

Safety of young drivers and riders in Greece

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High-Level Road Safety Performance Index
Improving the safety of young drivers & riders

Lefkosia, Cyprus, 14 May 2026



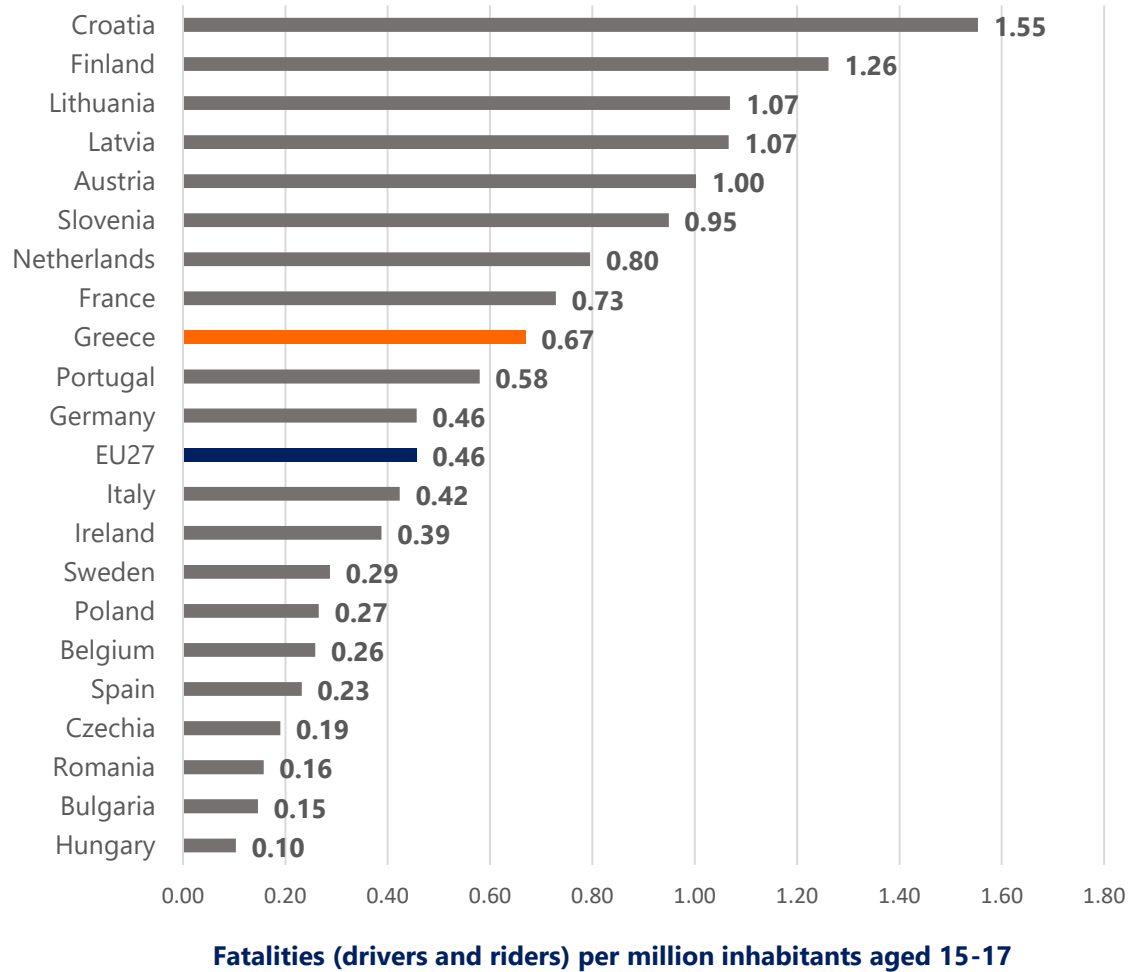
NTUA Road Safety Observatory

- The NTUA Road Safety Observatory (www.nrso.ntua.gr) is a **Center of Research and Innovation Excellence on Road Safety**, with global recognition [ranked: 4th in Europe and 45th worldwide ([PubMed](#) 2023), 2nd in Europe and 6th worldwide ([AAP](#) 2019)]
- A **Team of 40+ Scientists**: internationally recognized Professors, Senior Transportation Engineers, PostDoc, PhD Candidates and other scientists
- An **international reference website** - information system with state-of-the-art road safety data and knowledge:
 - more than 30.000 visits per month,
 - 157 electronic newsletters since 2007,
 - tens of tweets and social media posts annually,
 - network of more than 5.500+ road safety experts in Greece (1.500+) and worldwide (4.000+).
- An excellent **research activity**:
 - More than 200 Diploma Theses & 28 PhD Theses,
 - More than 187 road safety research projects, mostly highly competitive,
 - More than 1.100 road safety publications (287 in scientific journals),
 - More than 180 scientific committees,
 - International Cooperations: European Commission, UN/ECE, OECD/ITF, WHO, World Bank, EIB, CEDR, FEHRL, ERF, IRF, UITP, ETSC, WCTR, TRB, decades of Universities and Research Centers.

