SMART

SOBER MOBILITY ACROSS ROAD TRANSPORT

DRINK-DRIVING FACT FILE

December 2022

NORWAY

INTRODUCTION

Norway is the safest country in Europe both in terms of road mortality (deaths per million population) and in the improvement made between 2011 and 2021.

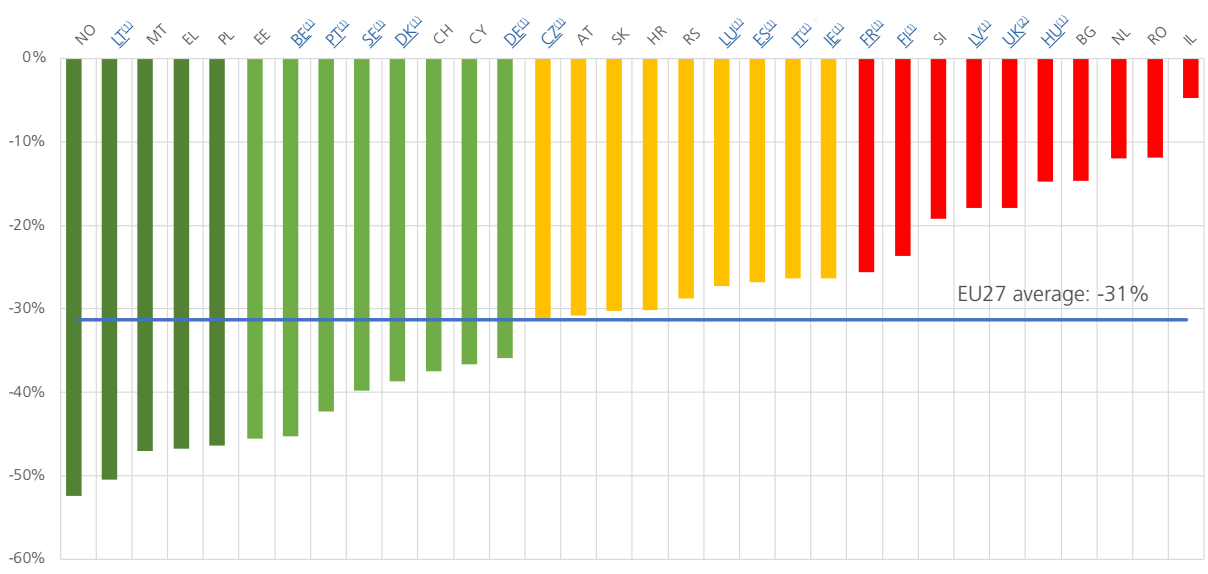
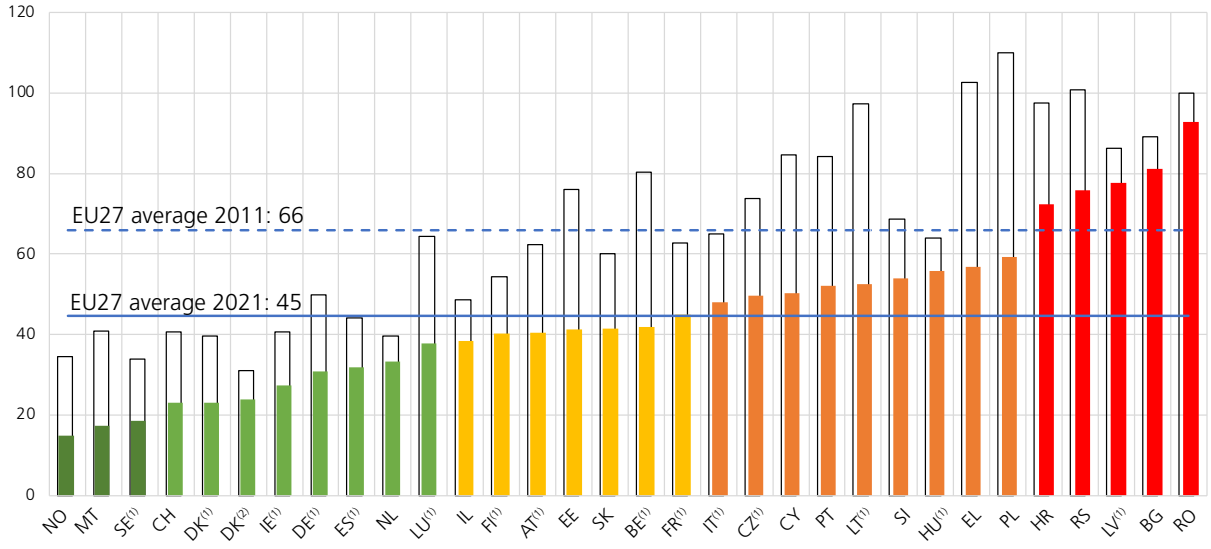


