ESCAP
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

STATUS OF ROAD SAFETY IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION 2024

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United Nations publication issued by the Sustainable Transport Section, Transport Division, ESCAP.

Cover design credit: Mr. Sélim Denoux, Research Assistant, ESCAP. The cover image was created using Adobe Creative Cloud, Midjourney and Canva in October 2024.

Acknowledgements

This report was prepared by the Sustainable Transportation Section, Transport Division, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).

The preparation of the report was led and coordinated by Ishtiaque Ahmed, Economic Affairs Officer, Sustainable Transport Section. Additionally, Nabila Imam, Yuhan Xiao, and Jenny Yamamoto supported the collection and analysis of data and drafting of the report.

The report was prepared under the overall management of Thanattaporn Rasamit, Chief, Sustainable Transport Section, and Weimin Ren, Director of Transport Division.

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Executive Summary

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), approximately 1.19 million deaths were attributed to road traffic accidents in 2021, yielding a global mortality rate of about 15 per 100,000 inhabitants.[1] A substantial proportion of these fatalities occurred in upper- and lower-middle-income countries, disproportionately affecting vulnerable groups such as children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities.[2]

Road safety remains a critical challenge for sustainable development in the Asia-Pacific region, where one person dies on the roads every 44 seconds. ESCAP calculations based on data from the Global Status Report on Road Safety published by the WHO in 2023 revealed that 59 percent of global road fatalities took place in this region. Although road fatalities declined by 7 percent between 2016 and 2021, the fatality rate in 2021 was 15.15 per 100,000 inhabitants, slightly higher than the global average of 15.05. Over 98 percent of these deaths occurred in low- and middle-income countries, with vulnerable road users (VRUs) such as motorcyclists, pedestrians, and cyclists accounting for 66.54 percent of fatalities.[3]

International commitments to road safety are encapsulated in Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 3 and 11, particularly Target 3.6, which aims to halve global road traffic deaths and injuries by 2030. This goal was reaffirmed by UN General Assembly Resolution 74/299, designating 2021–2030 as the Second Decade of Action for Road Safety.[4] To meet this target, the Asia-Pacific region must reduce road traffic fatalities by an average of 7.41 percent annually from 2021 to 2030, as indicated by the latest WHO data.[5]

The region's diverse socioeconomic conditions, varied transportation patterns, and rapid urbanization create unique challenges for road safety. It is essential to adopt strategies that address these dynamic changes and facilitate timely updates to road safety legislation. This report, Status of Road Safety in the Asia-Pacific Region 2024, provides a comprehensive analysis of road safety trends, assessing the current state of road traffic fatalities and progress on key safety legislation across the region. Utilizing the latest data, the report presents a country-wise breakdown of road safety performance, focusing on income categories, regional and subregional levels, and the safety of vulnerable road users.

Several key recommendations are proposed to advance road safety in the coming decade, including: (1) emphasizing the protection of vulnerable road users; (2) reinforcing legislative frameworks; (3) adopting and strengthening the Safe System Approach; (4) advancing road infrastructure; (5) securing funding for road safety initiatives; (6) fostering regional and international cooperation; and (7) improving data quality for effective road safety policies.

[1] World Health Organization. (2023). Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023.
2 Ibid.
3 ESCAP analysis based on the data from different editions of the “Global Status Reports on Road Safety” published by the World Health Organization (WHO).
4 General Assembly resolution 74/299
5 ESCAP analysis based on the data from different editions of the “Global Status Reports on Road Safety” published by the World Health Organization (WHO).

The report highlights the importance of adopting and reinforcing the Safe System Approach, in alignment with global frameworks such as the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021–2030 and the UN Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Target 3.6 on reducing road traffic deaths and injuries. In conclusion, the report calls for further research, policy innovation, and community engagement to enhance enforcement effectiveness, ensuring sustained progress toward safer roads in the Asia-Pacific region.