Armira Kontaxi, The safety of young drivers and riders – the situation in Greece



Mortality Rates (1/4)

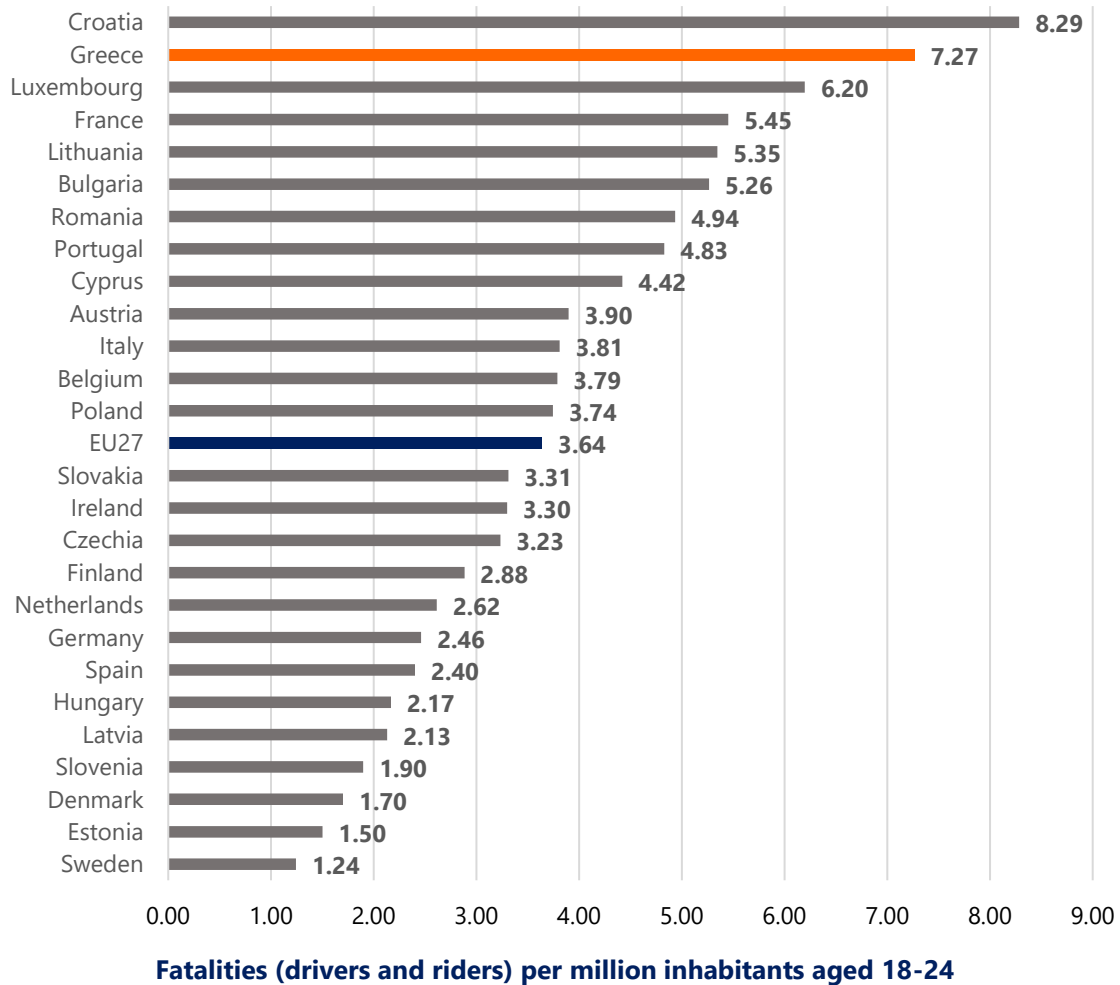


Source: CARE

- Greece records 0.67 fatalities per million inhabitants aged 15-17, just above the EU27 average (0.46), ranking 14th out of 22 countries.
- The highest rate is recorded in Croatia (1.55), nearly 3.4 times above the EU average. The lowest rate is in Hungary (0.10).



Mortality Rates (2/4)

