

Press Release

DEKRA Road Safety Report 2025 "The Changing Face of Mobility"



Progress achieved in road safety over decades to spur on further efforts

- ▶ DEKRA tests highlight development of vehicle technology
- ▶ Important regulations: from seat belt requirements to cell-phone bans
- ▶ Commitment to road safety can only be successful as an ongoing process

Over the past 100 years, road mobility has undergone an enormous transformation, with major advances being made in both vehicle technology and road safety. DEKRA does not see this as a reason to be complacent, but rather as an incentive to continue its efforts. "The successes are undisputed. And yet, politicians, associations, and organizations must work together more than ever to ensure safe mobility for everyone at all times," said Jann Fehlauer, Executive Vice President of DEKRA Group, regarding the DEKRA Road Safety Report 2025 "The Changing Face of Mobility". To mark DEKRA's 100th anniversary, the 18th report in the series highlights striking developments over the past decades. At the same time, it makes it clear that there is still a lot to do. There is still a long way to go before the "Vision Zero" goal of road traffic with as few fatalities and serious injuries as possible is achieved.

From the first simple automobiles to highly automated and connected vehicles, mobility reflects technological progress, social change, and global challenges — especially with regard to road safety. In view of the nearly 1.2 million traffic fatalities worldwide each year, the 4th Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety held in Marrakesh, Morocco, in February 2025 once again urged that measures to reduce the number of road traffic victims be further intensified.

DEKRA, too, supports this appeal: "We have been committed to safe mobility for 100 years — that was the impetus behind our founding and remains in our organization's DNA to this day," said Fehlauer. In his view, particular attention must be paid to the most vulnerable and unprotected people participating in traffic on foot, on bicycles, or on motorized two-wheelers. According to WHO figures, they account for more than half of all road traffic deaths. From a global perspective, much remains to be done to improve road safety, especially in low-income countries.

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Important parameters for fewer road accident victims

As the DEKRA Road Safety Report 2025 shows, the number of road deaths rose steadily in many countries until the 1970s and even beyond. In 1972, for example, Germany recorded more than 21,000 road deaths. Until then, road safety issues had not played a major role. Since then, the number of road accident victims has been declining, more or less steadily and more or less significantly, especially in many European countries.

According to preliminary figures from the EU Commission, the EU countries recorded 19,800 road deaths in 2024. Compared to the dismal peak figures of the 1970s, this represents a decline of 70 percent. In addition, there are already numerous cities around the world that have had no traffic fatalities for at least one or even several consecutive years. This is shown by the interactive DEKRA Vision Zero Map, which was first presented in 2014 and has been consistently updated ever since.

A wide variety of measures have contributed to this positive development at the international, national, and regional levels, most notably the mandatory use of seat belts, speed limits, bans on driving under the influence of alcohol and drugs, bans on the use of cell phones while driving, mandatory helmet use on motorcycles, and the mandatory use of child restraint systems. Looking to the future, the DEKRA Road Safety Report 2025 also addresses intelligent networking and digitalization, which will play an increasingly important role in improving road safety.

Illuminating crash and driving tests

In order to demonstrate the further of the passive safety system in cars over the decades, DEKRA conducted a crash test with a VW Golf II — built between 1983 and 1992 — for the Road Safety Report and compared the results with a Euro NCAP test of the VW Golf VIII (since 2019). The result: while a head-on collision at a speed of 50 km/h with 40 percent overlap would have been almost impossible to survive in the Golf II, occupants of the Golf VIII would likely have escaped with minor injuries, being able to get out of the car on their own.

In addition, numerous comparative driving tests were carried out at the DEKRA Lausitzring — also with a VW Golf II first registered in 1989 and a VW Golf VIII first registered in 2024. The tests showed significant improvements in the modern vehicle, including braking distance, cornering stability, steering forces, and lighting.

The work is far from over

For Jann Fehlauer, the experience of the past decades shows one thing above all: “Road safety work must not be a short-term campaign, but is only successful as a permanent process,” emphasized the DEKRA road safety expert. In order to prevent accidents or mitigate their consequences, it is important to combine preventive measures in the areas of technology, organization, and infrastructure.

According to Kristian Schmidt, EU Coordinator for Road Safety, it must be ensured “that safety does not become a privilege of the happy few, but that equitable access to safe mobility solutions is guaranteed for all.” As Schmidt writes in his contribution to the DEKRA Road Safety Report, the key areas of road safety tomorrow include the integration of artificial intelligence and machine learning into effective predictive safety systems and support for the transition to zero-emission vehicles without compromising safety standards.

Antonio Avenoso, Executive Director of the European Transport Safety Council (ETSC), writes in his statement in the report: “Financing at national level is also essential for creating and maintaining safe transportation systems that protect lives, promote economic prosperity and enhance overall quality of life. Governments must allocate and invest sufficient resources to address the complex challenges of road safety effectively.”

The DEKRA Road Safety Report 2025 “The Changing Face of Mobility” is available for download online at www.dekra-roadsafety.com. All previous reports since 2008 are also available there.

Ten DEKRA demands for more road safety

- Road traffic requires **responsible conduct** by all road users in accordance with rules and in **a spirit of partnership**.
- Efforts to improve road safety must be strengthened, especially **in low- and middle-income countries**.
- Road safety work must aim more at reducing the number of **serious injuries**, as well as cutting the number of traffic fatalities.
- Especially **dangerous behaviors** such as driving under the influence of alcohol and drugs, being distracted by smartphones, and speeding must be strictly prohibited, monitored, and punished effectively.
- As the **number one lifesaver**, **seat belts** should be used on all journeys; children should be secured by appropriate restraint systems for their size and age.

- All occupants of motorized and non-motorized two-wheeled vehicles should always wear **suitable helmets**.
- **Ongoing road safety education** is the best form of prevention – it should start as early as possible and address all road user groups through to old age.
- The **working order of the mechanical and electronic components** of vehicle safety systems must be ensured throughout the life of the vehicle. This also applies to the aspect of cyber security.
- The scope of **periodical technical inspection** of motor vehicles should be adjusted accordingly on a regular basis. In addition, testing organizations require regulated access to original vehicle safety data.
- When constructing new roads, especially in rural areas, or when modifying existing roads, the priority must be to ensure that the roads are **self-explanatory**, with a **roadside environment that forgives error**.



About DEKRA

For 100 years, DEKRA has been a trusted name in safety. Founded in 1925 with the original goal of improving road safety through vehicle inspections, DEKRA has grown to become the world's largest independent, non-listed expert organization in the field of testing, inspection, and certification. Today, as a global partner, the company supports its customers with comprehensive services and solutions to drive safety and sustainability forward—fully aligned with DEKRA's anniversary motto, "Securing the Future." In 2024, DEKRA generated revenue of 4.3 billion euros. Around 48,000 employees are providing qualified and independent expert services in approximately 60 countries across five continents. DEKRA holds a Platinum rating from EcoVadis, placing it among the top 1% of the world's most sustainable companies.