

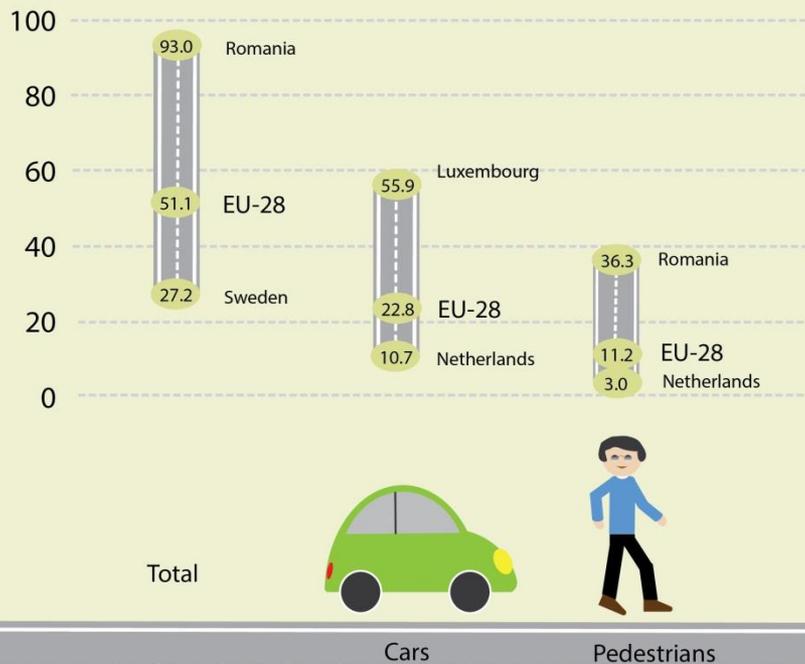
Key Road Safety Challenges in Romania

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Bucharest, 27 June 2017

Fatal road accidents in the EU

Member States with highest and lowest rates, fatalities per million inhabitants



Note: 2013 data. Total = cars, pedestrians, motorcycles, mopeds, bicycles, lorries, buses/coaches and 'others' (essentially agricultural tractors and other motorised vehicles).

Further information: <http://europa.eu/lqX74gm>

- ❑ Despite some positive trends, road safety is still a big challenge, Romania being amongst the four EU countries with the highest road fatality rates together with Latvia, Lithuania and Bulgaria;
- ❑ With more than 90 fatalities per million of inhabitants, Romania has approximately 3X higher fatality rates compared to the best performing countries (Sweden, UK and Netherlands);
- ❑ The challenge is recognized at national level. According to the GTMP, Romania has 466 fatalities per million passenger cars compared to an EU average of 126 fatalities, ranking Romania number 28 out of 28.
- ❑ The car ownership level at around 260 cars per 1000 inhabitants in Romania is well below EU average and is forecasted to grow the next years. This may result in increases of fatality rates unless effective preventive actions are taken.

JASPERS involvement



The Ministry of European Funds in Romania requires JASPERS assistance in order to:

- Support the relevant authorities to review the current state of play and all the relevant initiatives in the field of traffic safety;
- Support the preparation of a general action plan containing coherent and consistent measures for improved traffic safety conditions, with a view to attain the expected reduction of number of accidents resulting in fatal injuries.

JASPERS assignment included two main tasks:

- ❑ **Preparing a road safety needs and gaps assessment study:**
 - Review of existing legislation and strategic documentation and identification of gaps and additional measures needed in order to harmonise Romanian regulations with current European regulations and best practice;
 - Examination of the existing institutional framework in the field of road safety and identification of the measures needed to improve functionality;
 - Review of the current procedures for Road Safety Audit (RSA) applied to the entire project development cycle for road infrastructure projects (legal framework, procedures, technical specifications, etc.) and identification of the gaps and/or nonconformities with current European regulations and best practice.

- ❑ **Development of a General Action Plan** consisting of a prioritised list of actions with estimated budgets, potential sources of financing and responsible entities as well as corresponding tentative implementation schedules.

