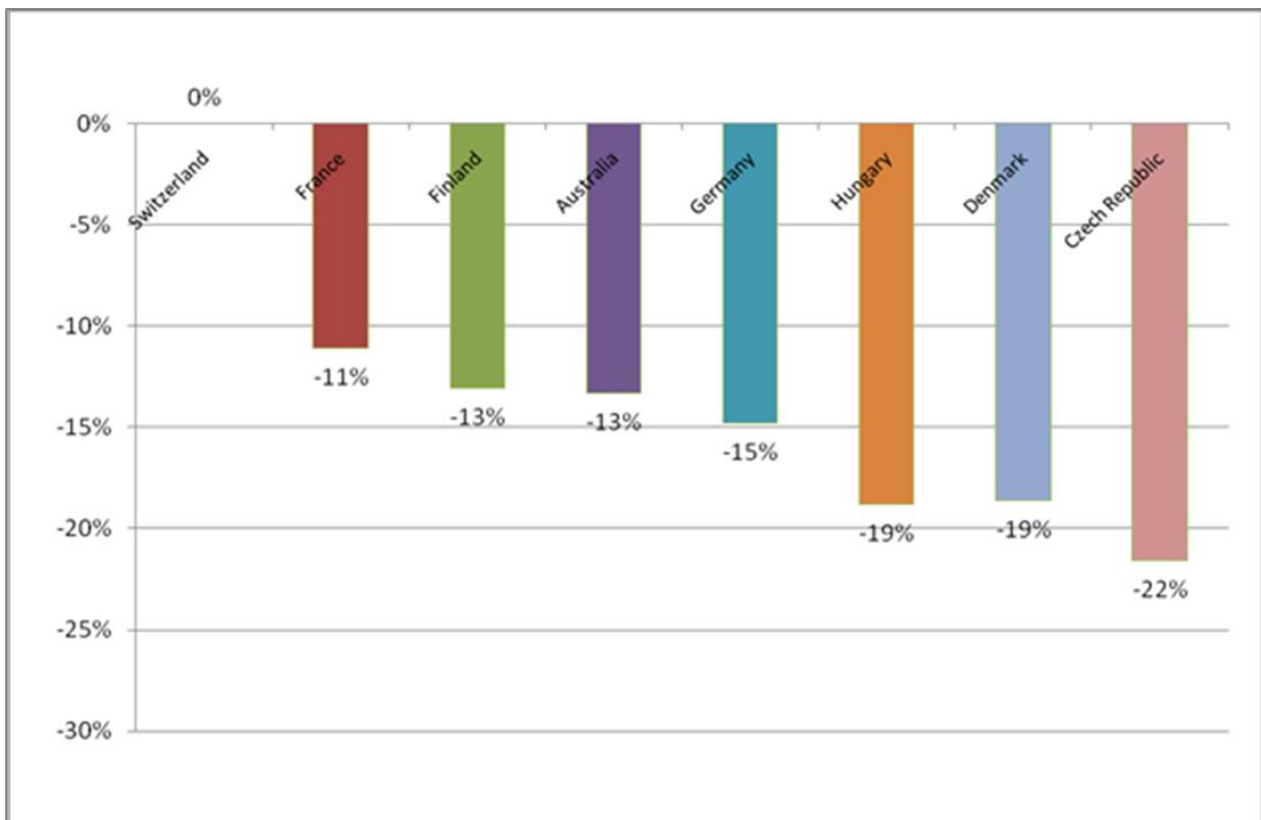
Source: International Transport Forum (IRTAD Database).

**Table 2: ROAD FATALITIES 1st HALF 2010 COMPARED TO 1st HALF 2009**  
(provisional data)

	January-June 2010	January-June 2009	Change 2010-09
Czech Republic	319	407	-22%
Hungary	319	393	-19%
Denmark	131	161	-19%
Germany	1675	1966	-15%
Australia	689	795	-13%
Finland	113	130	-13%
France	1786	2008	-11%
Switzerland	151	151	0%

Source: International Transport Forum (IRTAD Database).

