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From: Secretary-General of the European Commission, signed by Ms Martine DEPREZ, Director

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To: Ms Thérèse BLANCHET, Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union

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**COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT**

**Monitoring Road Safety Progress in the EU - Ireland**

*Accompanying the document*

**COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN  
PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL  
COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS**

**Report on the Implementation of the EU Road Safety Policy Framework at the Mid-  
Point**

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# Ireland

## 1. Summary

Ireland is **among the better performing countries** in the EU with 32 fatalities per million inhabitants in 2024 (EU average of 45). Compared to 2019, an increase of 22% in fatalities was recorded although there was a 5% decrease between 2023 and 2024. Additionally, in 2024, 1,368 serious injuries were recorded, which is 9% lower than the respective figure in 2019. Thus, based on the latest available data, **Ireland is currently not on track to meet the 2030 targets.**

Compared to the EU average, the distribution of fatalities in Ireland in 2023 showed a high proportion of car occupants and fatalities outside urban areas. Between 2019 and 2023, considerable increases in road fatalities were recorded, especially among PTW riders, pedestrians and inside urban areas.

Aligned with the European Commission, Ireland's Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030 sets the targets of **halving the numbers of road fatalities and serious injuries** by 2030. Interim targets for 2024 have been also set, including a 15% reduction in fatalities and a 10% reduction in serious injuries. The average of the 2017-2019 figures for fatalities and serious injuries are used as target baselines.

The 2021-2030 Road Safety Strategy adopts a transformational and partnership-based approach to road safety in Ireland to achieve the road safety targets by 2030 as well as progressing toward "Vision Zero" by 2050. It includes **three phases of action plans** (Phase 1 2021-2024; Phase 2 2025-2027; Phase 3 2028-2030), to ensure that the road safety interventions and activities undertaken will continue to be effective and incorporate the latest innovations and developments in the field. At the time of publication in December 2021, the action plan of Phase 1 included 50 high impact actions divided across the seven Safe System priority intervention areas and a further 136 support actions. Four further high impact actions were added during Phase 1, following the 2023 annual conference, giving a total of 190 actions.

In 2023, new legislation allowed for preliminary drug testing at the roadside, as well as harsher penalties and reductions in speed limits in regional and local roads. In addition, all uniformed police must carry out 30 minutes of roads policing per shift.

Regarding implementation of the road safety actions foreseen in the national strategy for the period 2021-2024, **progress has been made in most road safety areas, while some delays mainly due to legislation and resource constraints** are reported. Based on the self-reported assessment, out of the 26 road safety areas examined, 20 are well on track, while the remaining 6 have been delayed. It is noted that in 15 out of 26 examined road safety areas of all pillars, the starting level in 2021 is self-assessed as medium, while for the remaining 10 areas the baseline is assessed as low. The pillars which had advanced least by 2021 are Safe Roads and Safe Vehicles.

The main gap reported in the implementation of Ireland's first Road Safety Action Plan is **funding/resource constraints**. This was reported as the main reason for delaying or deferring various actions across all pillars, such as enforcement activities, the establishment of Road Safety Working Together Groups in several local regions, the expansion of the active travel infrastructure, the development of an online system that allows the access to vehicle testing

history, etc.

Another important gap reported in the implementation of some measures concerns **legislative changes**. It turned out that, where they were required, they proved to be a time-consuming process which caused delays in progressing the implementation of specific areas of the strategy or were barriers for the implementation of some actions (e.g. data sharing process). However, this is being addressed to some extent with the establishment of specific groups (Legislative Enabler Group, Data Enabler Group), aiming to resolve cross-organisational issues arisen and ensure progress in a collaborative way.

On the other hand, a series of **best practices** is available for Ireland, including actions from all pillars. A **multi-annual Communication Strategy** has been developed to ensure that the evidence-based communications target the right group of road users, at the right time, using the most effective communication channels. It is noted however, that despite these campaigns addressing the scope of communication as defined in the strategy, there were funding constraints in this area. To help address these constraints more recently, the Government directed additional investment into road safety communications campaigns in late 2023 and again in 2024.

Also, the **national cycling training programme** is one of the referred best practices of this period, which will reach 40,000 participants in 2024, including 9,000 participants from schools in disadvantaged areas and 1,000 participants with disabilities.

Additionally, a **national camera strategy** is prepared jointly with key stakeholders to ensure that camera enforcement will take place in a holistic manner. This includes trials of average speed cameras in various locations around the country. However, for the full implementation of this strategy, legislative changes need to be made to allow for the extended use of a camera-based enforcement, as well as significant resources, particularly with regard to the technology, background support and enforcement staff required.

Finally, various best practices are referred to the **Safe Roads pillar**, including the diversion of HGV traffic from the Dublin city centre via a tunnel, which is not feasible for the majority of counties. Other best practices include sharing templates with local authorities to create their own road safety plans, programmes for road safety in schools and partnering with local/rural sports clubs to raise awareness on road safety issues.

The Phase 2 action plan of the GRSS is under development in collaboration with all key stakeholders. There will be a streamlined approach to the development of the action incorporating a number of key transformational actions and support actions.