1 Facing the Unique Challenges of the Asia-Pacific Region

Introduction to the Global Road Safety Crisis

The World Health Organization's alarming statistics from 2021 serve as a stark reminder of the global crisis in road safety. Approximately 1.19 million people were reported to have lost their lives due to road traffic accidents that year, illustrating a significant public health issue with a mortality rate of about 15 per 100,000 people[6]. This staggering number of deaths places a considerable burden on societies, affecting socio-economic conditions, inclusivity, and various other dimensions. The crisis is projected to escalate, with an expected 13 million deaths and 500 million injuries over the next decade[7]. This projection is not only alarming due to the sheer numbers but also because it signifies a major impediment to sustainable development, particularly in low and middle-income countries where 92 per cent of these deaths occur[8]. The data reflects a dire situation for vulnerable populations, including children, the elderly, and individuals with disabilities, underscoring the critical need for comprehensive road safety measures to achieve broader societal goals such as health, climate action, equity, and prosperity.

The Asia-Pacific Region: A Focus on Unique Challenges

Within the context of global road safety, the Asia-Pacific region presents unique challenges that necessitate special attention. According to the latest data, the region accounts for a significant portion of the world's road traffic deaths, with the Asia and Pacific region accounting for 59 per cent of global road traffic deaths.[9] More alarmingly, 55 per cent of these deaths occurred in lower-middle-income countries within the region.[10] This staggering number of deaths places a considerable burden on societies, affecting socio-economic conditions, inclusivity, and various other dimensions. Road safety has been linked with a wide range of social and economic dimensions, including public health, poverty, equity, the environment, employment, education, gender equality, and the sustainability of communities.

Consequently, road safety is no longer seen as an isolated public health issue but as an integral part of development challenges. The Asia-Pacific's road safety challenge is further compounded by its diverse socio-economic landscape and reliance on road transport amid rapid urbanization. The notable proportion of deaths among motorized two- and three-wheeler users underscores the need for region-specific road safety

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[6] *World Health Organization. (2023). Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023.*
7 Ibid.
8 Ibid.
[9] *ESCAP analysis based on the data from the Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023, WHO.*
[10] *Ibid.*

strategies. The landscape of road safety in the Asia-Pacific is also significantly shaped by technological advancements and societal changes. Innovations such as the rise of electric vehicles and the impact of global events like the COVID-19 pandemic have introduced new dynamics into road safety considerations. These factors necessitate adaptive and resilient road safety strategies that can effectively address the changing patterns of transportation and societal norms.

Picture 1. Festival period motorcycle safety is a major challenge in Thailand. Credit: Ishtiaque Ahmed, PhD, Hua Hin, Thailand.

Aligning International Commitments with Regional Realities

Addressing the issue of road safety has become a priority for policymakers, governments, and international organizations worldwide. The incorporation of road safety into the Sustainable Development Goals signifies that sustainable development and well-being are not possible without significantly reducing road traffic deaths and serious injuries. Specifically, SDG Target 3.6 states, 'By 2030, halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents.' Furthermore, SDG 11.2 aims to 'By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible, and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities, and older persons.' Meanwhile, General Assembly resolution 74/299 on Improving Global Road Safety (A/RES/74/299) sets a target to reduce road deaths and serious injuries by 50 per cent by the end of 2030, introducing specific measures such as the Safe System Approach (SSA).

Towards a Safer Asia-Pacific

The pervasive impact of road transportation systems, whether through their presence or absence of safety, extends across a broad spectrum of societal needs. The issue of road safety has become a priority for policymakers, governments, and international organizations worldwide. Road safety is no longer seen as an isolated public health and safety initiative but as part of a broader range of social efforts, from business enterprises to humanitarian campaigns, underscoring its integral role in societal progress and well-being.

This may help explain why the *global trend* in road traffic deaths has been downward over the period 2010 to 2021.[11] Drawing on WHO's Global Health Observatory database for the period from 2010 to 2021,[12] this report provides a comprehensive overview of the status of road safety in the Asia and Pacific region. This report delves into how technological and societal shifts present both challenges and opportunities for enhancing road safety in the Asia-Pacific, emphasizing the need for ongoing research, policy innovation, and community engagement to navigate these changes successfully.

