



DRINK-DRIVING FACT FILE

January 2023



INTRODUCTION

The number of road deaths in Hungary was reduced by around 15% between 2011 and 2021, well below the EU average, and ranking the country among the worst performers in Europe. With 56 road deaths per million population recorded in 2021, Hungary is also below the EU average road mortality level of 45 road deaths per million inhabitants.

Figure 1. Relative change in road deaths between 2011 and 2021. *National provisional estimates used for 2020, as final figures for 2020 are not yet available at the time this report went to print.

**UK data for 2020 are the provisional total for Great Britain for the year ending June 2020 combined with the total for Northern Ireland for the calendar year 2020. The annual number of deaths in LU and MT are particularly small and, therefore, subject to substantial annual fluctuations. The annual numbers of deaths in CY and EE are also relatively small and may be subject to annual fluctuations.

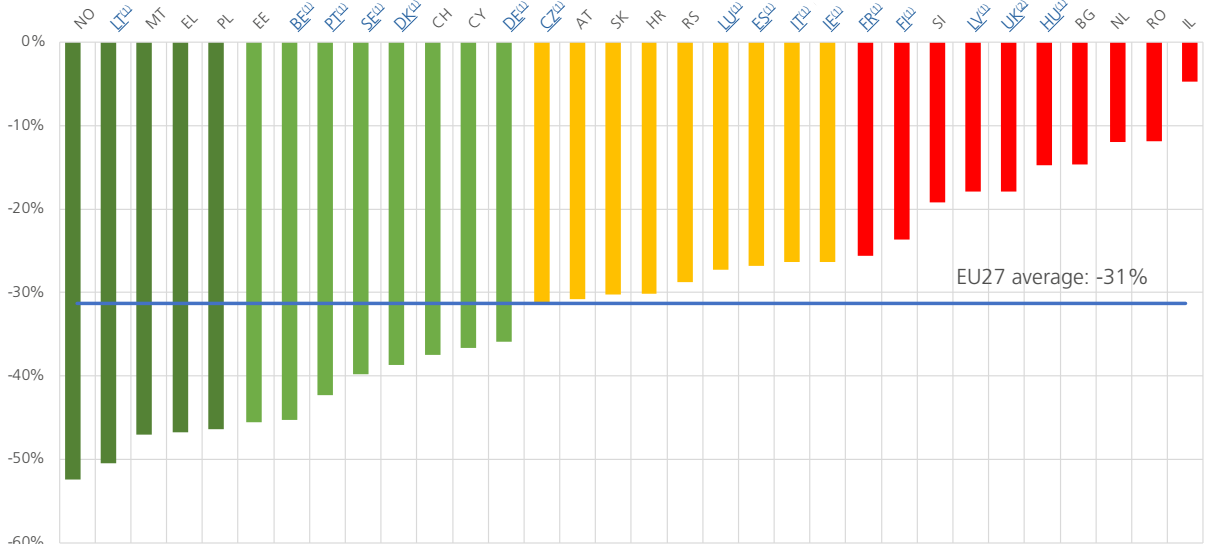
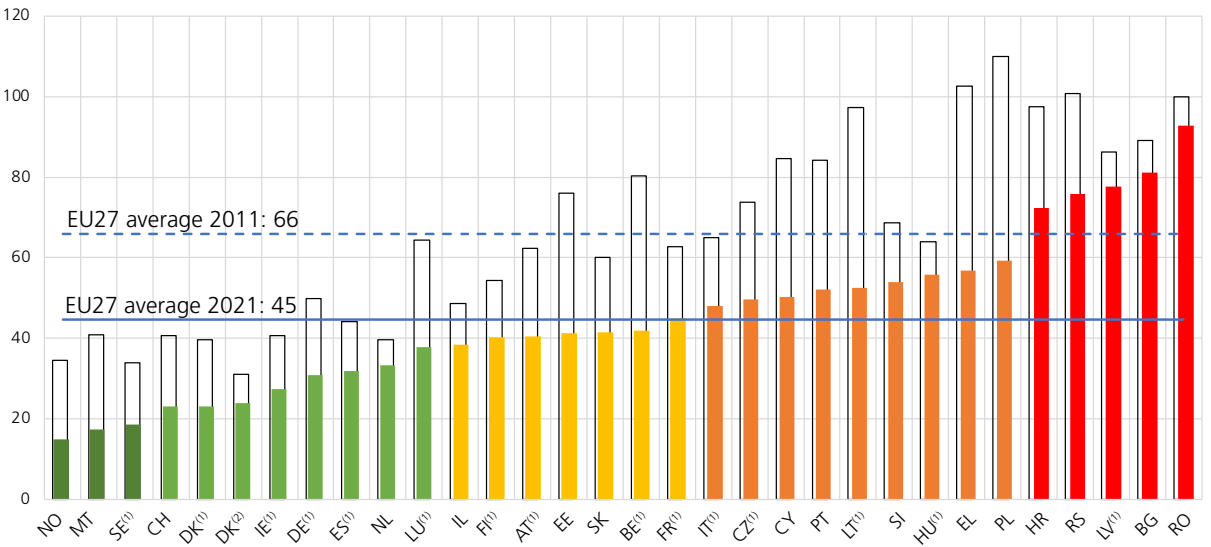