Although Ireland continues to perform better than the EU average, an increasing trend in road fatalities is observed from 2019-2024. The possible way forward to address this could include:

- accelerating the implementation of the delayed measures,
- identifying relevant actions in the phase 2 action plan, ensuring that the focus is on transformative actions that all stakeholders have agreed and are resourced adequately to deliver in the timeline proposed.

## 2. Road Safety Strategy and Measures

### 2.1. Road Safety Strategy

The Government of **Ireland’s current Road Safety Strategy** spans the decade 2021–2030. It has a new ambition at its core, guiding Ireland towards ‘Vision Zero’, which underpins the EU Road Safety Policy Framework (2021–2030) and will be delivered by the Safe System approach. This Road Safety Strategy adopts a transformational and partnership-based approach to road safety in Ireland to achieve the road safety targets by 2030. The Road Safety Strategy was developed by the Road Safety Authority (RSA) in partnership with key stakeholders.

The 2021–2030 Road Safety Strategy will include **three action plans** (Phase 1 2021-2024; Phase 2 2025-2027; Phase 3 2028-2030), to ensure that the road safety interventions and activities undertaken will continue to be effective and incorporate the latest innovations and developments in the field.

**Table 15.1:** National road safety strategy

Ireland	
Timeframe	2021-2030 (3 phases)
Lead Authority	Road Safety Authority (RSA) developed the strategy, in consultation with key Irish road safety stakeholders and the Irish public
Link	<a href="https://www.rsa.ie/about/safety-strategy-2021-2030">https://www.rsa.ie/about/safety-strategy-2021-2030</a>

### 2.2. Road Safety Governance

Strategy delivery is overseen by the Road Safety Transformation Partnership Board, which is comprised of senior officials from across the most relevant Departments and State Agencies. At political level, Strategy progression is also reported to the Ministerial Committee of Road Safety, which is chaired by the Minister for Transport. The relevant committee in the legislature, the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Transport, has also scheduled several sessions on road safety matters in recent years.

More generally, the Road Safety Authority has a statutory responsibility to produce and publish statistics on road safety and Transport Infrastructure Ireland has responsibility for various road safety matters as set out in the RISM Directive.

## 2.3. Main Safety Issues

Despite the good road safety progress over the previous decade, a number of challenges remain for Ireland<sup>1</sup>:

- **Less progress** has been observed in cyclist, pedestrian, and PTW rider deaths, compared to car occupant deaths.
- Since 2014, there has been a steady annual increase in the number of **seriously injured people**<sup>2</sup> in road crashes up to 2019. This was followed by a decrease in 2020 and a further increase in 2021 and 2022. An annual decrease of 14% was recorded also in 2023 and a 6% decrease in 2024.
- Contributory factors to road user fatalities in Ireland include:
  - 26% of driver fatalities (2016-2020)<sup>3</sup> with a record of their actions available were exceeding a safe speed.
  - 35% of driver fatalities (2016-2020) with a toxicology result available had a positive toxicology for alcohol<sup>4</sup>.
  - 21% of car users killed were not wearing a seat belt (2019-2023)<sup>5</sup>.

Also, based on observational and survey research:

- In 2023, about 47% of passenger car drivers on urban roads (50km/h limit) and 34% of car drivers on 80km/h roads were driving above the speed limits<sup>6</sup>.
- In 2023, 9% of motorists were using a mobile device, based on an observational survey<sup>7</sup>.

## 2.4. Road Safety Targets

Aligned with the European Commission's road safety targets, the following targets have been set in the Road Safety Strategy 2030 of Ireland:

- By 2030, a **50% reduction in fatalities**, from 144 to 72 or lower
- By 2030, a **50% reduction in serious injuries**, from 1,259 to 630 or lower

The **average number of** fatalities and serious injuries from 2017-2019 are used as baseline figures in Ireland.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.rsa.ie/about/safety-strategy-2021-2030>

<sup>2</sup> There is a break in the time series for serious injuries in the year 2014, due to a change in the way road traffic collision data was provided in Ireland (i.e., a change from a paper based to electronic system). This break does not affect the trend figures for fatalities.

<sup>3</sup> RSA analysis of coronial data for driver fatalities that occurred during 2016-2020.

<sup>4</sup> A positive toxicology for alcohol was recorded where the BAC of the deceased was >20mg alcohol per 100ml blood (or equivalent in urine/vitreous humour).

<sup>5</sup> Source: Road Traffic collision database 2025

<sup>6</sup> RSA (2024). Free Speed Survey 2023. Available at: [https://www.rsa.ie/docs/default-source/road-safety/r4.1-research-reports/safe-speeds/free-speed-survey-2023.pdf?sfvrsn=361a71ae\\_5](https://www.rsa.ie/docs/default-source/road-safety/r4.1-research-reports/safe-speeds/free-speed-survey-2023.pdf?sfvrsn=361a71ae_5)

<sup>7</sup> RSA (2024). Mobile Device Usage Observational Survey 2023. Available at: [https://www.rsa.ie/docs/default-source/road-safety/r4.1-research-reports/safe-road-use/mobile-device-usage-observational-survey-2023.pdf?sfvrsn=c6a7cad1\\_5](https://www.rsa.ie/docs/default-source/road-safety/r4.1-research-reports/safe-road-use/mobile-device-usage-observational-survey-2023.pdf?sfvrsn=c6a7cad1_5)

To further monitor road safety performance in Ireland during the first phase of the strategy implementation (2021-2024), **interim targets for 2024** were set:

- By 2024, a **15% reduction in fatalities** compared to the average number of fatalities of the period 2017-2019 (from 144 to 122 or lower).
- By 2024, a **10% reduction in serious injuries** compared to the average number of serious injuries of the period 2017-2019 (from 1,259 to 1,133 or lower).