**Figure 3: ROAD FATALITIES 1st HALF 2010 COMPARED TO 1st HALF 2009**  
(provisional data)



Source: International Transport Forum (IRTAD Database).

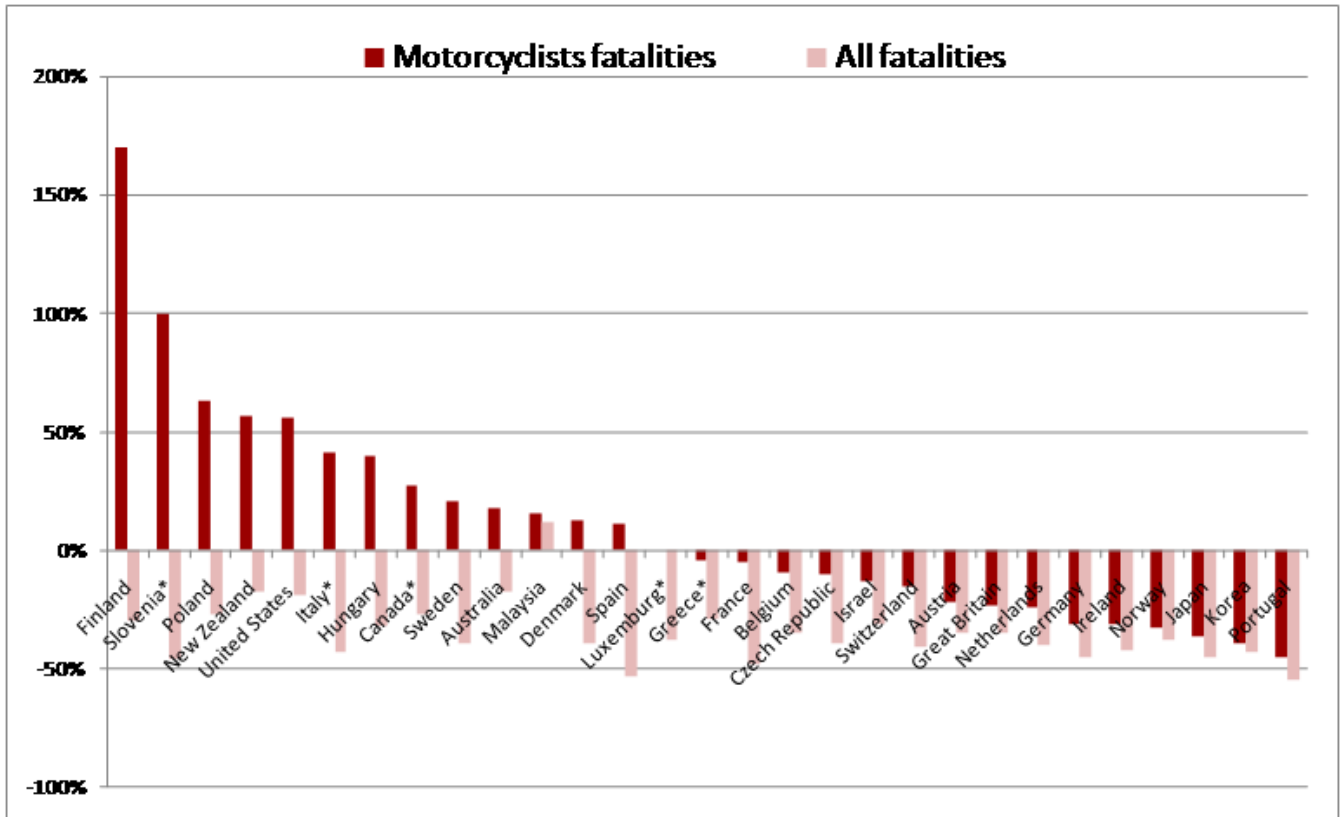
**Table 3: EVOLUTION IN THE NUMBER OF MOTORCYCLES, KILLED MOTORCYCLISTS AND TOTAL ROAD DEATHS**

