



Provisional Review of Fatal Collisions

1 January to 31 December 2020

Road Safety Authority
Issued 6 January 2020



Review of fatal collision statistics

In this report, an analysis has been conducted of the following variables to help understand the current trends in fatality rates.

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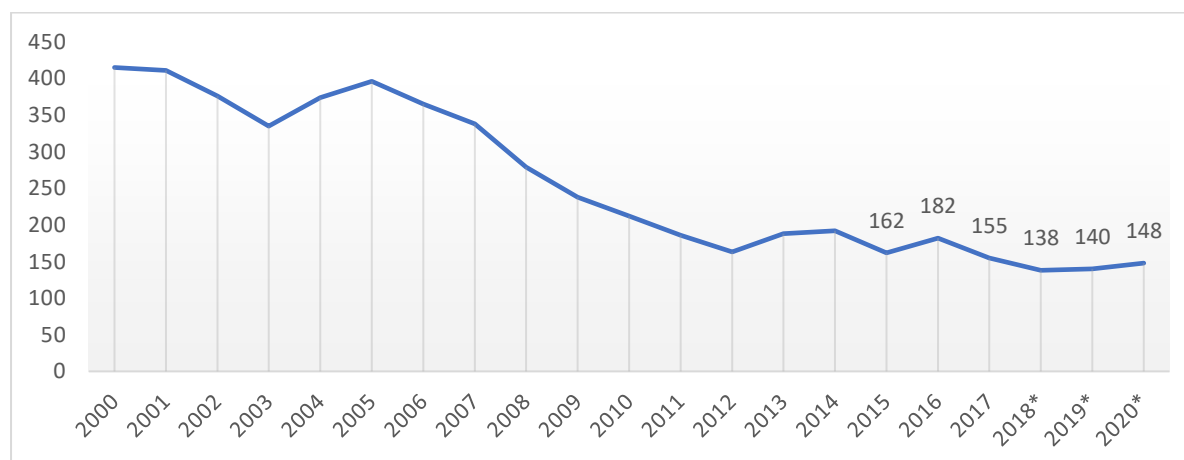


Overview

This report summarises the main trends in road traffic collision fatalities that have occurred up to 31 December 2020¹. This report has been prepared by the Road Safety Authority following analysis of the fatality reports provided to the RSA by An Garda Síochána. Note that the information contained in this report is provisional and is subject to change until the 2020 collision data is formally signed off on by the RSA.

As of 31 December 2020, there have been 137 fatal collisions, which have resulted in 148 fatalities on Irish roads. This represents 8 more fatal collisions and 8 more deaths (6%) compared to provisional Garda data for the full year 2019. The death per million population increased from 28 in 2019 to 30 in 2020.

Figure 1 Fatalities by year, 2000-2020



*Note: 2018-2020 data is provisional and subject to change.

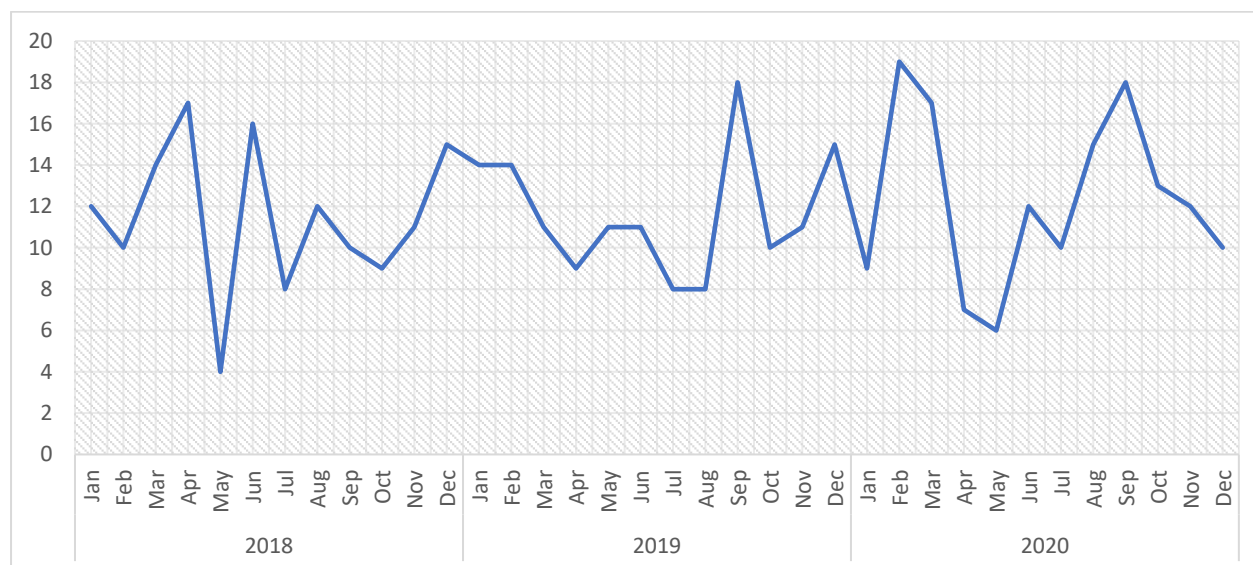
¹ Based on provisional data and subject to change.