Figure 1. Relative change in road deaths between 2011 and 2021. *National provisional estimates used for 2021, as final figures for 2021 are not yet available at the time this report went to print. **UK data for 2021 are the provisional total for Great Britain for the year ending June 2021 combined with the total for Northern Ireland for the calendar year 2021. 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.

ETSC

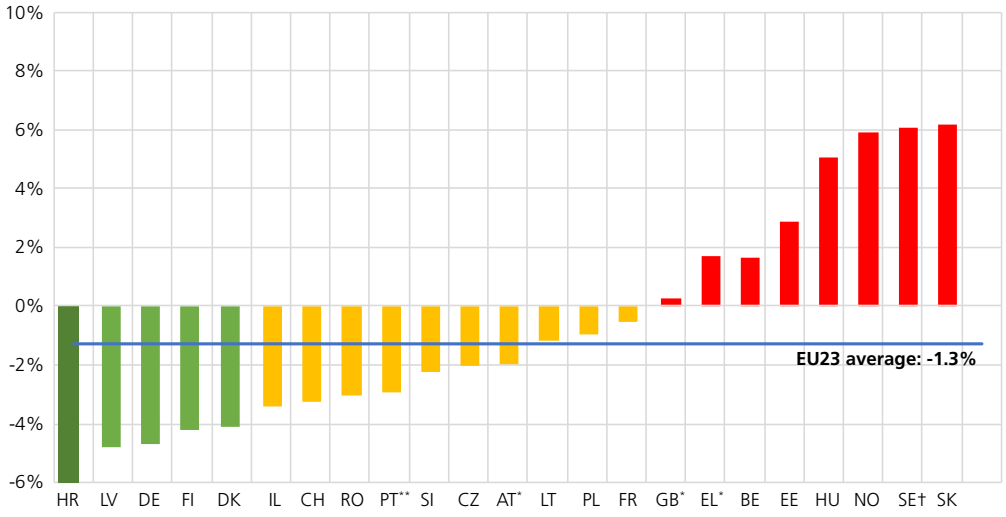
European Transport Safety Council

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.



Norway saw non-drink-driving road deaths decrease more quickly than road deaths related to alcohol in the period 2010-2019 (figure 3 below). It is estimated that drink-driving accounts for around 25% of all road deaths in Norway. Results from the National Road Administration's accident analysis group confirmed that driving under the influence was a contributing factor in 25% of fatal collisions in the period 2017 to 2020. In 47% of the road crashes due to impairment, the driver had consumed alcohol.[1]

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.