Picture 2. Use of an appropriate helmet by motorcyclist is a major factor in Lao PDR. Credit: Ishtiaque Ahmed, PhD, Luang Prabang, Lao PDR.

This section emphasizes the importance of addressing these challenges through a comprehensive analysis that considers the region's unique socio-economic conditions, geographical diversity, and prevalent transportation habits.

The following section of this report provides an in-depth look at the state of road safety across the ESCAP region. It describes the major trends in road traffic deaths and death rates at the regional and subregional levels, considered income categories, and then presents the latest data on genders and vulnerable road users, including motorized two- and three-wheel vehicle drivers and riders, pedestrians, and cyclists.

The subsequent section provides an in-depth analysis of road safety legislation and enforcement across the diverse

[11] *World Health Organization. (2023). Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023.*
[12] *See Appendix A for the full list of ESCAP Member States that provided data to the WHO for the 2023 Global Status Report on Road Safety (WHO, 2023).*

countries within the Asia-Pacific region. Finally, the concluding section synthesizes the key findings from the analysis of road safety in the Asia-Pacific region and provides actionable policy recommendations to address the identified challenges. The report concludes by emphasizing that a multi-faceted, coordinated approach is essential for making significant strides in road safety in the Asia-Pacific region.

The "Status of Road Safety in the Asia-Pacific Region 2024" is based on the latest data and research, offering insights into the factors influencing road safety outcomes and identifying areas where improvements are needed. It underscores the urgent need for a coordinated and sustained effort to address road safety challenges. While progress has been made in some areas, the report calls for renewed commitment from governments, regional organizations, and other stakeholders to reduce road traffic injuries and fatalities, ultimately striving for safer roads across the entire region. It is hoped that this report can contribute to the evidence base on the best approaches to improving the region’s road safety record.

2 Road Safety Trends in the Asia-Pacific Region

2.1 Regional and Subregional Trends in Road Traffic Deaths

Regional and Sub-regional Overview of Road Safety

In absolute numbers, the Asia-Pacific region represented just under 60 per cent of the global population and accounted for 59 per cent of global road traffic deaths.[13] As Figure 2.1 shows, the region as a whole exhibited a steady reduction in terms of the absolute number of road traffic fatalities after 2016. This suggests that the aggregate number of road traffic deaths has been on a downward trend even taking into consideration the impact of COVID-19 in 2020 and 2021, when governments imposed travel restrictions and many people voluntarily reduced their travel.