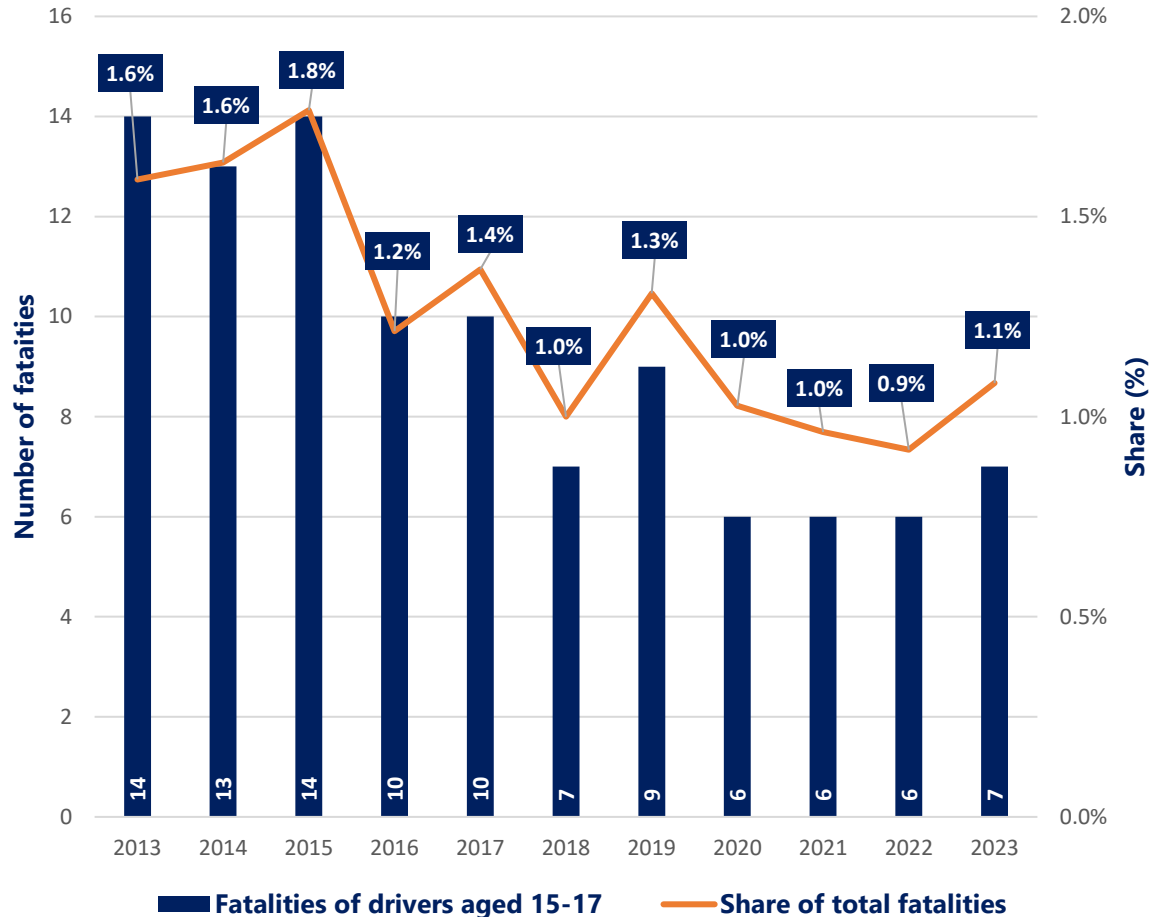


Source: CARE

- Greece records 7.27 fatalities per million inhabitants aged 18-24, significantly above the EU27 average of 3.64, ranking 2nd worst in Europe.
- Croatia records the highest rate (8.29), while Sweden the lowest (1.24).
- A stark contrast to the 15–17 age group, where Greece was close to the EU27 average, the gap widens sharply once young people start driving independently.



Mortality Rates (3/4)