1. Month of year

As can be seen in Figure 2, which presents the monthly fatalities from 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2020, there can be considerable fluctuations in monthly fatalities across each year.

During this period, the greatest number of fatalities occurred in February 2020 with 19 fatalities. By contrast, May 2018 (4) had the lowest number of fatalities over this timeframe, followed by May 2020 (6).

Figure 1 Fatalities by month 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2020

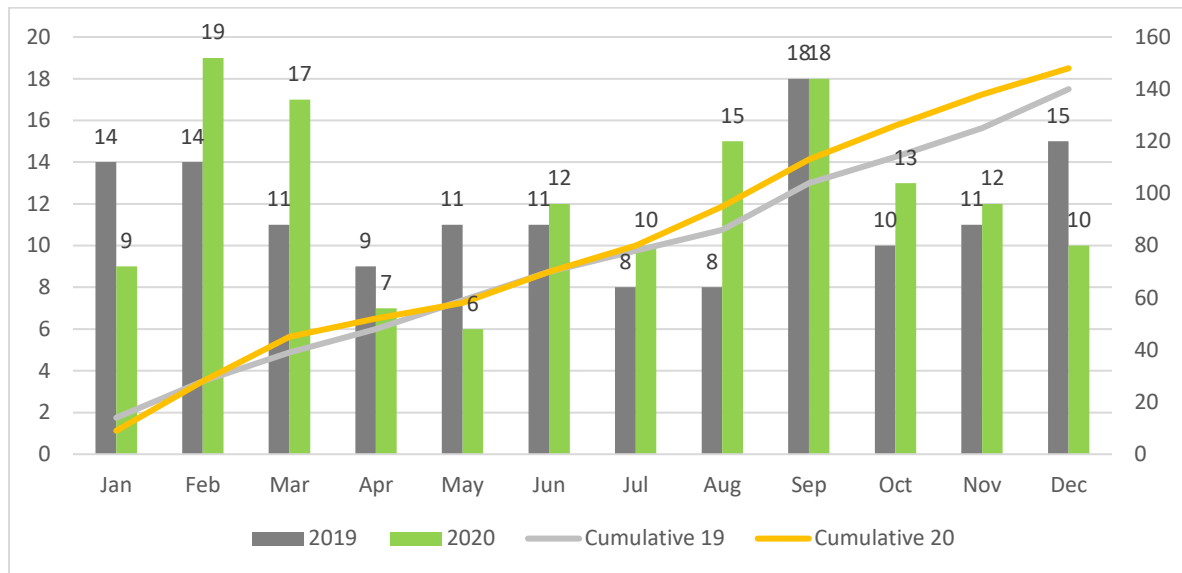


In Figure 3 the fatality figures for each month of the year for 2019 and 2020 are presented. February (19), September (18), March (17), and August (15) were the most dangerous months in 2020.

In comparison to the same months in 2019, there has been an increase in February (+5), March (+6), and August (+7) while figures for September remain the same. There were also decreases in fatalities in four other months of 2020 compared to 2019.

The monthly average for 2020 was 12.3 fatalities per month, while the monthly average for 2019 was 11.6 per month.