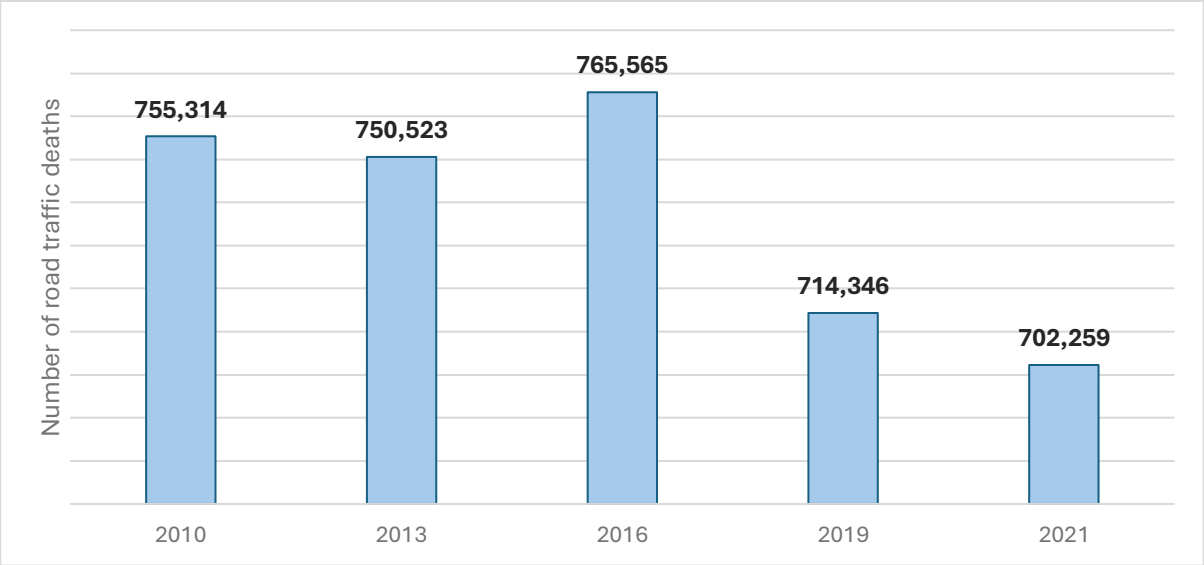


Figure 2.1 Estimated number of road traffic deaths in the Asia-Pacific region, (2010-2021)
Source: ESCAP analysis based on the data from different editions of the "Global Status Reports on Road Safety" published by the World Health Organization (WHO).

A breakdown by subregion reveals that in 2021, the highest number of deaths occurred in South and South-West Asia, followed by East and North-East Asia, South-East Asia, North and Central Asia, and the Pacific subregion.[14]

Amidst global population growth, the ESCAP region has exhibited concerning trends in road safety, as highlighted by the 2021 comparison of population shares and road traffic fatalities. Although the ESCAP region accounts for 58.62% of the world's population (Figure 2.2), it also represents 59.01% of global road traffic deaths (Figure 2.3), indicating a proportionate alignment between population and fatalities. This data underscores the inadequacy of current road safety measures in effectively reducing fatalities, posing a significant challenge to achieving the target set by UN Resolution

[13] *ESCAP analysis based on the data from the Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023, WHO.*
[14] *Ibid*

A/RES/74/299, which seeks a 50% reduction in road traffic deaths by 2030. The variation in road traffic fatality rates across ESCAP sub-regions further emphasizes the seriousness of the issue. A comparison of road traffic death rates (per 100,000 inhabitants) between 2010 and 2021 reveals both global patterns and regional disparities within the ESCAP region. While the global rate saw a slight decrease from 18.35 to 15.05, the ESCAP region also experienced a decline, from 18.00 to 15.15, closely mirroring global trends (Figure 2.4).