Also, 15 key safety performance indicators (SPIs) are defined in the road safety strategy to measure and track the factors affecting road fatalities and serious injuries. No targets have been set for the SPIs.

## 2.5. Road Safety Measures

The Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030 of Ireland includes seven areas of intervention. All action plans will include actions under each of these areas. The action plan of Phase 1 includes **190 actions**, with **50 high impact actions** and **136 support actions**<sup>8</sup>. 4 additional high impact actions were introduced, following the 2023 annual conference.

**Table 15.2:** Number of road safety actions in the road safety strategic plan of Phase 1 (2021-2024)

Areas	High Impact Actions	Support Actions
1. Safe roads and roadsides	5	23
2. Safe speeds	5	6
3. Safe vehicles	5	12
4. Safe road use	18	76
5. Post-crash response	5	7
6. Safe and healthy modes of travel	6	3
7. Safe work-related road use	6	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>136</b>

## 3. Road Safety Progress

### 3.1. Road Safety Outcomes

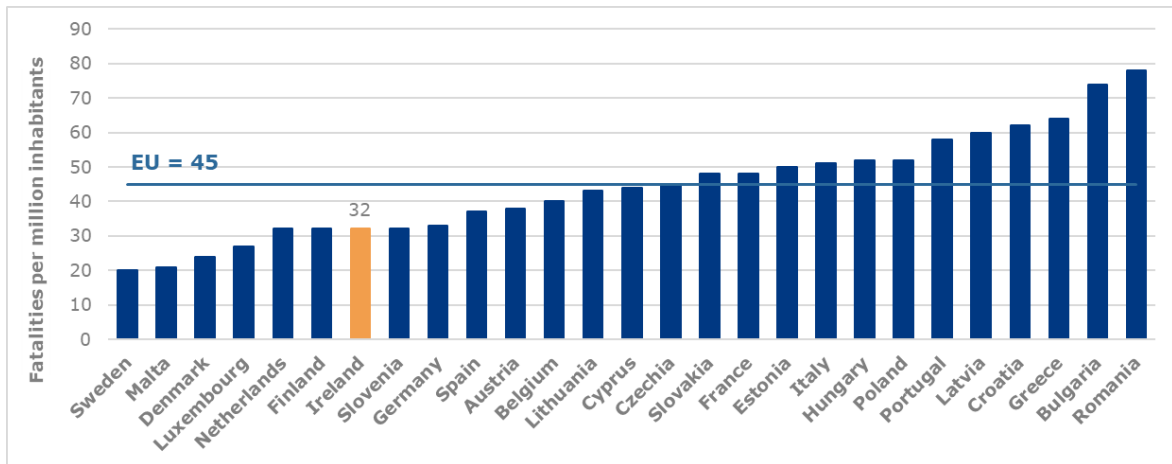
Based on preliminary data, in 2024, 171 road fatalities and 1,368 serious injuries<sup>9</sup> in road crashes were recorded in Ireland. Ireland **ranked 7<sup>th</sup> out of the 27 EU countries** in terms of the lowest rate of fatalities. In fact, 32 fatalities per million inhabitants were recorded, which is well below the EU average (45).

<sup>8</sup> RSA (2021). Our Journey Towards Vision Zero - Ireland's Government Road Safety Strategy. Phase 1 Action Plan 2021–2024. Available at:

[https://www.rsa.ie/docs/default-source/road-safety/action-plans/rsa\\_safety\\_strategy\\_action\\_plan\\_2021\\_2024\\_13th\\_jan2022\\_final\\_online.pdf?sfvrsn=67518e36\\_5](https://www.rsa.ie/docs/default-source/road-safety/action-plans/rsa_safety_strategy_action_plan_2021_2024_13th_jan2022_final_online.pdf?sfvrsn=67518e36_5)