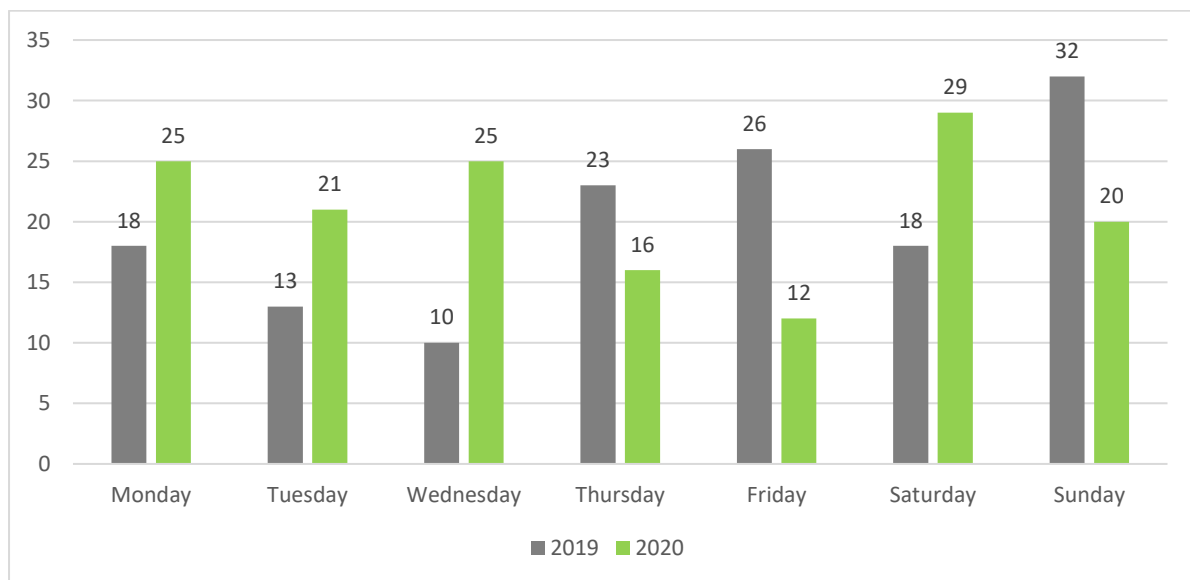
Figure 2 Road deaths by month, 1 January to 31 December 2019 and 2020



2. Day of week

The day of week pattern differs between 2019 and 2020. Figure 4 shows the distribution of fatalities by day of week for 2020 compared to 2019. Saturday was the most dangerous day of the week in 2020. Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday were considerably more dangerous than these days in 2019 (+30 deaths). By contrast, there were less fatalities on Friday and Sunday with 26 more fatalities on these days in 2019. Almost 60% of fatalities occurred between Monday-Thursday in 2020.

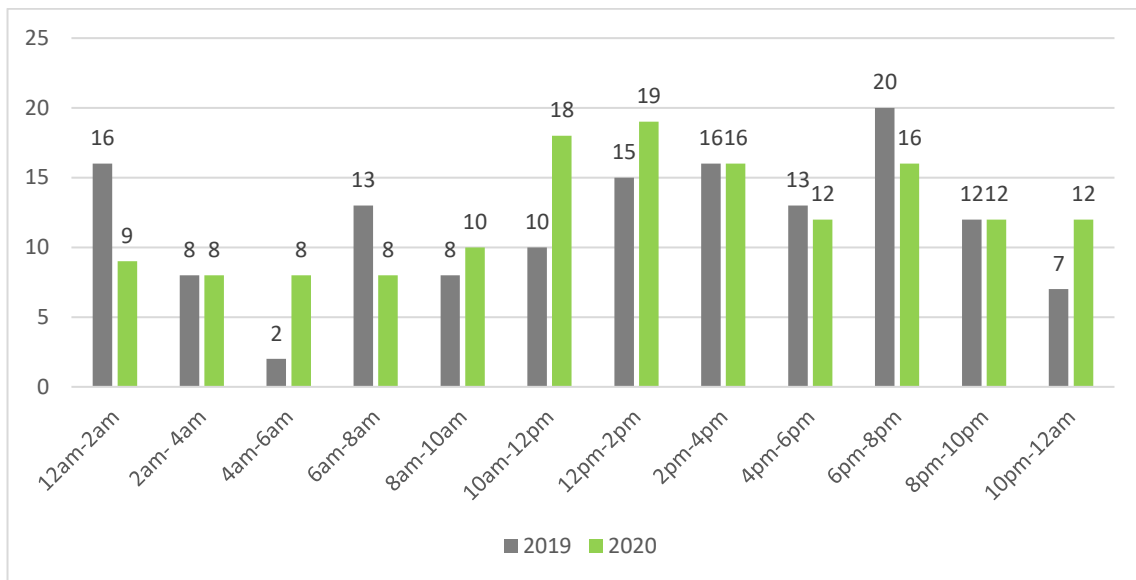
Figure 3 Road deaths by day of week, 1 January to 31 December 2019 and 2020