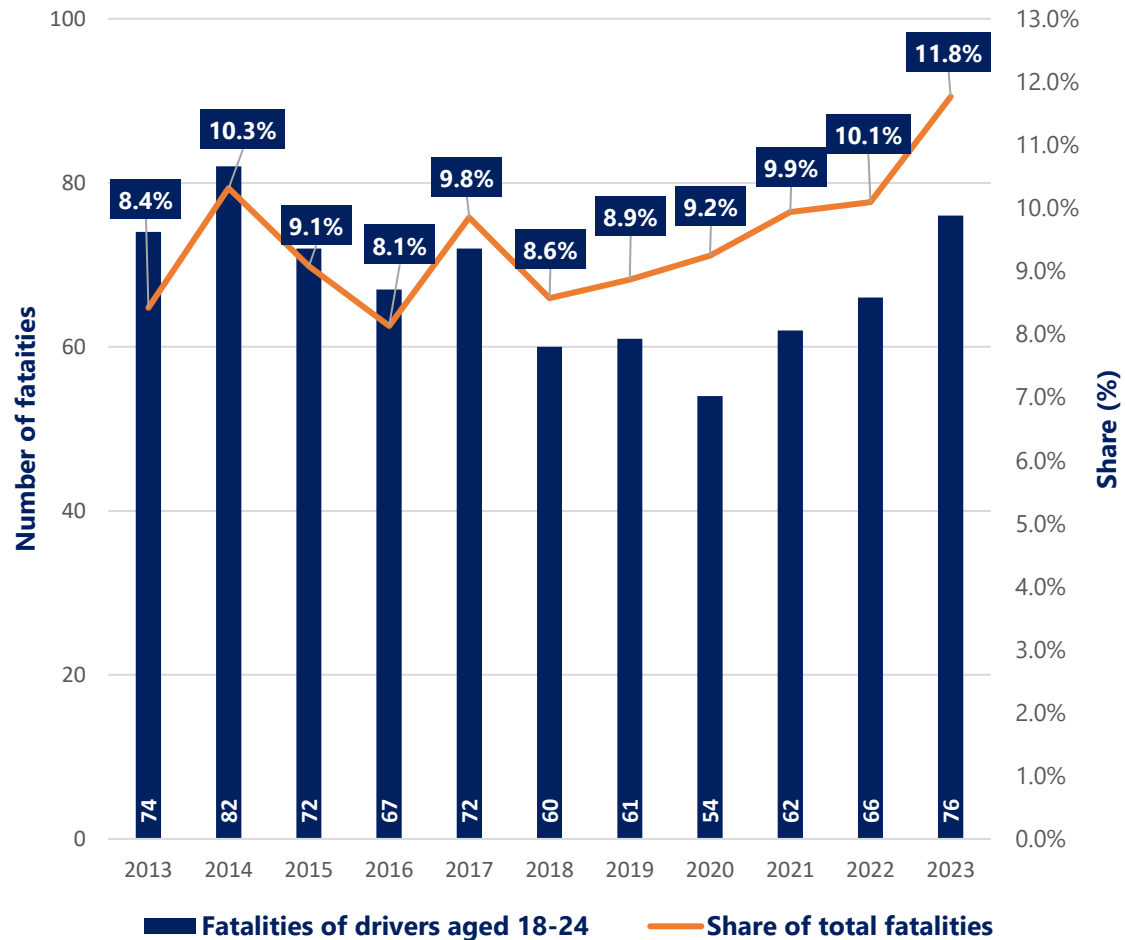


Source: CARE

- The **number of fatalities** (drivers and riders) dropped from 14 in 2013 to 7 in 2023, representing a reduction of **50% over the decade**.
- Their **share of total road fatalities remained** relatively **stable** throughout the period, fluctuating **around 1%** with a slight downward trend in the most recent years.



Mortality Rates (4/4)

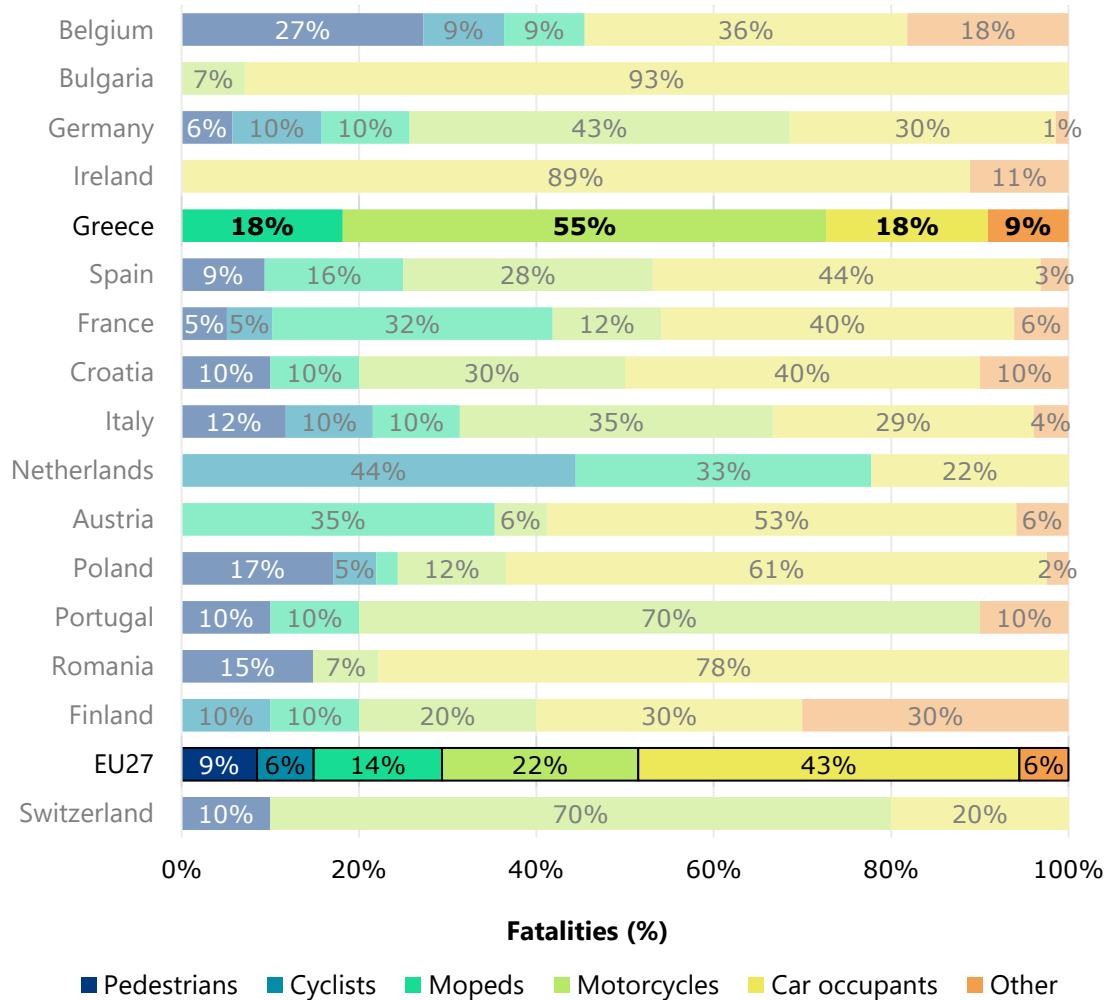


Source: CARE

- The chart shows a **steady decline** in fatalities among drivers and riders aged 18-24 years, decreasing from 74 in 2013 to 54 in 2020, **before rising again** to 76 in 2023.
- The **percentage share** generally followed **an upward trend**, increasing **from 8.4%** in 2013 **to 11.8%** in 2023, despite minor fluctuations throughout the decade.