<sup>9</sup> Source: rsa.ie

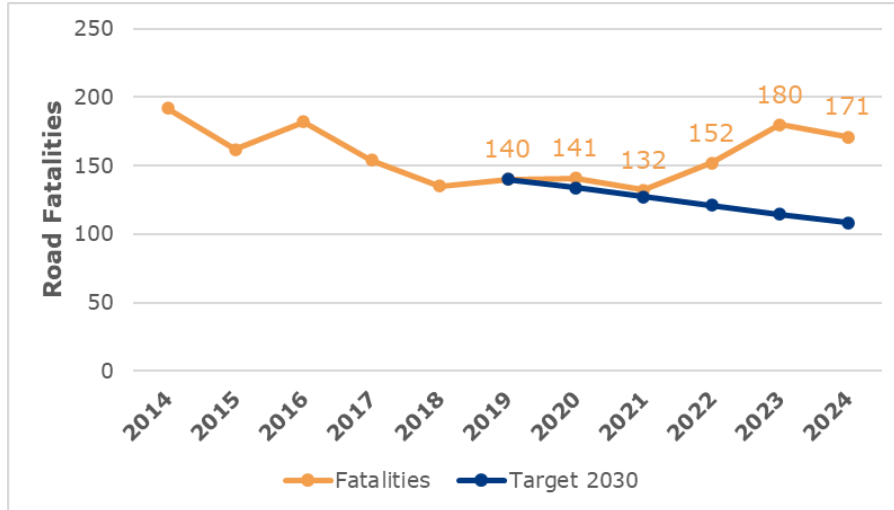
**Figure 15.1** Mortality rates by country, 2024



Sources: CARE database on road crashes; population data from Eurostat (online data code [demo\\_pjan](#)).

However, in 2024, the number of fatalities increased by 23% compared to 2019<sup>10</sup>. On the other hand, the number of serious injuries in 2024 was 9% lower than the respective figure in 2019. Thus, based on the latest available data, Ireland is currently **not in line to reach the 2030 targets, although it continues to perform better than the EU average**.

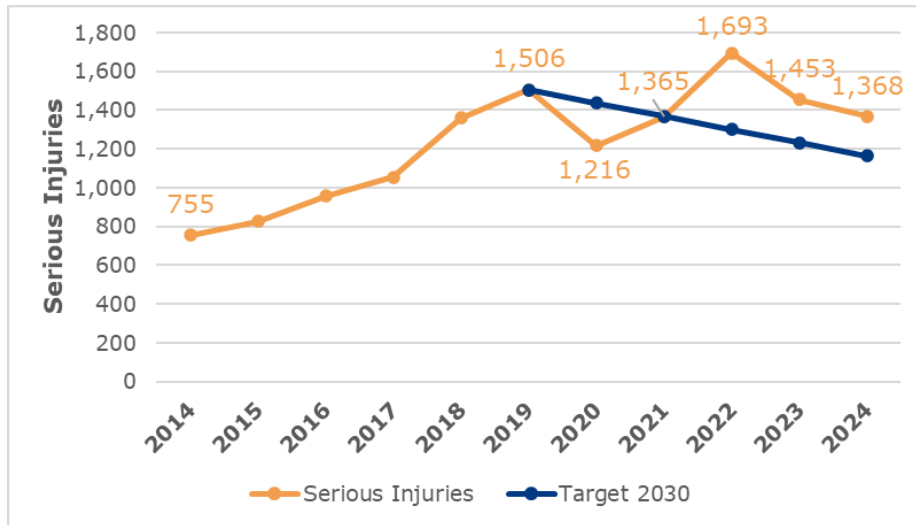
**Figure 15.2** Road fatalities and target 2030  
(Source CARE database)<sup>11</sup>



<sup>10</sup> For all Member States, 2019 has been used as the baseline year for the monitoring of 2030 targets in this report, which is used at EU level. Ireland has set the average of 2017-2019 as baseline (144 fatalities and 1,259 serious injuries). Considering the national baseline, in 2024, the observed number of fatalities was 55% higher than the target value and in 2023, the number of serious injuries was about twice higher.

<sup>11</sup> It is noted that the global COVID-19 pandemic had an impact on the CARE data for 2020 and 2021 for many European countries. Traffic volumes dropped sharply during the pandemic due to traffic restrictions, which was associated with a significant drop in road traffic crashes and fatalities.

**Figure 15.3** Serious road injuries and target 2030  
(Source: CARE database)<sup>12</sup>



In 2023, compared to the EU average, the distribution of fatalities in Ireland showed a high proportion of car occupants and fatalities occurred outside urban areas<sup>12</sup>. In fact, 47% of killed people in road crashes were car occupants in 2023 and 69% of road crash fatalities outside urban areas, on non-motorway roads. Also, the share of fatalities and serious injuries on motorways in Ireland was very low in 2023.

An overview of the evolution of road fatalities and serious injuries for the years 2019 and 2023 is provided below for specific types of roads, crashes and road users. **Serious injuries decreased in 2023** for almost all groups examined, except serious injuries outside urban areas, on non-motorway roads and among car occupants and pedestrians. The decrease in seriously injured cyclists was considerably higher than the decrease in the total number of serious injuries.

On the other hand, road **fatalities increased considerably for almost all groups** between 2019 and 2023. The number of fatalities among PTW riders increased by 63%, among pedestrians by 59% and inside urban areas by 52%.

<sup>12</sup> European Commission (2023), Country Profile Ireland. Road Safety Observatory. Brussels, European Commission, Directorate General for Transport.