3. Time of day

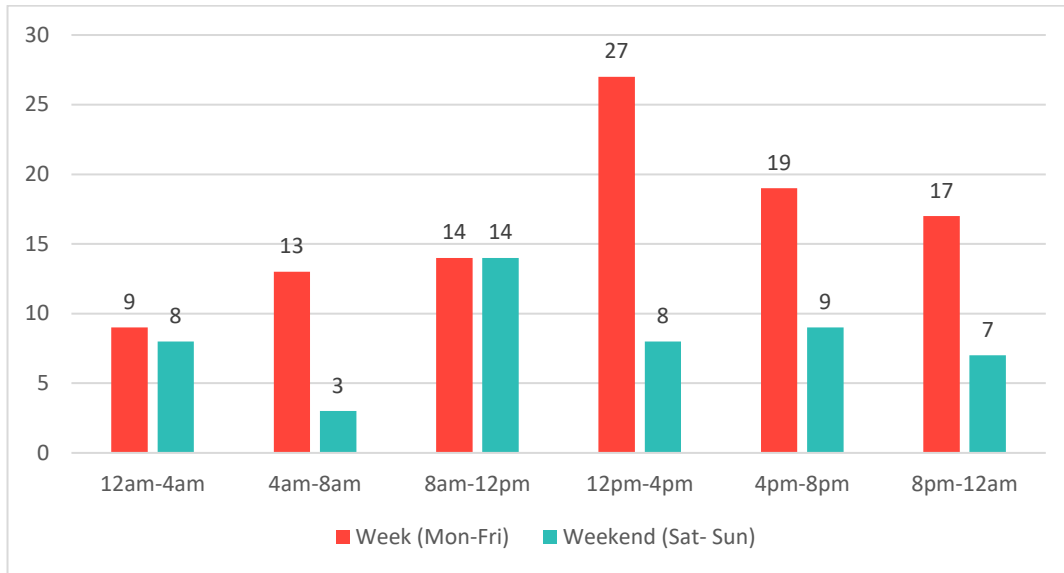
Figure 5 shows the distribution of road deaths by hour of the day in 2019 and 2020. 43% of fatalities in 2020 occurred between 12pm and 8pm. There were 25 fatalities between midnight and 6am (17%). Of the 25, 36% (9) occurred on Saturdays and Sundays, while 64% (16) occurred on weekdays.

Figure 4 Road deaths by time of day, 1 January to 31 December 2019 and 2020



As seen in Figure 6, the hours 12pm-12am during weekdays accounted for a large amount of fatalities (63) in 2020 (43%). For the hours 4am-8am, weekdays (13) accounted for more fatalities relative to weekend days (3).

Figure 5 Road deaths by time of day and weekday vs weekend, 1 January to 31 December 2020



Note: Weekday is Monday to Friday and weekend is Saturday to Sunday.

4. Where fatalities occurred

As can be seen in Figure 7, in both 2019 and 2020 there have been more fatalities on rural roads than on urban roads. Rural roads are those where the speed limit is 80km/h or greater while urban roads have speed limits of 60km/h or less.

