



**TRANSPORT
SCOTLAND**
CÒMHDHAIL ALBA

Scottish Transport Statistics 2022

Injury Road Accidents

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I. Introduction

1.1 This chapter provides information on injury road accidents which were reported to the police, such as the number and severity of accidents, the police force area in which the accidents occurred, the types of vehicle involved, the number and severity of casualties resulting from the accidents, and the costs of injury and non-injury accidents.

1.2 During 2019 Police Scotland started to use a new accident recording system. The introduction of this new system has changed the way casualty severity is recorded and, as a result, comparisons of the number of serious and slight casualties to earlier years needed to be made with caution.

However, the Department for Transport has carried out analysis which adjusts historical figures so that they reflect the numbers that would have been reported if CRASH had been used to record the casualty severity in those years. In this chapter, these adjusted figures are used to report on serious accidents and casualties and slight accidents and casualties for the years 2004 to 2019. This means that the adjusted figures for 2004 to 2019 are comparable with figures for 2020 and 2021, but not with figures for years prior to 2004.

More information can be found in the Transport Scotland National Statistics publication [Reported Road Casualties Scotland](#)

Key points

- **There were 140 people killed in road accidents in 2021, one less than the previous year.**
- **There were 1,615 people recorded as seriously injured in road accidents in 2021.**
- **Almost three quarters of casualties in 2021 were car users or pedestrians. Sixty per cent of casualties were car users and 15 per cent were pedestrians. Pedal cycles accounted for 10 per cent and Motorcycles for 9 per cent.**

2. Main Points

Accidents

2.1 There were 3,899 injury road accidents reported in 2021, 9 more than in 2020. The number of reported accidents has been falling over the past ten years, and in 2021 was 61% lower than in 2011; the second lowest figure since current records

began in 1970. There were 135 fatal accidents in 2021: 4 more than in 2020. The reported number of accidents in which someone was seriously injured, but no-one died was 1,443 and the number of reported slight accidents was 2,321. (*Table 6.1*)

2.2 In 2021, two fifths of all reported injury road accidents (1,524: 39%) were on non-built up roads (speed limit of more than 40 m.p.h. - see injury road accidents section of the user guide). However, such roads accounted for a higher proportion of fatal accidents (93: 69%), partly because speeds tend to be higher on non built-up roads than on built up roads. There was a 5% decrease in accidents on built-up roads but a 9% increase in accidents on non built-up roads between 2020 and 2021. (*Table 6.1*)

2.3 The long term trends in the number of injury road accidents reported between 2011 and 2021 varied between the Police Force divisions across Scotland, ranging from no change in Orkney to an 84% fall in Aberdeen City. The figures for an area may fluctuate from year to year, especially in smaller areas, although the trends appear to be downwards. (*Table 6.2*)

2.4 There were 6,832 vehicles involved in reported injury road accidents in 2021. Over two thirds of them were cars (4,769 70%); light goods vehicles were the next vehicle type most often involved in accidents (432: 6%), though motorcycles are a similar proportion. (*Table 6.3*) Up until 2010, the number of motorcycles involved was higher than the number of pedal cycles but since then there has been an increase in pedal cycle traffic.

Casualties

2.5 140 people were killed in road accidents in 2021, one less than the previous year. This was 19% less than the 2014-18 average, the time period used as the baseline for Scotland's Road Safety Framework to 2030. (*Table 6.4*) Further analysis of progress against the Road Safety Framework Targets can be found in article 1 of Reported Road Casualties Scotland 2021.

2.6 There were 1,615 people recorded as seriously injured in road accidents in 2021. 3,348 people were recorded as slightly injured in 2021. There were a total of 5,103 casualties in 2021, 47 (1%) higher than in 2020. (*Table 6.4*)

2.7 In the context of the total volume of traffic on the roads in Scotland, the 5,103 total casualties recorded represented 11.76 casualties per 100 million vehicle kilometres. The Road Safety Framework also monitors the numbers of slight injuries per 100 million vehicle kilometres. The 3,348 people who were recorded as slightly injured in 2021 represented 7.71 casualties per 100 million vehicle-kilometres. (*Table 6.4*)

Child casualties

2.8 There were 494 reported child casualties in 2021, representing 10% of the total number of casualties of all ages. There were five child fatalities, 140 children were seriously injured, and 349 were classified as slightly injured. Due to the relatively small number of child fatalities, these are often monitored using a three year average to remove the effect of year on year fluctuations. In the three years to 2021, there was an average of 4 child fatalities. (*Table 6.4*)

Casualty Rates & Costs

2.9 *Table 6.5* provides road casualty rates per thousand population by age group and mode of transport. Overall, there were 0.93 casualties per thousand population in 2021. The casualty rate for children (0-15 years) was 0.54 per thousand population. However, the child and young adult pedestrian casualty rates (0.27 and 0.16 per thousand population respectively) were much higher than the pedestrian casualty rate for adults (0.12). The total young persons' (16-24 years) casualty rate in 2021 was 1.67 per thousand population, just under twice the rate for all ages. The young persons' casualty rate in cars (1.13 per thousand population) was almost double the rate for adults aged 25-59 (which was 0.61 per thousand population). Further information about the mid-year population estimates used to calculate these rates can be found at the [National Records of Scotland](#). (*Table 6.5*)

2.10 The cost of all road accidents (including damage only non-injury accidents) in 2021 is estimated at £910 million at 2021 prices. (*Table 6.6*)



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Published by Transport Scotland, March 2023

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