**Table 15.3:** Evolution of road fatalities, 2019-2023

Fatalities	2019	2023	% in 2023	% change 2019-2023
Total road fatalities	140	180	-	<b>+29%</b>
Inside urban areas	31	47	26%	<b>+52%</b>
Outside urban areas	101	125	69%	<b>+24%</b>
Motorways	8	7	4%	<b>-13%</b>
Multi vehicle crashes <sup>13</sup>	66	70	39%	<b>+6%</b>
Car occupants	81	85	47%	<b>+5%</b>
PTW riders	16	26	14%	<b>+63%</b>
Cyclists	8	9	5%	<b>+13%</b>
Pedestrians	27	43	24%	<b>+59%</b>

**Table 15.4:** Evolution of serious injuries, 2019-2023

Serious Injuries	2019	2023	% in 2023	% change 2019-2023
Total serious injuries	1,506	1,453	-	<b>-4%</b>
Inside urban areas	811	738	51%	<b>-9%</b>
Outside urban areas	651	682	47%	<b>+5%</b>
Motorways	44	33	2%	<b>-25%</b>
Multi vehicle crashes <sup>14</sup>	870	749	52%	<b>-14%</b>
Car occupants	613	620	43%	<b>+1%</b>
PTW riders	227	175	12%	<b>-23%</b>
Cyclists	305	225	15%	<b>-26%</b>
Pedestrians	301	302	21%	<b>0%</b>

### 3.2. Road Safety Performance Indicators

Seat belt and helmet wearing rates are higher in Ireland than the EU average, while self-reported drink-driving is less frequent than at EU level. Also, the passenger car fleet is considerably younger than the EU average.

<sup>13</sup> Injuries in a collision with more than one vehicle involved which was not a hit and run collision.

<sup>14</sup> idem

**Table 15.5:** Road Safety Performance Indicators, 2022 – 2025 (Source: ERSO, Country Profiles)

	Ireland		EU	
	2022	2025	2022	2025
<b>Speeding<sup>15</sup></b>				
% of passenger cars travelling within speed limits <sup>a</sup>				
Motorways	88.4	89.0	-	-
Rural Roads	80.5	61.0	-	-
Urban Roads	25.4	71.0	-	-
<b>Seat belt &amp; CRS use rates (%) <sup>a*,b</sup></b>				
Front	95.0	95.9	93.1	92.4
Rear	75.0	97.9	75.3	69.9
Child restraint systems (roadside observations)	67.0	-	67.0	83.3
Child restraint systems (in-vehicle inspections)	/	/	-	-
<b>Helmet use rates (%) <sup>a</sup></b>				
PTW driver	98.0	99.4	97.0	97.6
PTW passenger	-	-	94.4	97.0
Cyclist	49.0	57.5	37.8	34.5
<b>DUI of Alcohol<sup>c</sup></b> (self-reported)				
% of car drivers who have driven at least once in the last 30 days over the legal limit	8.0	-	11.8	11.8
<b>Driver Distraction <sup>a</sup></b>				
% of drivers not using hand-held mobile device/phone while driving	91.0	90.1	94.8	94.5
<b>Vehicle Safety</b>				
% of new passenger cars rated with 4 EuroNCAP stars and above <sup>a</sup>	93.6	85.0	83.6	82.7
Average age of passenger car fleet (years) <sup>d</sup>	9.1	12.0	12.3	12.5

Sources: <sup>a</sup> Baseline and Trendline projects, <sup>b</sup> ETSC (2022), <sup>c</sup> ESRA3 project (2024), <sup>d</sup> ACEA (2024, 2025), Notes: \*2025 data only for weekdays

## 4. Monitoring Road Safety Strategy Implementation

### 4.1. Implementation Progress

#### *Road Safety Management*

Ireland starts from a medium level in all areas related to **road safety management** except the national road safety authority, for which the baseline is assessed as high. The Road Safety Authority (RSA) of Ireland has been active in the field of road safety since 2006, having made a significant contribution to the country's progress.

<sup>15</sup> An EU average is not available for speeding, due to different legal speed limits among countries, which does not allow for a straightforward comparison.

**Table 15.6:** Self-reported assessment of implementation progress of measures related to road safety management

B1	Road Safety Management	Baseline Assessment (2021)	Progress (2021-2024)
1	National road safety authority	high	delayed
2	National road safety budget	medium	on track
3	Road safety legislation	medium	delayed
4	National road safety observatory	medium	on track

According to the self-reported assessment, during the period 2021-2024, progress has been made in the implementation of the road safety actions related to the **national road safety budget**. Specifically, the required funding for the planned infrastructure improvements over this period is available, and the related actions are on track.

In Ireland, there is no national road safety observatory, however, activities related to data, research and monitoring have been taking place for years from the responsible bodies. All planned research and monitoring activities are well on track. Difficulties have arisen in relation to collision data sharing due to the need to ensure GDPR compliance. However, much progress has been made in 2024 to resolve the governance issues related to the sharing of the collision data.

The implementation progress of the actions for the remaining two areas of the road safety management pillar is assessed as delayed. Regarding the area of **national road safety authority**, there is a delay in the establishment of Road Safety Working Together Groups (RSTWGs) by some local authorities. Also, due to resource constraints, not all existing RSTWGs have been adequately staffed and supported to function equally effectively. Furthermore, there have been mixed levels of progress in the implementation of the National Cycle Network Plan.

As regards **road safety legislation**, not all planned legislative changes will have been implemented within the anticipated timeframes, as these procedures are proving to be more time-consuming. However, they are planned to be completed in the long-term. Thus, some actions have to be postponed until after 2025, such as the consolidation of road traffic legislation, which has now been resourced with a dedicated project team.