Transport Modes (1/2)



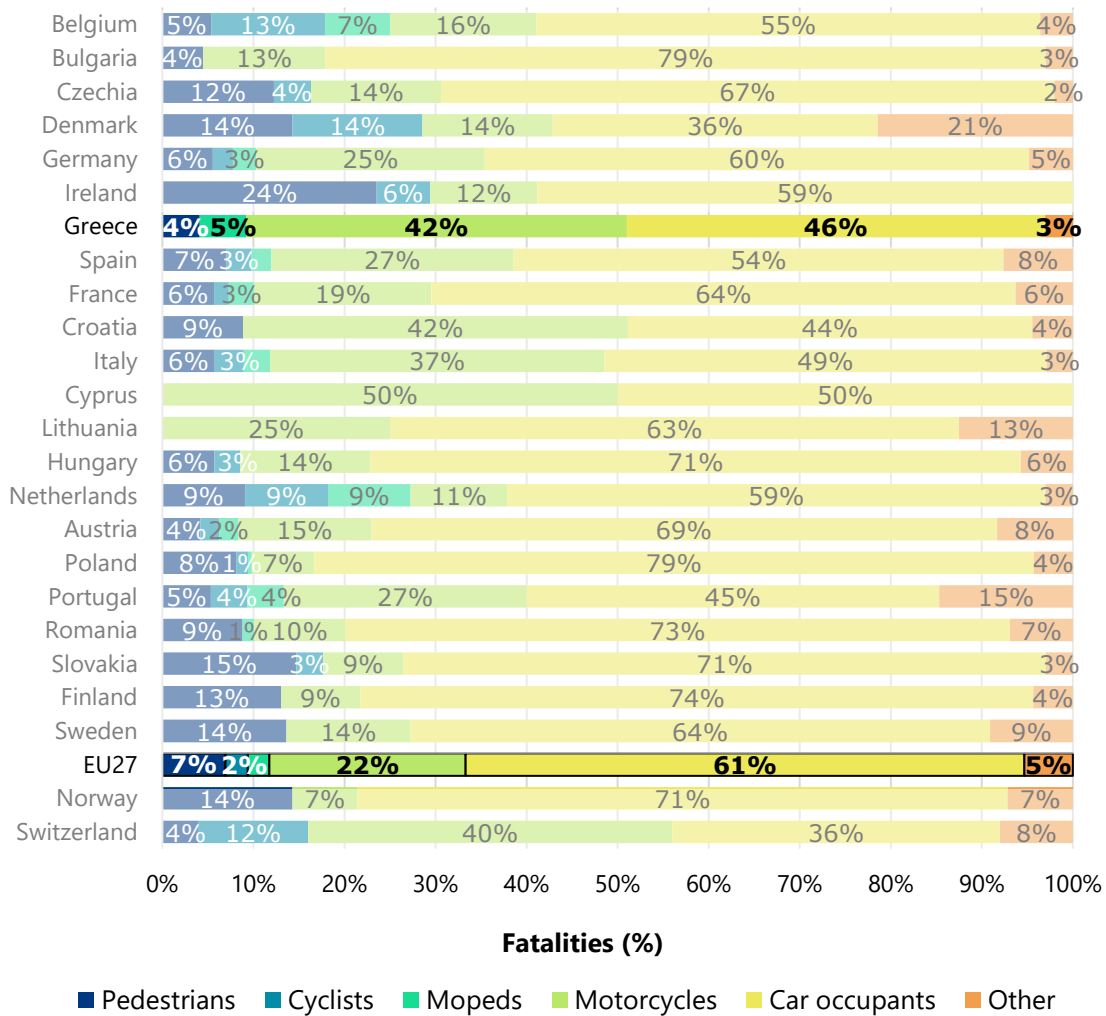
Source: ERSO Facts & Figures, Young People

Young people aged 15-17:

- **Riders:** Motorcycles dominate at 55%, nearly 2.5 times the EU27 average of 22%, reflecting the widespread use of motorcycles among teenagers not yet eligible for a car license. Mopeds add a further 18%.
- **Car occupants:** account for only 18%, well below the EU27 average of 43%.



Transport Modes (2/2)