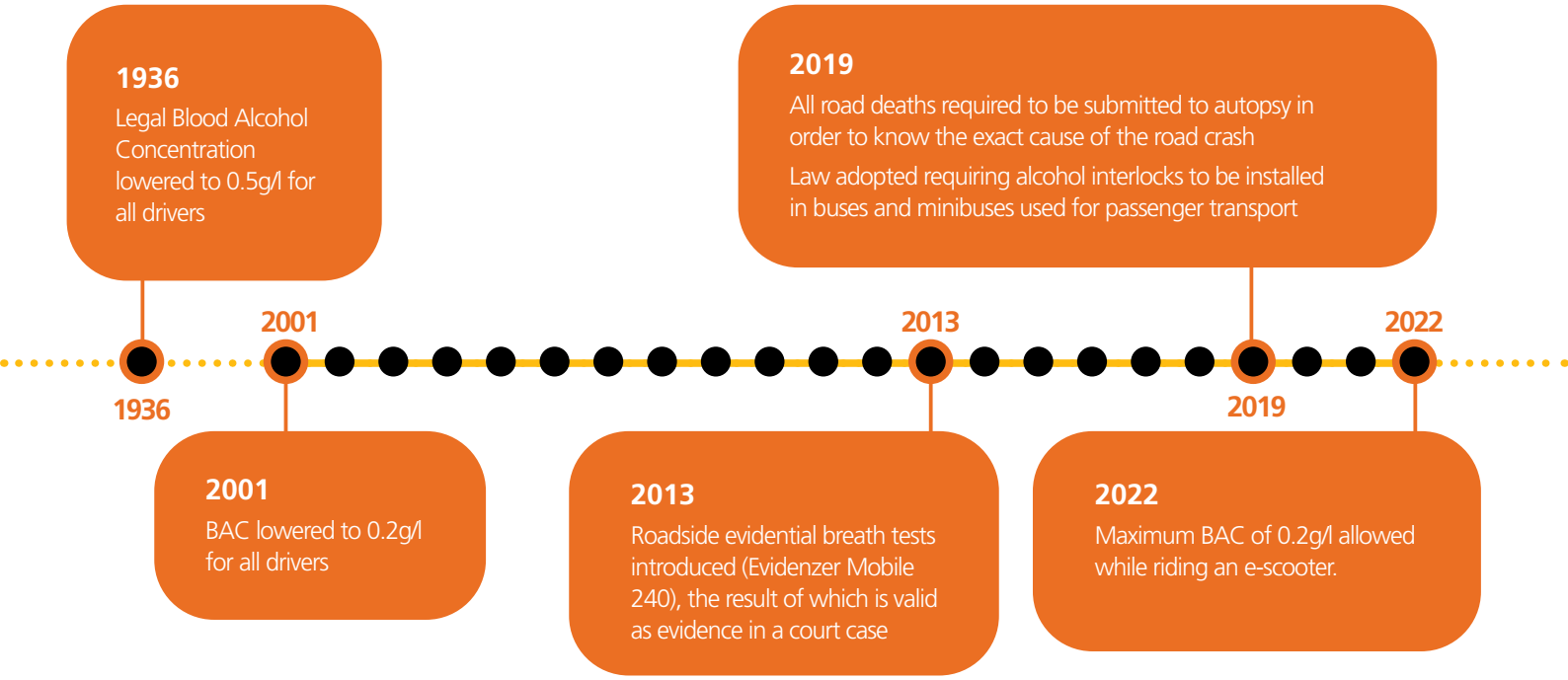


The COVID-19 pandemic and accompanying restrictions in mobility had an impact on the number of road deaths attributed to alcohol in Norway, with an increase of over 30% in alcohol-related road deaths between 2019 and 2020. In 2020, 24 people were killed by impaired driving while 2021 data were not available.

[1] https://bit.ly/3uzTJQb

NATIONAL POLICIES

Timeline of national measures to tackle drink-driving:



NATIONAL ROAD SAFETY STRATEGY 2022-2025:

Norway has recently published its Road Safety Strategy for the years 2022 - 2025. Like Sweden, Norway has adopted vision zero and aims at achieving zero deaths in road traffic by 2050.

Concerning drink-driving, the main target to be achieved by 2025 is to reduce to 0.1% the proportion of drivers found with a blood alcohol level above 0.2g/l. Roadside surveys on driving under the influence carried out both in 2015 and 2019 showed that this percentage was at 0.2%. To achieve this new goal by 2025, the government has put in place several measures, as listed below:

- The police must carry out a preliminary test for the influence of alcohol on all drivers stopped at traffic checks.
- The Norwegian Public Roads Administration will have to make an assessment of whether the current mandate on alcohol interlocks in buses should be extended to taxis.
- The Norwegian Motorists Association (MA-Rusfri Trafikk), in collaboration with The Norwegian Council for Road Safety (Trygg Trafikk), will be working on a proposal for an offender program with alcohol interlock as an alternative to loss of driving license.
- MA-Rusfri Trafikk will carry out a preliminary project that assesses the implementation of an Alcohol interlock as an alternative condition for driving licences for people with alcohol problems.
- The police, together with municipalities and other relevant actors, will carry out two annual campaigns on reducing drink-driving.
- Oslo University Hospital will carry out a roadside survey to map the extent of intoxication in traffic.