#### *Safe Road User Behaviour*

In relation to the pillar of **Safe Road User Behaviour**, Ireland starts from a medium level in 2021 in all road safety areas, except the area of vulnerable road users, the baseline of which is assessed as low.

**Table 15.7:** Self-reported assessment of implementation progress of measures related to road user behaviour

B2	Safe Road User Behaviour	Baseline Assessment (2021)	Progress (2021-2024)
1	Enforcement	medium	on track
2	Education	medium	on track
3	New drivers training	medium	delayed
4	Communication campaigns	medium	on track
5	Measures for vulnerable road users	low	on track
6	Measures for professional drivers	medium	delayed

Based on the self-reported assessment, during the period 2021-2024, **actions in all road safety areas are on track**, except those regarding novice drivers training and professional drivers, which have been delayed.

**Enforcement** activities (road policing and commercial vehicle/driving enforcement) have been a long tradition in Ireland. The introduction of improved roadside drug testing, improved police access to data on the roadside, and an improved penalty point system are among the highlights for the 2021-2024 phase of the strategy. The development of a national strategy for camera-based enforcement is underway, which will ensure the necessary structures, funding and governance arrangements in place to support consistent and planned rollout of camera enforcement. Also, a High-Level Strategic Oversight Group on road policing has been established.

Furthermore, **education activities** have been ongoing for a long time in Ireland. The related road safety actions include school programmes, and collaboration with other organisations, particularly in the area of driving for work, which are well on track. In 2024, the Road Safety Authority launched a new, optional road safety programme for schools to deliver to students generally between the ages of 15 and 16. During the initial rollout phase of the new programme in autumn 2024, demand for the programme from schools far exceeded the target and 149 teachers representing 134 schools have now been trained to deliver the content compared to a target of 30 schools..

**Communication activities** are an area of road safety with a long history as well. Evidence-based communication campaigns are used to ensure that the right group of road users are targeted, at the right time, using the most effective communication channels.

Activities for **vulnerable road users** are also on track and include a combination of education/awareness campaigns, improvements to active travel infrastructure, use of CCTV on buses, improved bus stops and cycling training programmes. More attention and investment are devoted to the active mobility and public transport, which is also coordinated with climate action efforts.

On the other hand, the implementation of actions related to the **training and testing** of new drivers has have been delayed. The driver training curriculum needs to be updated and strengthened, but this has encountered delays due to funding constraints. Similarly, the incidence of learners holding a third or subsequent learner permit remains high. Again, partially

due to funding constraints, to develop the required systems to tackle this issue meaningfully, progress on this action has been delayed. It is noted, however, that fees for a range of services offered by the Road Safety Authority were increased with effect from 1 January 2025, the first such increases since 2012. The additional revenue generated by these increases should help to alleviate some of the financial constraints faced in recent years and allow for increased investment and pace of delivery in relation to both the curriculum review and incidence of multiple learner permits.

Delay is also reported in the implementation of measures relating to **professional drivers**. The road safety strategy includes mainly legislation and enforcement actions for this area. However, some activities had to be deferred to post 2025 due to time or resource issues. For example, Action 116 requires the examination of the feasibility of creating a register of disqualified commercial drivers' licences, that will be accessible to employers. However, this had to be deferred to post 2025, due to the time and resources needed to fully assess the legal requirements to support it. Also under Action 160, recommendations for legislative changes in relation to maximum driving and minimum resting times for professional drivers were made. The paper with the recommendations has been submitted to the Department of Transport for consideration and their agreement is pending. A related project is likely to be included in Phases 2 or 3 of the Action Plan.

### *Safe Speeds*

Regarding the **Safe Speeds** pillar, based on the self-reported assessment, Ireland starts from a medium level in all related road safety areas, except the update of speed limits. Actions of all areas are on track, except those regarding the update of speed limits, which have been delayed, mainly due to the time needed to introduce legislation for the speed limit review. The necessary legislation to implement safer default speed limits on rural roads, national secondary roads and urban roads was enacted in April 2024 and will now be implemented in phases, starting with the speed limit on many rural roads changing to 60km/h in early 2025. As local authorities have significant devolved power in respect of speed limits within their areas, making changes to speed limits across all counties has proven to be a complex and time-consuming process, but experience gained from the change of default limits on rural roads will inform subsequent changes.

**Table 15.8:** Self-reported assessment of implementation progress of measures related to safe speeds

B3	Safe Speeds	Baseline Assessment (2021)	Progress (2021-2024)
1	Update of speed limits	low	delayed
2	Enforcing speed limits	medium	on track
3	Campaigns on speeding	medium	on track
4	Monitoring speeding	medium	on track

In terms of enforcement and monitoring of speeding, GoSafe speed vans have been in place for many years. This is expanded to trials of average speed cameras under the umbrella of a national camera strategy, which is currently being prepared. The number of police checks is to be increased since April 2024, a new policy has been in effect requiring all uninformed members of the national police service to conduct 30 minutes of high-visibility roads policing per shift, subject to operational demands.

Also, **communication activities concerning speeding** have been conducted for many years and they are included in the communication strategy, ensuring such communications are well targeted, and evidence based.