Figure 6 Fatalities by urban and rural roads, 1 January to 31 December 2019 and 2020

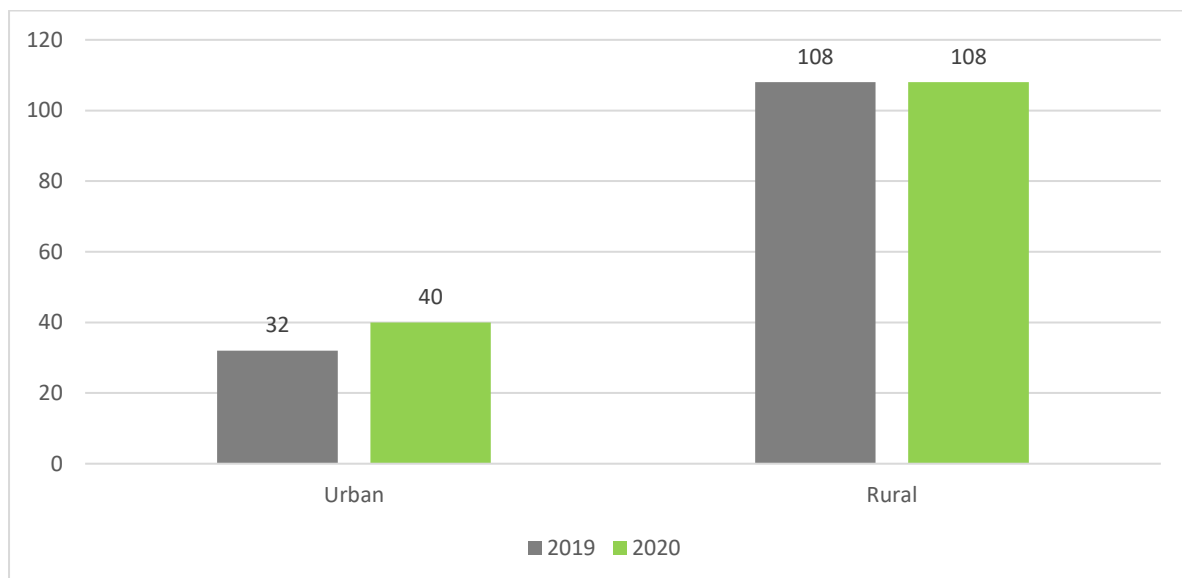


Table 1 shows a pronounced increase in fatalities on roads with speed limits of ≤ 30 km/h (+4), 60 km/h (+4), and 120 km/h (+7) between 2019 and 2020, while there was a notable decrease on roads with speed limits of 80 km/h (-9).

Table 1 Fatalities by speed limit, 1 January to 31 December 2019 and 2020

Speed Limit	2019	2020	Change
≤ 30 km/h	4	8	+4
50 km/h	26	26	0
60 km/h	2	6	+4
80 km/h	66	57	-9
100 km/h	38	40	+2
120 km/h	4	11	+7
Total	140	148	+8

Fatalities at the county level are shown in Figure 8. The highest number of fatalities in 2020 were in Cork (24), Dublin (20), Donegal (10), Kerry (9) and Louth (9).

Cork (13) had the highest number of vulnerable road user (pedestrian, cyclist, and motorcyclist) fatalities followed by Dublin (11). Both Kerry and Offaly had the next highest figures with 4 vulnerable road user fatalities each in 2020.

Dublin (8) had the highest number of driver fatalities. This was followed by Cork (6), Donegal and Louth (5 driver fatalities each). Cork (5), Donegal (3) and Louth (3) had the highest number of passenger fatalities.