Figure 2. Mortality (road deaths per million inhabitants) in 2021 (with mortality in 2011 for comparison).

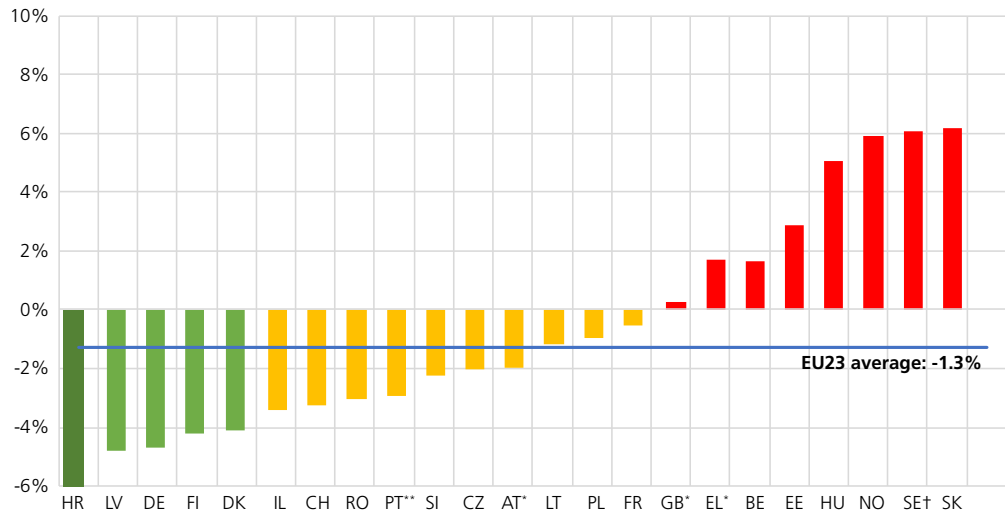
(1) National provisional estimates used for 2021, as final figures for 2021 were not available at the time this report went to print. The annual number of deaths in LU and MT are particularly small and, therefore, subject to substantial annual fluctuations. (2) UK 2021 estimate is based on GB provisional total for the year 2021 and the provisional data for Northern Ireland for the calendar year 2021, population data is an estimate for the year 2021.



In Hungary, all other road deaths decreased more quickly than road deaths related to alcohol for the period 2010-2019, as shown in the table below. In 2020, Hungary registered 65 road deaths due to alcohol while 2021 saw a decrease to 51 alcohol-related road deaths.