### *Safe Roads*

Regarding the **Safe Roads** pillar, the baseline is assessed as low for all road safety areas, except the motorways safety management and road design standards, which start from a medium level.

**Table 15.9:** Self-reported assessment of implementation progress of measures related to safe roads

B4	Safe Roads	Baseline Assessment (2021)	Progress (2021-2024)
1	City mobility & safety plans	low	on track
2	Urban infrastructure for VRUs	low	on track
3	Rural roads safety interventions	low	on track
4	Motorways safety management	medium	delayed
5	Road design standards	medium	on track
6	Road safety audit and inspection	low	on track

During the period 2021-2024, all actions of this pillar were on track, except those related to the motorways safety management, which have been delayed.

More specifically, each city develops its own **development plan for transport and mobility**, with focus being given on the improvement of infrastructure for active travel and public transport in order to support safe active travel according to the Road Safety Strategy and the Climate Action Plan. Also, Action 58 requires a review of the effectiveness of the Heavy Good Vehicle (HGV) ban in Dublin City with a view to consider similar workable initiatives in other urban cities. Although discussions on the success of the Dublin scheme have been held, it cannot be replicated in the short and medium term in other major cities due to the resources required.

The actions concerning the **urban infrastructure for VRUs** are on track and include development of active travel infrastructure and plans, awareness campaigns and community engagement.

**Safety interventions on rural roads** are mainly focused on the improvement of rural bus stops and engagement with local groups/clubs to raise awareness on road safety issues.

Regarding the area of **road design standards** of this pillar, a design manual for urban roads and streets was already in place before the start of the current strategy. Also, a cycle design manual has been completed since 2021. Training of engineers and project managers on application of the guidelines is ongoing.

Also, a safety rating indicator for the road network is under development, which will be exploited for **road safety audits and inspections**.

Finally, as regards the **management of motorways safety**, the starting level is assessed as medium, with motorway safety measures having been in place for many years. The road safety strategy focuses mainly on communication campaigns on motorway safety measures. However, these campaigns require cross-organisational funding, which is the main reason for the delay in their implementation.

### *Safe Vehicles*

In relation to the pillar of **Safe Vehicles**, Ireland starts from a low level in all related areas, except the technical vehicle inspections. During the period 2021-2024, all related actions were on track.

**Table 15.10:** Self-reported assessment of implementation progress of measures related to safe vehicles

B5	Safe Vehicles	Baseline Assessment (2021)	Progress (2021-2024)
1	Fleet renewal	low	on track
2	Promotion of ADAS	low	on track
3	Technical vehicle inspection	medium	on track
4	Automation preparation	low	on track

For the fleet **renewal** and **promotion of ADAS**, a focus has been given on promoting Euro NCAP 5-star rating and new technologies in vehicles through campaigns.

As regards **technical vehicle inspections**, the road safety strategy focuses on strengthening the vehicle testing regime, for example, testing ADAS technologies, increasing the frequency of testing of cars less than 10 years old, examining the feasibility of testing motorbikes and agricultural vehicles. It is also planned to deliver a system allowing a vehicle’s testing history to be available online, however, the required resources for its development are not available.

Concerning the area of **automation preparation**, the development of a Strategy for Connected and Automated Mobility is underway.

### *Post Crash Care*

Regarding the **Post-Crash Care** pillar, Ireland starts from a self-reported low level in 2021 in the area of reducing Emergency Medical Services (EMS) reaction time, while from a medium level in the area of supporting injured people. All actions of this pillar are on track.

**Table 15.11:** Self-reported assessment of implementation progress of measures related to post crash care

B6	Post Crash Care	Baseline Assessment (2021)	Progress (2021-2024)
1	Reduce EMS reaction time	low	on track
2	Support people injured	medium	on track

Regarding the **reduction of EMS reaction time**, a working group has been established to make recommendations on improving overall emergency response time. Additionally, a pre-hospital

trauma triage tool has been developed and is being rolled out to ensure patients with major trauma are brought to a major Trauma Centre if within 45 minutes of one. Trauma facilities across Ireland are also being improved.

For the **support of injured people** following road crashes, clinical pathways to rehabilitation for trauma patients are already in place. The pre-hospital trauma triage tool, mentioned above, is being rolled out. Also, the Rehabilitation Needs Assessment and Rehabilitation Prescription have been implemented at the Major Trauma Centres. Work on providing emotional and psychological care for victims, families and emergency responders is under way.

## 4.2. Best Practices

A series of best practices is available for Ireland:

### Road Safety Management:

- An inter-agency **Legislative Enabler Group** has been set up to ensure the promotion of cross-cutting legislative issues affecting action progress. The work of this group facilitated the Road Traffic Act 2024, which sought to target dangerous driving behaviours in a systemic manner.
- An inter-agency **Data Enabler Group** was put in place to resolve cross-organisational data -sharing issues, with its work successfully delivering an agreement with the national Data Protection Commission on the sharing of collision data and the necessary legislative changes to effect that agreement now underway.