BAC LIMITS AND SANCTIONS

The legal limit for all drivers is:

0.2g/l

Norway was the first country in the world to set a legal limit for drink-driving, introducing a 0.5g/l BAC limit in 1936. After Sweden reduced the legal limit in 1990, the pressure increased for a similar reduction in Norway. The legal BAC was reduced in 2001, with a maximum permitted level of 0.2g/l for all drivers.

Norway has a long tradition of strict enforcement and drink-driving sanctions. The sanctions escalate as the BAC level increases and can range from a fine for being just over the limit (above 0.2g/l and up to 0.5g/l) to licence withdrawal and imprisonment. The penal and administrative sanctions may in most situations be applied in combination. Concerning drink-driving fines, they are proportional to the offender's average monthly salary as follows:

BAC level (g/L)	Maximum Fine	Driving ban	Imprisonment
0.2 to 0.5g/l	1 month's gross salary	Maximum six months	No
0.51 to 1.2g/l	1,5 months gross salary	12 to 24 months	A conditional or unconditional sentence of imprisonment
above 1.21g/l	a fine of 1,5 months gross salary	At least 2 years	An unconditional sentence of imprisonment (21 days)

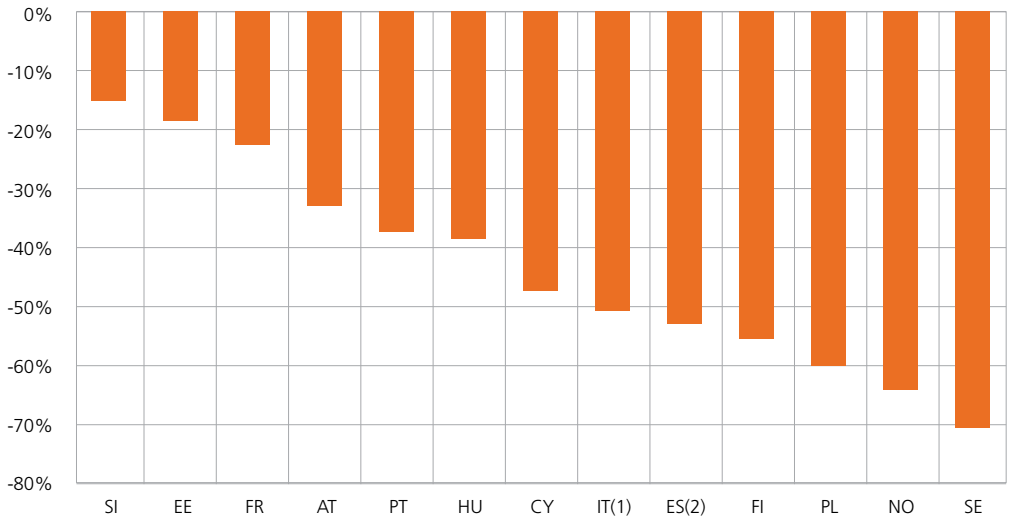
ENFORCEMENT

Norway has introduced systematic breath-testing in all police checks. Each time a driver is stopped by traffic police, he/she will be systematically checked for drink-driving.

Norway saw a 65% decrease in the number of roadside drink-driving checks during 2020 as shown in the graph below. Also interesting to note is that the proportions of tested drivers being over the legal limit did change in 2020 in Norway, where the proportions were 0.8% in 2019 and 2.6% in 2020. Looking at data since 2010, the proportions of drivers tested being over the legal limit have never been so high as in 2020. In 2021, 9,573 people were reported by the police for drink-driving.

Figure 4. Relative change in the number of alcohol roadside breath checks per 1000 population between 2019 and 2020

(1)IT: alcohol roadside breath checks by national police.
(2)ES: checks on roads inside urban areas and in the region of the Basque Country are not available. Data checks in Catalonia include urban areas.