Figure 8 County breakdown by the number of fatalities 2020

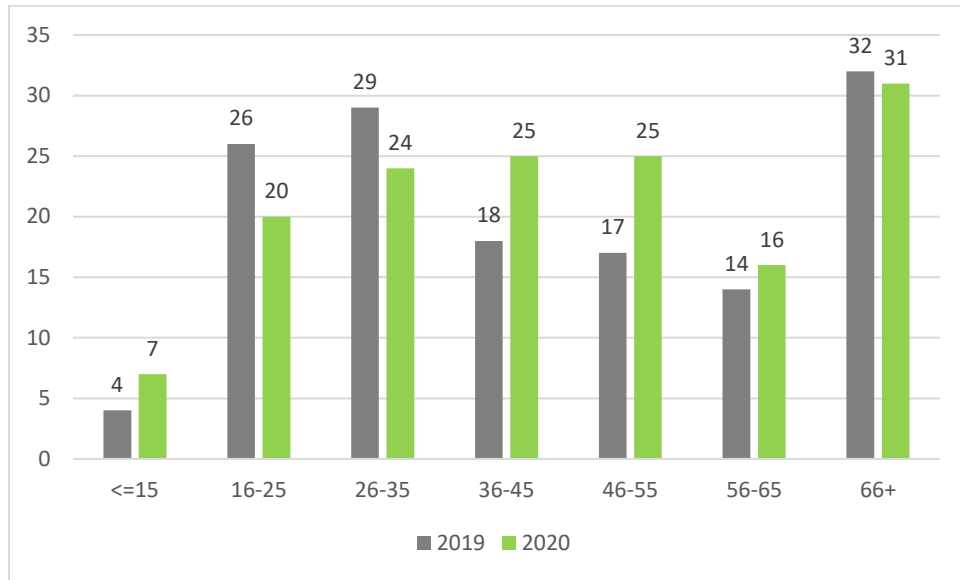


5. Age profile

As per Figure 9 the highest risk age group was those aged 66 years and older (21%).

In 2020, there have been reductions in deaths among those aged 16-25 (-6), 26-35 (-5), and 66+ (-1). There has been an increase in the number of fatalities in those aged 0-15 (+3), 36-45 (+7) and 46-55 (+8), 56-65 (+2).

Figure 9 Deaths by age group, 1 January to 31 December 2019 and 2020



6. Road user type

As can be seen in Figure 10 and Table 3 below, driver and passenger fatalities represent almost 60% of fatalities in 2020 while vulnerable road users represent 41% of fatalities.

There has been a decrease in driver fatalities (-12) while there has been an increase in all other road user fatalities (passenger (+11), pedestrian (+5), cyclist (+2), motorcyclist (+1)).