### Safe Road User Behaviour:

- Legislation to be enacted to ensure that **multiple penalty points** are issued where more than one offence is detected.
- Ireland's state-funded bus company applies **random alcohol and drug testing** to all its drivers. An approved alcohol interlock system is now available on the Irish market.
- The use of Automatic Number-Plate Recognition (ANPR) technology and a Mobility App ensure that the **police service has increased data** available at the roadside, including access to vehicle taxation, insurance and driver disqualification information.
- “**Driving for Work**” education material is made available through an online platform on which the Irish Road Safety Authority, the Health and Safety Authority and “an Garda Síochána” (Ireland’s national police and security service) collaborated. Also, annual conferences are provided by this group.
- A multi-annual **Communication Strategy** has been developed to ensure that communications are targeted, and evidence based in the medium term.
- The **national cycling training programme** reached 40,000 participants in 2024, including 9,000 participants from schools in disadvantaged areas and 1,000 participants with disabilities.

### Safe Speeds:

- A cross-sectoral **working group** was established early 2024 to take forward the **speed limit review** as soon as possible, with the legislation enacted in April 2024.
- A safety **Camera Strategy** is being prepared jointly with key stakeholders to ensure that camera enforcement will take place in a holistic manner. This includes trials of average speed cameras in various locations around the country.

### Safe Roads:

- Dublin City **diverted HGV traffic from the city centre** via a tunnel. Local authorities are provided with templates to allow them to create their own road safety plans which mirror the national road safety strategy.
- “**Safe Routes to School**” programme ensures a holistic, stakeholder-led approach to assessing and improving safety at the front of school gates.
- **Partnering with local/rural sports clubs** to raise awareness of road safety issues.
- A **graduate certificate course on road design** is developed.

### 4.3. Gaps

The main gap reported in the implementation of Ireland’s Road Safety Action Plan (Phase 1) is **funding constraints**. This was reported as the main reason for delaying or deferring various actions across all pillars, including:

- the establishment of RSTWGs in several local regions and the appropriate staffing of the existing RSTWGs,
- updating the driver curriculum or addressing multiple learner permits,
- implementation of city safety plans,
- expanding the active travel infrastructure,
- development of an online system that allows the access to vehicle testing history,
- further work to provide emotional and psychological care for victims, families and emergency responders.

Also, **funding constraints affect the depth and breadth of some interventions** applied, such as educational initiatives and communication activities. Following once-off measures in 2023 and 2024 to increase investment in these interventions, specific funding has been ringfenced in 2025 to sustain increased levels of education and public awareness building.

Another important gap reported in the implementation of some measures concerns **legislative changes**. Where legislative changes were required, it proved to be a time-consuming process which caused delays in progressing the implementation of specific areas of the strategy. Examples of gaps related to legislation concern the data sharing process, with the relevant national legislation being a barrier to sharing crash data with the responsible bodies for the implementation of interventions. In addition, the application, use and testing of automated vehicles depends on the existence of relevant legislation at national level.

Both the above-mentioned gaps (resource constraints and legislation) are also mentioned in the **area of enforcement**. Available resources affect the extent of technology used to facilitate enforcement. Also, the recruitment of additional personnel for road policing is needed and progressing, while the 30-minute measure for all uniformed members of the police will further contribute to visibility. Furthermore, legislative changes need to be made to allow for the extended use of a camera-based enforcement for traffic violations other than speeding, and significant resources, particularly with regard to the technology, background support and enforcement staff are required. Another gap referred in this area is the capacity of courts system to support efficiently enforcement activities.

Moreover, the **legislative changes depend in some cases on the available resources**. For example, the examination of developing a register of disqualified commercial drivers’ licences, which will be accessible to employers, has been deferred to post 2025 due to the time and

resources needed to fully assess the legal requirements.

Finally, a reported gap in the pillar of post-crash care is the limited number of Major Trauma Centres in Ireland at present.

## 5. Conclusions and Recommendations

In the Road Safety Strategy 2030 of Ireland, **targets of halving the numbers of road fatalities and serious injuries by 2030** were set. Interim targets for 2024 were also included, with the average of the 2017-2019 figures being used as the baseline. The Road Safety Strategy includes three phases of action plans (Phase 1 2021-2024; Phase 2 2025-2027; Phase 3 2028-2030). In the action plan of Phase 1, 190 actions (54 high impact actions and 136 support actions) divided in 7 road safety areas have been planned.

In 2024, Ireland **was among the best performing countries in the European Union** in terms of fatality rates (7<sup>th</sup> lowest fatality rate). However, between 2019 and 2024, the number of fatalities increased by 23%, while the number of serious injuries decreased by 9%.

Regarding implementation of the road safety actions foreseen in the national road safety strategy for the period 2021-2024, **progress has been made in most road safety areas** based on the self-reported assessment, while some delays mainly due to legislation and resource constraints are reported. Out of the 26 road safety areas examined, 20 are well on track, while the remaining 6 have been delayed.

Finally, in terms of **number of fatalities and serious injuries, Ireland is currently not in line to meet the targets set for 2030**. The possible way forward to address this could be by:

- accelerating the implementation of the delayed measures,
- identifying relevant actions in the phase 2 action plan, ensuring that the focus is on transformative actions that are resourced adequately to deliver in the timeline proposed.