Source: ERSO Facts & Figures, Young People

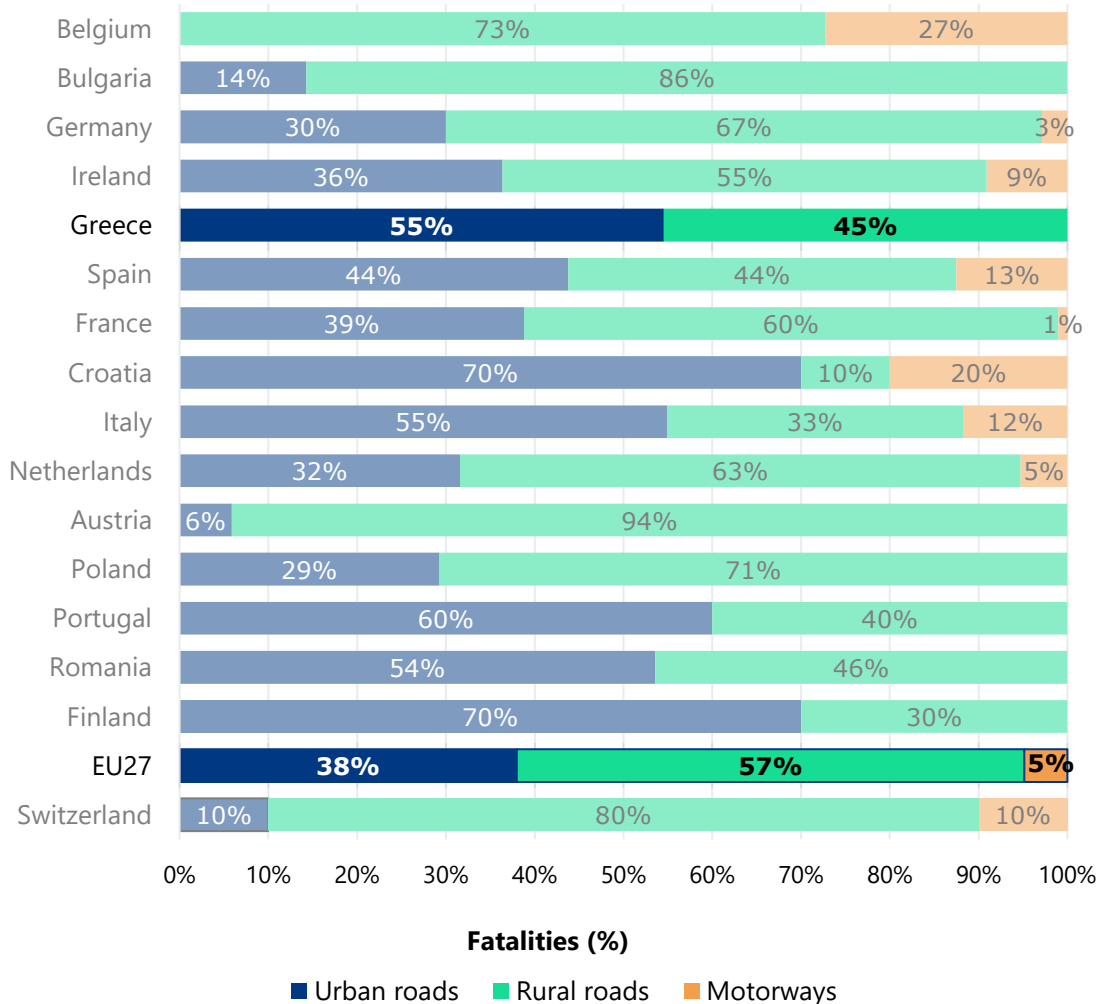
Young people aged 18-24:

- **Riders:** Motorcycles account for 42% of fatalities, nearly double the EU27 average of 22%, making Greece one of the most motorcycle-exposed countries for this age group in Europe. Mopeds add a further 5%.
- **Car occupants:** represent 46% of fatalities, broadly in line with the EU27 average of 61%.



Road Type (1/2)

Young people aged 15-17:

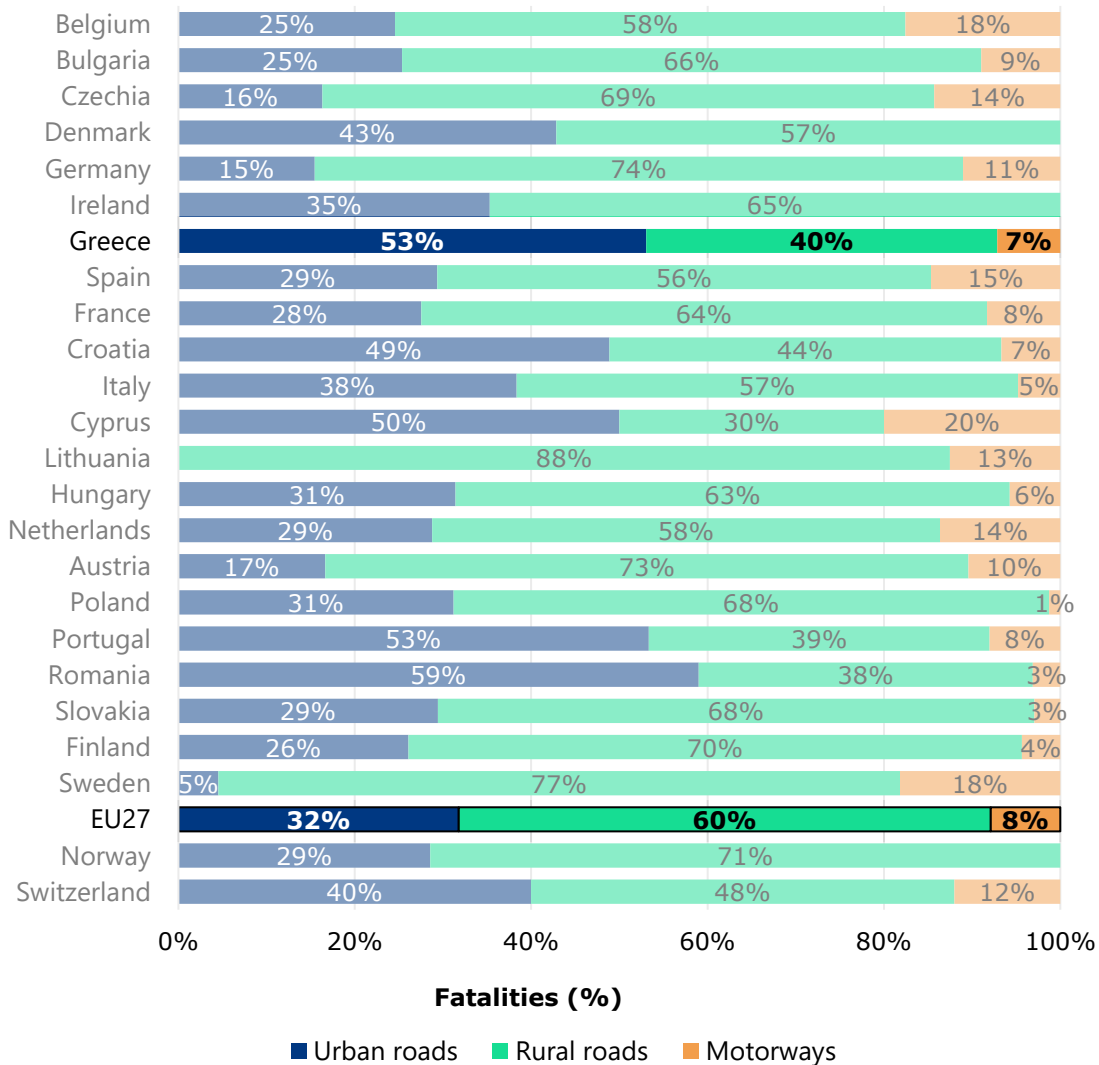


- **Urban roads:** Account for 55% of fatalities, significantly above the EU27 average of 38%, suggesting high exposure risk in city environments, likely linked to the dominant use of motorcycles in urban areas.
- **Rural roads:** Represent 45% of fatalities, well below the EU27 average of 57%, the inverse of the European pattern, where rural roads are typically the most dangerous setting.
- **No fatalities** are recorded on motorways, contrasting with the EU27 average of 5%

Source: ERSO Facts & Figures, Young People



Road Type (2/2)



Young people aged 18-24:

- **Urban roads:** Remain elevated at 53%, well above the EU27 average of 32%, pointing to a persistent concentration of fatal accidents in urban areas.
- **Rural roads:** Account for 40% of fatalities, significantly below the EU27 average of 60%.
- **Motorways:** Contribute only 7%, just below the EU27 average of 8%. Fatal accidents on high-speed infrastructure remain a comparatively minor factor for this age group in Greece.

Source: ERSO Facts & Figures, Young People



Road Safety Performance in Greece, 2025

Greece's Best-Ever Road Safety Performance in 2025

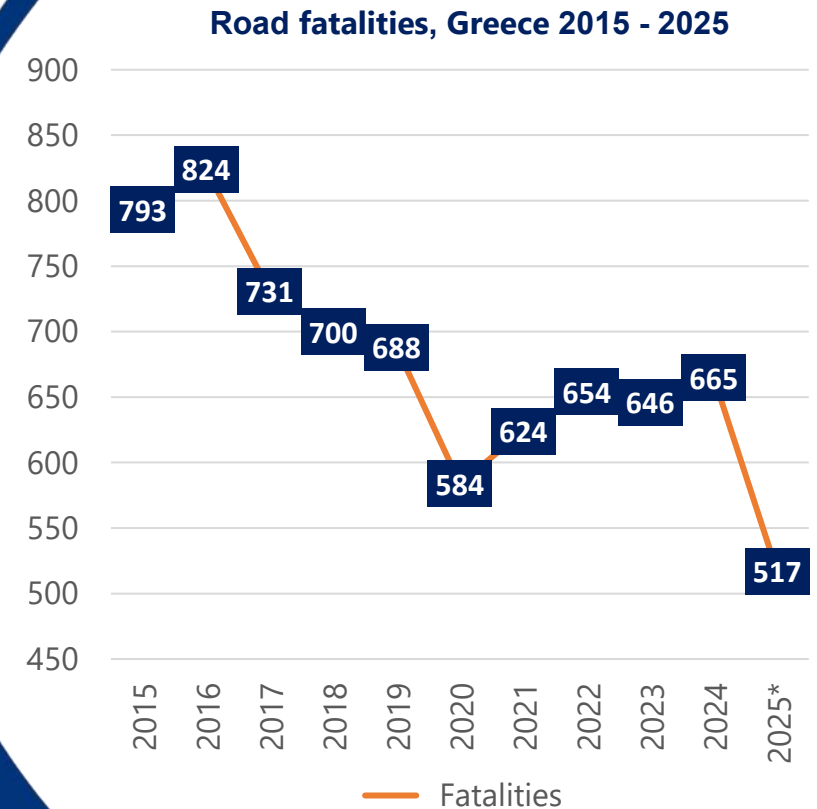
- The lowest number of fatalities ever recorded (517)
- The highest annual percentage reduction (-22%)
- **148 lives saved** in 2025 (517 vs to 665 in 2024)