Figure 3. Difference between the average annual change in the number of road deaths attributed to alcohol and the corresponding change for other road deaths over the period 2010-2019

(1) PT: Number of road deaths attributed to alcohol are not available, so numbers of positive forensic post-mortem tests of drivers, passengers and pedestrians were used instead.
 (2) ES: data for Catalonia and the Basque Country are not available.
 (3) RS: data collection methodology changed in 2016. Serbia is working to improve alcohol-related fatal collision data collection according to the EU guidelines on the Common Accident and Injury Database (CaDas).
 EU 23: EU 27 Member States minus Ireland, Italy, Malta and the Netherlands due to insufficient data.





NATIONAL POLICIES

Timeline of national measures to tackle drink-driving:

2008

A zero-tolerance policy was adopted for all drivers, with the blood alcohol limit set at 0.0g/l

2011

Drink-driving offences treated in the framework of an administrative official procedure

2013

drink-driving considered a criminal offence if the driver is caught with a blood alcohol concentration above 0.5g/l

2008

2011

2013

The current national approach to road safety in Hungary involves three-year road safety strategy periods. The last programme was the ROAD SAFETY ACTION PROGRAM 2020-2022. It included drink-driving as one of the major issues on Hungarian roads and highlights the importance of road safety measures including:

- developing appropriate regulation; reviewing and modifying the infringement procedure, administrative fines and the demerit point system;
- introducing the use of the alcohol interlock, taking into account international best practice;
- reviewing the regulation of drink-driving as regards cycling.

Regrettably, no action was taken at national level on the proposed measures.



BAC LIMITS AND SANCTIONS






The legal limit for

All drivers is:

0.0g/l —

The zero-tolerance policy was introduced in Hungary in 2008. If the BAC does not reach a blood alcohol concentration of 0.5 g/l, the offence is not considered as a criminal act, but only an infringement.

Detailed sanctions are summarised in the table below:

 BAC level (g/L)	 Fine	 Penalty points	 Imprisonment	 Driving ban
Up to 0.3g/l	Around 75 euros	6	-	-
0.3 to 0.5g/l	Around 250 euros	8	-	-
Above 0.5g/l	-	11	Up to two years	At least one month - up to 10 years



ENFORCEMENT

The number of roadside breath checks increased over the 2010-2019 period in Hungary, with 279 alcohol checks registered per 1000 population in 2019. A total of 2.7 million tests were carried out by the police in 2019, ranking Hungary among the best performing EU countries in enforcing drink-driving on the roads.

Both 2020 and 2021 saw a drastic reduction of the police controls (one million checks less than in 2019), most likely as an effect of the COVID-19 restrictions. 185 checks per 1000 population were recorded in 2021, with 1.2% of drivers found above the legal limit.

	2021		2020		2019		2018		2017		2016		2015	
	Roadside police tests per 1000	Proportion above the legal limit (in %)	Roadside police tests per 1000	Proportion above the legal limit (in %)	Roadside police tests per 1000	Proportion above the legal limit (in %)	Roadside police tests per 1000	Proportion above the legal limit (in %)	Roadside police tests per 1000	Proportion above the legal limit (in %)	Roadside police tests per 1000	Proportion above the legal limit (in %)	Roadside police tests per 1000	Proportion above the legal limit (in %)
EE	576	0,8%	566	0,9%	696	0,8%	584	0,9%	513	1,0%	656	0,8%	n/a	n/a
PL	219	1,2%	177	1,5%	444	0,7%	434	0,6%	470	0,6%	473	0,6%	149	3,2%
SI	190	3,1%	172	3,2%	203	3,1%	171	3,3%	191	3,5%	142	3,7%	189	4,5%
HU	185	1,2%	173	1,3%	279	0,9%	298	1,0%	241	1,2%	174	1,5%	118	2,9%
PT	160	2,2%	126	1,9%	186	6,1%	172	2,2%	172	3,9%	167	2,7%	117	4,3%
AT	155	2,1%	137	2,1%	204	1,7%	197	1,6%	196	1,6%	192	1,7	169	2,8%
FR	109	3,2%	108	3,2%	139	3,4%	145	3,4%	157	3,3%	153	3,1%	177	3,5
FI	71	2,3%	78	2,2%	174	1,0%	253	0,8%	268	0,7%	277	0,7%	219	0,9%
SE	33	2,3%	40	2,1%	126	0,9%	117	0,9%	117	1,0%	122	1,0%	259	0,7%
CY	31	8,3%	49	9,0%	92	8,9%	102	9,0%	120	7,2%	105	7,9%	205	4,9%
IE	18	0,6%	21	0,4%	64	0,5%	65	0,5%	n/a					
NO	n/a		64	2,6%	180	0,8%	177	0,7%	211	0,6%	258	0,6%	358	0,3%
RO	n/a												n/a	n/a
LT	n/a												83	5,1%
EL	n/a													