	Motorcycle fatalities				All fatalities	Number of motorcycles
	2009	2008	2008- 009	2000-2009	2000-2009	2000-2008
Australia <sup>2</sup>	225	245	-8.2%	18%	-17%	50%
Austria	87	91	-4.4%	-22%	-35%	35%
Belgium	-	108	-	-9% <sup>4</sup>	-35%	35% <sup>3</sup>
Canada	-	211	-	27% <sup>4</sup>	-27% <sup>1</sup>	82% <sup>2</sup>
Czech Republic	90	121	-25.6%	-10%	-39%	11%
Denmark	27	40	-32.5	13%	-39%	94%
Finland	27	33	-18.2%	170%	-30%	135%
France	888	795	11.7%	-5%	-48%	5% <sup>3</sup>
Germany	650	656	-0.9%	-31%	-45%	7%
Great Britain	456	474	-3.8%	-23%	-35%	42%
Greece	-	394	-	-4% <sup>4</sup>	-29%	78%
Hungary	73	91	-19.8%	40%	-32%	55%
Iceland	2	1	100%	100%	-47%	-
Ireland <sup>2</sup>	27	29	-6.9%	-31%	-42%	19%
Israel	33	44	-25.0%	-13%	-31%	40%
Italy	-	1,085	-	41%	-43%	74%
Japan	577	637	-9.4%	-36%	-44%	11%
Korea	-	740	-	-39% <sup>4</sup>	-43%	-6%
Luxemburg	-	8	-	0% <sup>4</sup>	-39%	50% <sup>3</sup>
Malaysia	4,067	3,898	4.3%	16%	12%	-
Netherlands	68	67	1.5%	-24%	-40%	41%
New Zealand	47	49	-4.1%	57%	-17%	64% <sup>2</sup>
Norway	27	32	-15.6%	-33%	-38%	59%
Poland	290	262	10.7%	63%	-27%	13%
Portugal	116	116	0%	-45%	-55%	-
Slovenia	-	38	-	100% <sup>4</sup>	-46%	282%
Spain <sup>1</sup>	436	495	-11.9%	11%	-53%	73%
Sweden	47	51	-7.8%	21%	-39%	91%
Switzerland	78	83	-6.0%	-15%	-41%	29%
United States	4,462	5,312	-16.0%	85%	-19%	65% <sup>3</sup>

Source: International Transport Forum (IRTAD Database).

1. Provisional data for 2009.
2. Motorized two wheelers (including mopeds).
3. 2007-2000.
4. 2008-2000.

Figure 4: EVOLUTION IN THE NUMBER OF FATALITIES 2000-2009



Source: International Transport Forum (IRTAD Database).

\* 2000-2008

Iceland not included in this figure

**Table 4: ROAD DEATHS PER 100 000 INHABITANTS AND PER BILLION VEHICLE KILOMETERS TRAVELLED**

Country	Killed per 100 000 inhabitants <sup>a</sup> 2009	Country	Killed per billion veh-km <sup>b</sup> 2008
Malaysia	23.8	Korea	20.1
Argentina	18.4	Czech Republic	19.4
Greece <sup>2</sup>	13.8	Malaysia	17.7
Cambodia <sup>1</sup>	12.6	Cambodia	15.1
United States	11.1	Slovenia	12.3
Korea <sup>1</sup>	12.0	Belgium	9.6
Poland	12.0	New Zealand	9.1
Lithuania <sup>1</sup>	11.0	Austria	9.0
New Zealand	8.9	Israel	8.8
Belgium <sup>2</sup>	8.9	Denmark	8.2
Czech Republic	8.6	France	7.8
Slovenia	8.4	Japan	8.1
Hungary	8.2	United States	8.0
Portugal	7.9	Canada	7.3
Italy <sup>2</sup>	7.9	Norway	6.6
Austria	7.6	Australia	6.5
Luxemburg <sup>2</sup>	7.2	Finland	6.5
Australia	6.9	Germany	6.5
France <sup>1</sup>	6.9	Ireland	5.7
Canada <sup>1</sup>	6.3	Switzerland	5.6
Spain	5.9	United Kingdom	5.2
Denmark	5.5	Sweden	5.1
Ireland	5.4	Iceland	3.9
Finland	5.3	Argentina	-
Iceland	5.3	Greece	-
Germany	5.1	Hungary	-
Japan	4.5	Italy	-
Switzerland	4.5	Lithuania	-
Norway	4.4	Luxemburg	-
Israel	4.2	Netherlands	-
Netherlands	3.9	Poland	-
Sweden	3.9	Portugal	-
United Kingdom	3.8	Spain	-