Strong improvement among young road users (13–24):

- Fatalities of young drivers and riders (including passengers) decreased by 25% in 2025

Mainly due to:

- Systematic enforcement of helmet use and drink-&-drive
- The new Road Traffic Code in Greece
- Helmet use increased from 80% (2022) to 92% (2025), saving 75 motorcyclist lives
- Continuous advocacy by NTUA to Authorities and the media



Young Novice Drivers and Riders (1/2)

In Europe and in Greece, **young novice drivers (16-24)** are **over-represented in crashes**

Main causes:

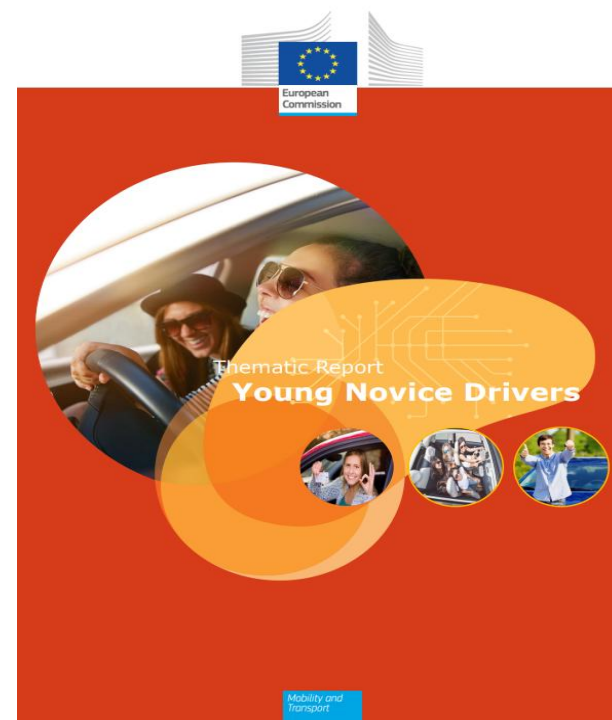
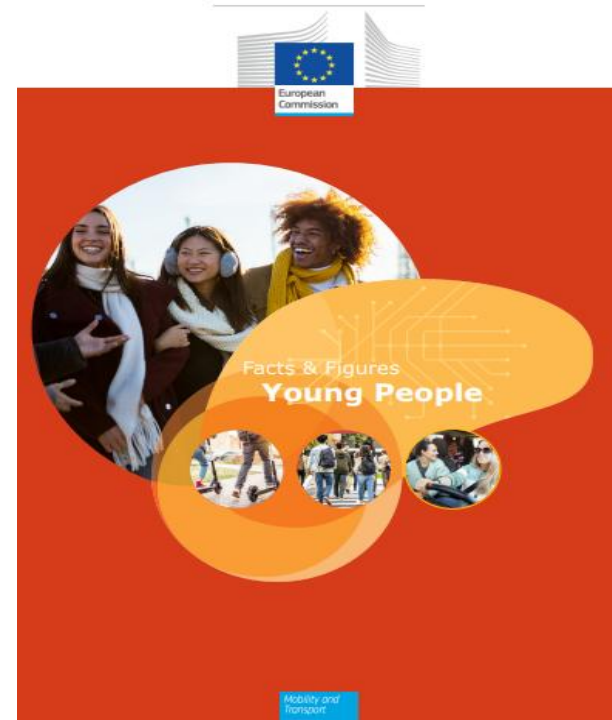
- **Lack of experience** → poor hazard perception, risk awareness & calibration
- **Young age factors** → biological component (i.e., having a brain which has not yet completely matured) and a social component (youth culture, lifestyle)
- **Risk-taking lifestyle**

Key limitations:

- Poor **hazard perception & risk awareness**
- Reduced ability to resist **peer pressure**
- More **distraction, fatigue, night driving**

Additional risks:

- **Speeding** is a key behaviour
- **Alcohol** affects them more strongly
- More frequent **drug driving**
- Use of **older, less safe cars**



Young Novice Drivers and Riders (2/2)

Crash risk among young novice drivers and riders is a **multi-factor problem** involving inexperience, age-related development, and risky behaviour.

Proven measures:

- Improve **higher-order skills training** (e.g., hazard perception and risk awareness)
- **Learner phase** (with experienced driver)
- **Intermediate phase** with **restrictions**:
 - No peer passengers
 - No night driving
 - No mobile phone use
- **Stricter alcohol limits** (BAC) for young drivers



Conclusion

- Young novice road users face **elevated crash and fatality risk** across Europe.
- **Downward trend over time**: fatalities show a significant decrease **since 2013 to 2023**, indicating overall improvement.
- **Age pattern**: the 15-17 group has lower fatality rates than the 18-24 group, where **risk increases** sharply **after independent driving** begins.
- **Transport modes**: fatalities are **dominated by motorcycles/mopeds**, while car occupants represent a smaller share compared to EU averages.
- **Road type**: fatalities **are mainly** concentrated on **urban roads**, with lower shares on rural roads and minimal involvement of motorways.



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