The Norwegian police started using 'evidential breathalysers' in roadside police checks in 2013. Before then, the police used breathalysers in roadside police checks but in the case of a positive reading it was necessary to take the driver to a hospital for a follow-up as an evidential blood test which could be used in a potential court case was needed. The test result from an evidential breathalyser device is printed like a receipt within 10 minutes, and it is attached to the criminal case as evidence. In this way, the police do not have to spend a long time getting a blood sample taken from the alcohol suspect. The blood sample of someone who is suspected of drink-driving can take several weeks to analyse, and there are also greater costs associated with such a sample than when using this measuring instrument. In 2017, the police had around 100 'Evidenzers' in use throughout the country.

A video was made by a local tabloid showing how the tool works in practice (see link below).

https://www.adressa.no/nyheter/trondelag/i/o6O3gW/denne-maskinen-tok-150-tronderske-alkotester-i-fjor

REHABILITATION AND ALCOHOL INTERLOCK PROGRAMMES

Norway now requires the use of alcohol interlocks for some categories of professional drivers. Since the adoption of the law in 2019, alcohol interlocks have been installed in buses and minibuses for passenger transport. More and more taxis in Norway also choose to install the tool.

No alcohol interlock rehabilitation programmes are in place so far in Norway. In the last national Road Safety Strategy 2022-2025, it is stated that the Norwegian Abstaining Motorists' Association (MA), in cooperation with the Norwegian Council for Road Safety, will do some advocacy work for the setting up of a programme that uses alcohol interlocks as an alternative to licence withdrawal, targeting drink-driving offenders in general but also those with alcohol problems.

DUI Prevention Programme

In Norway a judge can offer alternative sanctions to high level and recidivist offenders in the framework of the Driving under the Influence Rehabilitation Programme. This began as a trial arrangement in 1996, but from 2003 the DUI Prevention Programme was extended to all counties in Norway. The prevention programme aims at helping drivers to separate drinking from driving.

The programme takes normally 10 months and consists of 20-30 hours of group meetings – oriented lessons for two or three months and individual conversations every 14 days. The content of the conversations is adapted to individual needs and should be related to the content of group meetings.

The programme provides knowledge about the consequences of intoxicated driving and encourages participants to take responsibility for their actions. Drivers are confronted with consequences of drink-driving. They are asked to reflect upon what motivates them to drink and drive and what strategies they should develop to avoid drink-driving in the future. By participating in the programme drivers increase their understanding of their own abuse and risks associated with it. They are motivated to change, and receive support to help avoid drink-driving in the future.

CAMPAIGNS

DeathTrip is a nationwide competition organised by Ung i Trafikken, a traffic safety organisation focusing on young people aged between 15 and 26 years old. Students from upper secondary schools are engaged in creating campaigns against drink-driving. Through their work during the competition, students must increase their knowledge of the topic, and influence their own and other young people's attitudes. At the same time, the use of the students' campaigns should contribute to initiate dialogue and debate, and highlight drink-driving as a road safety problem. The best campaigns are then shown through the traveling exhibition DeathTrip on the Road at schools, festivals, motorsport events etc. Below are some examples of previous winning campaigns.

https://ungitrafikken.no/fakta-om-fyllekjoring/

2020 Competition (People's choice winner) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZhGMtF3ijeg&t=4s

SOURCES

National Road Safety Strategy 2022-2025 (EN version):

https://bit.ly/3ufq5Qp

Sanctions:

www.politiet.no

Enforcement:

https://www.marusfritrafikk.no/fakta/promilletest-med-alkometer/

https://bit.ly/3ED4BI0

Campaign:

https://ungitrafikken.no/deathtrip/

ETSC, 16th PIN Annual Report (2022):

https://etsc.eu/wp-content/uploads/16-PIN-annual-report_FINAL_WEB_1506_2.pdf

ETSC, How traffic law enforcement can contribute to safer roads (2022):

https://etsc.eu/wp-content/uploads/ETSC_PINFLASH42_v2TH_JC_FINAL_corrected-060522.pdf

European Transport Safety Council

ETSC would like to thank Elisabeth Fjellvang Kristoffersen from the Norwegian Motorists Association, for contributing to this report.

The SMART project receives financial support from The Brewers of Europe.