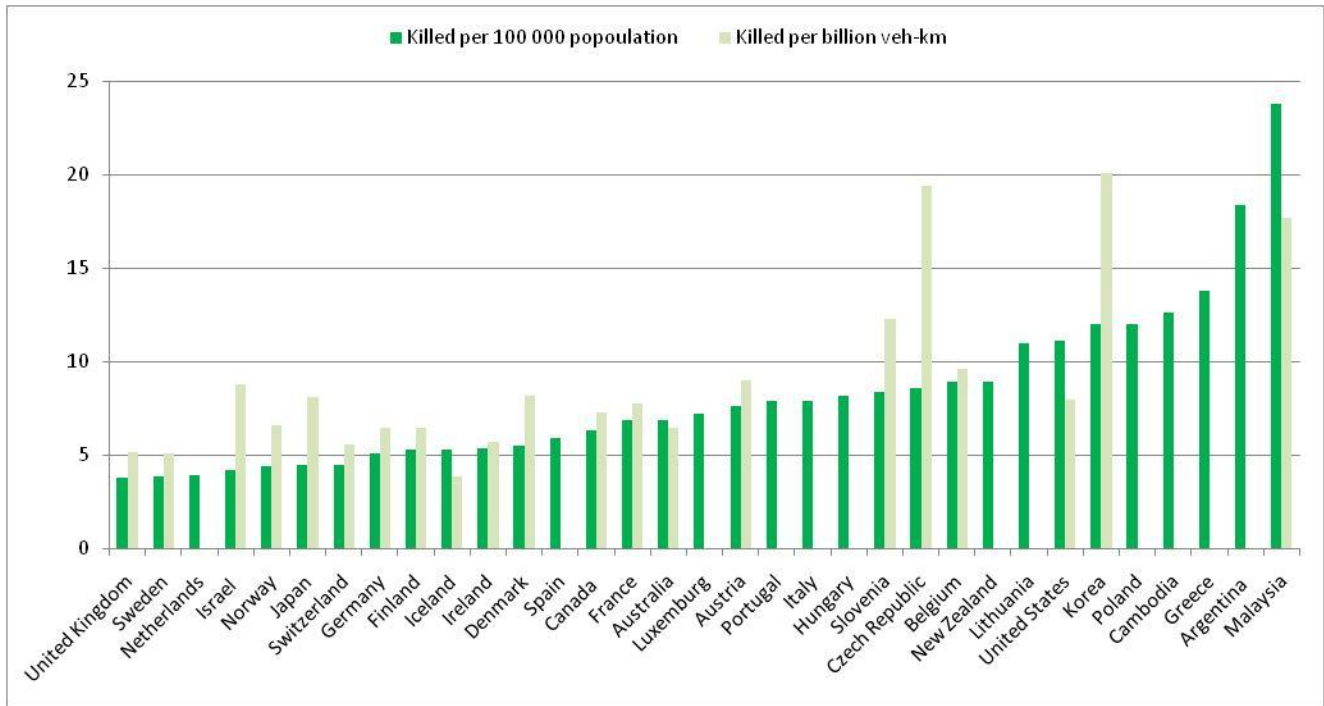
Source: International Transport Forum (IRTAD Database).

1. Provisional data.

2. Year 2008 data.

- a. The number of road deaths per 100 000 population is a means of comparing road death levels among countries by taking into account their different sizes in population. It is also a measure of the public health risk associated with road trauma.
- b. The number of road deaths per billion vehicle kilometres travelled is a direct measure of the risk of road travel.

**Figure 5: ROAD DEATHS PER 100 000 INHABITANTS AND PER BILLION VEHICLE KILOMETERS TRAVELLED**



Source: International Transport Forum (IRTAD Database).