Figure 10 Deaths by road user type, 1 January to 31 December 2019 and 2020

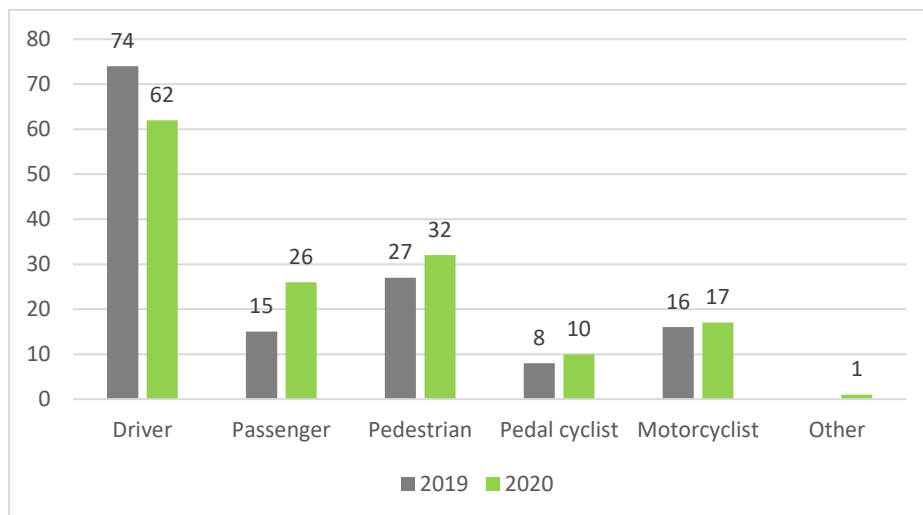


Table 2 Road User Fatalities 2019 and 2020

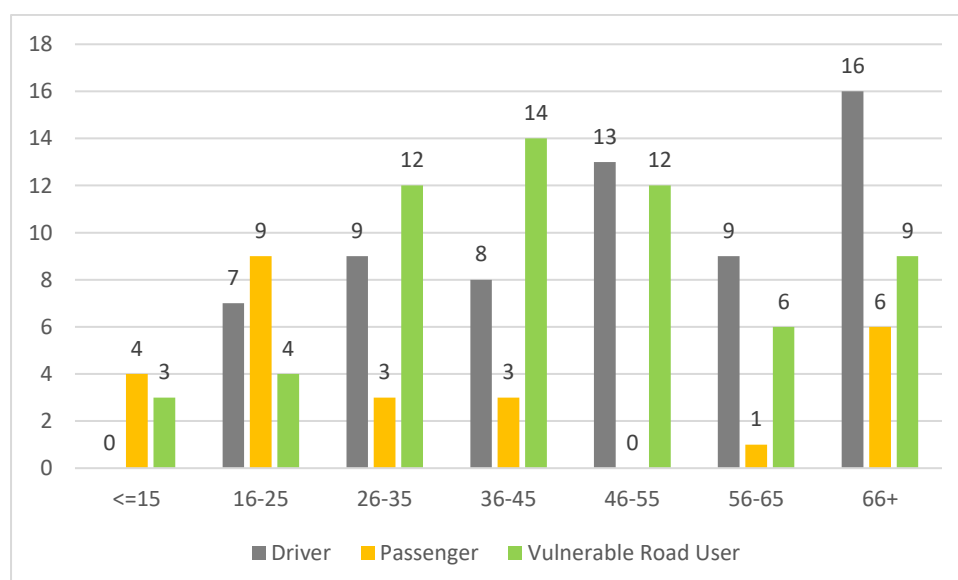
	2019	2020	Change
Driver	74	62	-12
Passenger	15	26	+11
Pedestrian	27	32	+5
Pedal Cyclist	8	10	+2
Motorcyclist	16	17	+1
Other		1	+1
Total	140	148	+8

7. Age profile by road user type

Figure 11 illustrates that of drivers killed the highest risk were those aged 66+ (16). Passenger fatalities were highest among the 16-25 age group (9).

In relation to vulnerable road user fatalities, the group which was most at risk was those aged 36-45 (14). A large proportion (63%) of vulnerable road users were aged between 26 and 55 (38).

Figure 11 Deaths by age group of drivers, passengers and vulnerable road users, 1 January to 31 December 2020



8. Profile of fatalities by road user group

8.1 Profile of Driver Fatalities:

As of 31 December, there were 62 driver fatalities in 2020.

Gender: The majority of driver fatalities were male (53).

Age: In 2020 the majority of fatalities among drivers were those aged 46 years and above (38).

Speed limit: The majority of fatalities occurred on higher speed roads (50), mainly on 80km/h roads (24) and 100km/h roads (21). Twelve driver fatalities occurred on roads with a speed limit of 60km/h or less.

Time of day: Thirteen driver fatalities took place between midnight and 6am, 20 driver fatalities occurred between 6am and 12pm and 13 driver fatalities occurred between the hours of 12pm and 4pm. Seven driver fatalities occurred between 4pm and 8pm and 9 driver fatalities occurred between 8pm and midnight.

Month of year: There were eight driver fatalities in February and September (16 in total).

Seatbelt use: Of 59 drivers killed operating seatbelt-equipped motor vehicles², thirteen (22%) were reported as not wearing a seatbelt; 31 drivers (53%) were confirmed as wearing a seatbelt. In the case of 15 killed drivers (25%), it is not known if they were wearing a seatbelt.

Multi vehicle collisions: Of the driver fatalities, 32 occurred in single vehicle collisions with the remainder involving at least one other vehicle or road user.

County: Dublin (8), Cork (6), Donegal (5) and Louth (5) had highest number of driver fatalities

8.2 Profile of Passenger Fatalities:

As of 31 December there were 26 passenger fatalities in 2020.

² Figures include drivers of goods and passenger vehicles only.

Gender: There were 12 male passengers killed and 14 female passengers.

Age: Older and younger people were most vulnerable; there were 13 passengers killed aged 25 years or younger and 6 passengers killed aged 66+.

Speed limits: More passenger fatalities occurred on higher speed roads³ (22), eleven of which happened on 80km/h roads. Three passenger fatalities occurred on roads with a speed limit of 50km/h.

Month of year: July had the highest number of passenger fatalities (5), followed by February and August (both 4).

Seating position: Where seating position was known, there were 13 front seat passengers and 11 rear seat passengers killed.

Seatbelts: Twelve passengers (46%) were wearing a seat belt⁴ and 9 (35%) were confirmed as not wearing a seatbelt. For 5 passengers (19%) it was unknown whether they were wearing a seat belt.

Single vehicle collisions: Fourteen of the fatalities occurred in single vehicle collisions (54%).