Needs and Gaps Assessment

The main gaps identified relate to:

❑ Institutional framework, legislation and organisation of road safety

- The central unit for coordination of road safety is the Inter-Ministerial Council for Road Safety (ICRS). While at working level the ICRS has a well balanced structure and the members seem to be active and motivated at professional level, the efficiency of the overall activity is diminished by a rather weak political drive to enforce the decisions of the Council;
- The relevant legal framework for road safety has never been and it is still not fully functional in the absence of implementation norms.

❑ Monitoring of targets through performance indicators

- The draft National Road Safety Strategy available at the time of the assessment was accompanied by an action plan outlining the activities to be undertaken, with no focus on the results.

❑ Sustainable Funding

- There is no sustainable mechanism for funding road safety activities. Present funding for road safety activities is unreliable and irregular which negatively impacts effective planning of the activities.

❑ Accident data and data collection

- Accident data is collected at national level and processed by the Police. While the accident data collected is detailed and similar to international best practice, information is accessible to other stakeholders only by request. Furthermore, Road Authorities have no direct access to the accident database;
- There are no Romanian studies on social costs of traffic accidents. Currently the costs are estimated based on the German values from HEATCO study rebased for Romania.

❑ Physical safety conditions – road infrastructure

- Some of the road design standards are outdated;
- While provided by the law, road safety audit and inspections are not regularly performed and there is no proof of incorporating relevant recommendations into the final design;
- In general black-spot improvement measures are planned and carried out, with very little or no monitoring of their effectiveness.

❑ Traffic law enforcement

- The traffic policing/control seems reasonably effective in deterring unsafe driving behaviours but the system for collection of fines should be reconsidered as it is not efficient.

❑ Vehicles and safety devices

- The vehicle inspection system generically seems adequate and effective in keeping unroadworthy vehicles off the road network. Nevertheless, incidences of informal payments to get vehicle through inspection have been mentioned.

Needs and Gaps Assessment

❑ Driver training and testing

- The driver training system seems to be quite comprehensive and thorough in Romania. However, incidences of informal payments to get driver license without passing the formal test have been mentioned.

❑ Road safety education and campaigns

- Some activity is being undertaken to educate road users and to raise general awareness of road safety issues. However, the Police, who is responsible for campaigns, lacks stable financing and thus has to rely on irregular private sector funding.

❑ Handling of crash victims

- Emergency medical and rescue services capability in Romania are adequate, with good general response times. The only issue identified is the need to ensure the continuation of the ambulance replacement process which has been temporarily stopped in 2015.

❑ Research in road safety

- Road safety research in Romania to support government policymaking is very limited. This applies for all institutions including universities and research institutes. Furthermore, no mechanisms (conferences, journals etc.) exist for disseminating or exchanging research results.

The General Action Plan

Main interventions identified in the Action Plan are:

❑ Improved road safety management by:

- Strengthening the role of the ICRS, improving the specific legislation and the funding/resource allocation for road safety;
- Improving accident data collection, data analysis and data sharing;
- Improving use of the social costs of road accidents as a tool for ranking and selecting the most cost effective safety interventions;
- Development of a monitoring and evaluation system for road safety actions;
- Improving road safety research and knowledge sharing to provide the framework against which safety policy decisions should be taken.

The General Action Plan

☐ Safer roads by:

- Functional implementation of the EU Road Safety Directive;
- Improving the planning, design, operation and use of roads by updating the existing road and road safety standards, carrying out road safety impact assessments, audits and inspections and promoting network safety management.

☐ Safer road users by:

- Intensified police enforcement, including enforcement on commercial vehicles;
- Improved education in schools and driver training and testing.

☐ Safer vehicles by:

- Improving the vehicle inspection system.

Conclusions

The results of the gap assessment and the proposed actions are now incorporated into the National Road Safety Strategy for 2016 – 2020 and its Implementation Action Plan which were approved through the Governmental Decision 775/2016.

Thank you for your attention!

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