REHABILITATION AND ALCOHOL INTERLOCK PROGRAMMES

If the authority handling infractions orders the full suspension of the driver's licence for a period exceeding 6 months, or if the court, due to a criminal act, imposes a full disqualification from driving, the offender is obliged to follow a rehabilitation course, with a cost of around 170 to 345 euros.

There are seven different programmes. During an initial exploration phase, a theoretical traffic knowledge test is required, as well as a practical driving test and a discussion of driving habits and behaviours related to the infraction. After evaluating the results of the investigation, experts from the examination centre decide who should participate in which of the seven programmes.

The programmes can be theoretical, practical or group sessions, as well as programmes for slightly, moderately or severely intoxicated drivers. The length varies between 6 and 12 hours, depending on the chosen programme.



CAMPAIGNS

The police carry out continuous campaigns against drink-driving, by for example, displaying the content of court judgments anonymously on the websites of www.police.hu or www.kreszvaltozas.hu, which are then picked up by national media.

In addition, drink-driving is continuously monitored during coordinated local, regional or national alcohol checks run by the police, the results of which are published on the police website.

In 2020, the National Accident Prevention Committee of the National Police Department (ORFK-OBB) launched a new campaign on road safety. The campaign included an emotional drink-driving video, part of a series launched on social media as well as on the ROADPOL website during the ROADPOL Safety Days campaign week.



<https://www.facebook.com/roadpoleu/videos/671034263620624/>

In September 2022, a Hungarian brewery (Borsodi) offered an educational program in the framework of the European Mobility Week, organised by the Regional Police Headquarters in Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county. The topic was “Tune in to safety” during which adult visitors could test their knowledge on the effects of alcohol and responsible consumption by completing a quiz and, with the help of a pair of „drunk glasses,” experience vision and reaction time changes at a go-kart track.

Since 2015, Dreher Breweries and the Veszprém County Police Department have run a campaign at Lake Balaton, a popular summer vacation destination in Hungary. Road safety awareness actions are regularly organised to draw car drivers’ attention to zero tolerance while driving.

In 2021 and 2022, during the summer peak season, the police held two road checks per year, where non-alcoholic products were given away as gifts to those drivers who had a negative breathalyser test result. In these two years of cooperation with the police, the campaign reached more than 5742 car drivers (plus their passengers).





SOURCES

Sanctions:

www.police.hu

Rehabilitation programmes:

<https://vizsgakozpont.hu/kozuti-jarmuvezetok-utankepzes>

ETSC, 16th PIN Annual Report (2022):

<https://etsc.eu/16th-annual-road-safety-performance-index-pin-report/>

ETSC, HOW TRAFFIC LAW ENFORCEMENT CAN CONTRIBUTE TO SAFER ROADS (2022):

<https://etsc.eu/how-traffic-law-enforcement-can-contribute-to-safer-roads-pin-flash-42/>

Campaigns:

<https://kreszvaltozas.hu/hir/erzelmi-ervekkel-az-ittas-vezetes-ellen/>

<https://www.facebook.com/roadpoleu/videos/671034263620624/>