County: Cork (5), Donegal (3) and Louth (3) had highest number of passenger fatalities.

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8.3 Profile of Pedestrian Fatalities:

As of the 31 December there were 32 pedestrian fatalities in 2020.

Gender: Eighteen pedestrian fatalities were male and fourteen were female.

Age: The age groups with the highest risk were those aged 46-55 (8) and those 66 and older (8).

Speed limit: Fifteen pedestrian fatalities occurred on a road with a speed limit of 50km/h or less. Most pedestrian fatalities occurred on roads with a speed limit of 50km/h (10). In seven cases the pedestrian fatalities happened on a road with an 80km/h speed limit, in five cases it was a road with a speed limit of 100km/h and three occurred on a 120km/h speed limit road.

³ Higher speed roads include road with speed limits of 80km/h or greater.

⁴ Figures include passengers of goods and passenger vehicles only.

Month of year: The most dangerous month for pedestrians in 2020 was March, which saw seven fatalities. This was closely followed by six pedestrian fatalities in February.

Light conditions: More pedestrian fatalities occurred in hours of darkness (17) compared to during daylight (15). Eight (25%) pedestrian deaths occurred between the hours of 8pm and 8am.

County: Eight pedestrian fatalities occurred in Cork and six in Dublin.

8.4 Profile of Cyclist Fatalities:

As of 31 December, there were 10 cyclist fatalities in 2020.

Gender: All 10 cyclists killed were male.

Age: Five cyclists killed were aged 56-65.

Speed limits: Four collisions occurred on roads with an 80km/h speed limit and another five occurred on roads with 50km/h speed limit.

Light conditions: Six fatalities occurred during daylight conditions.

Day of week: Five of the fatalities occurred on Saturday (3) or Sunday (2), while 5 fatalities occurred on weekdays⁵.

8.5 Profile of Motorcycle Fatalities:

As of 31 December, there were 17 motorcyclist fatalities in 2020.

Gender: All 17 motorcyclists killed were male.

Age: Thirteen motorcyclists were aged 16-45. Four motorcyclists were aged 46+.

Speed limits: Sixteen motorcyclist fatalities occurred on roads with a speed limit of 80km/h or higher.

Multi-vehicle collisions: Of the 17 fatal motorcycle collisions, 12 were recorded as multi-vehicle collisions (71%).

⁵ Weekday is Monday to Friday and weekend is Saturday and Sunday

Month: There were three motorcyclist fatalities in May and three motorcyclist fatalities in August.

Day of week: Six fatalities occurred on a Sunday (35%).

Time of day: Thirteen fatalities took place between the hours of 10am and 8pm (76%).

County: There were three motorcyclist fatalities in Dublin.

9. Summary

The key findings of this provisional review of 2020 fatalities can be summarised as follows:

In 2020 there have been 148 fatalities in 137 fatal collisions.

- There has been a 16% decrease in driver fatalities (-12) compared to 2019.
- There has been a 73% increase in fatalities across passengers (+11), a 25% increase in cyclist fatalities (+2), a 19% increase in pedestrian fatalities (+5) and a 6% increase in motorcyclist fatalities (+1) compared to 2019.
- The highest risk age group in 2020 were those aged 66 and older (n=31) which makes up 21% of those killed. Those aged 26-55 years make up 50% of fatalities in 2020.
- February (19; 13% of fatalities) had the most deaths, followed by September (18; 12% of fatalities)
- The highest number of fatalities, 63, occurred from 12pm - 8pm (43%).
- Saturday had the highest number of deaths, with 29 fatalities (20%), followed by Monday and Wednesday (both with 25 fatalities).
- Cork (24; 16%), Dublin (20, 14%), Donegal (10; 7%), Kerry (9; 6%) and Louth (9; 6%) had the highest number of fatalities overall.
- Twenty-two, or 26% of all drivers and passengers killed⁶, were reported as not wearing a seat belt. 43 (51%) were recorded as wearing seat belts, while for 20 (24%) it is not known whether the killed passenger/driver wore a seat belt.

The information contained in this report will be used by the RSA to inform road safety interventions and campaigns, as the RSA is committed to the implementation of evidence-based policies and practice.

⁶ Drivers and passengers of goods and passenger vehicles only.



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