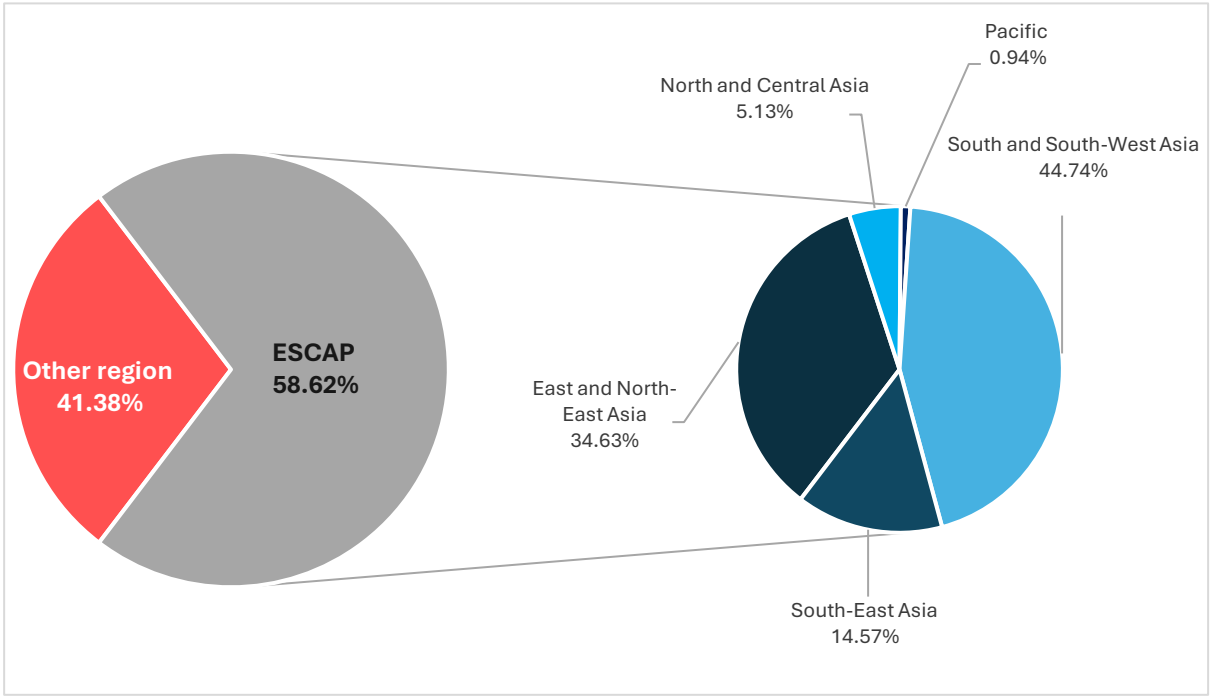


Figure 2.2 Proportion of population by ESCAP subregions, 2021

Source : UNE population data portal.

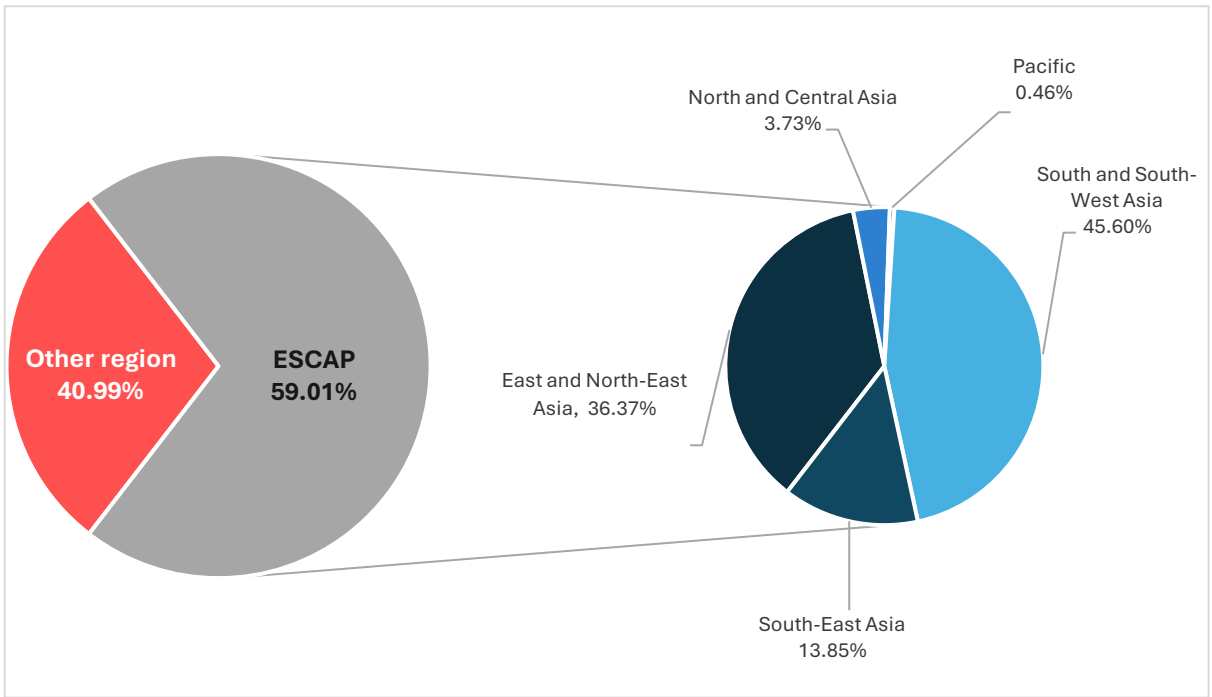


Figure 2.3 Proportion of road traffic deaths by ESCAP subregions, 2021

Source: ESCAP analysis based on the data from the Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023, WHO.

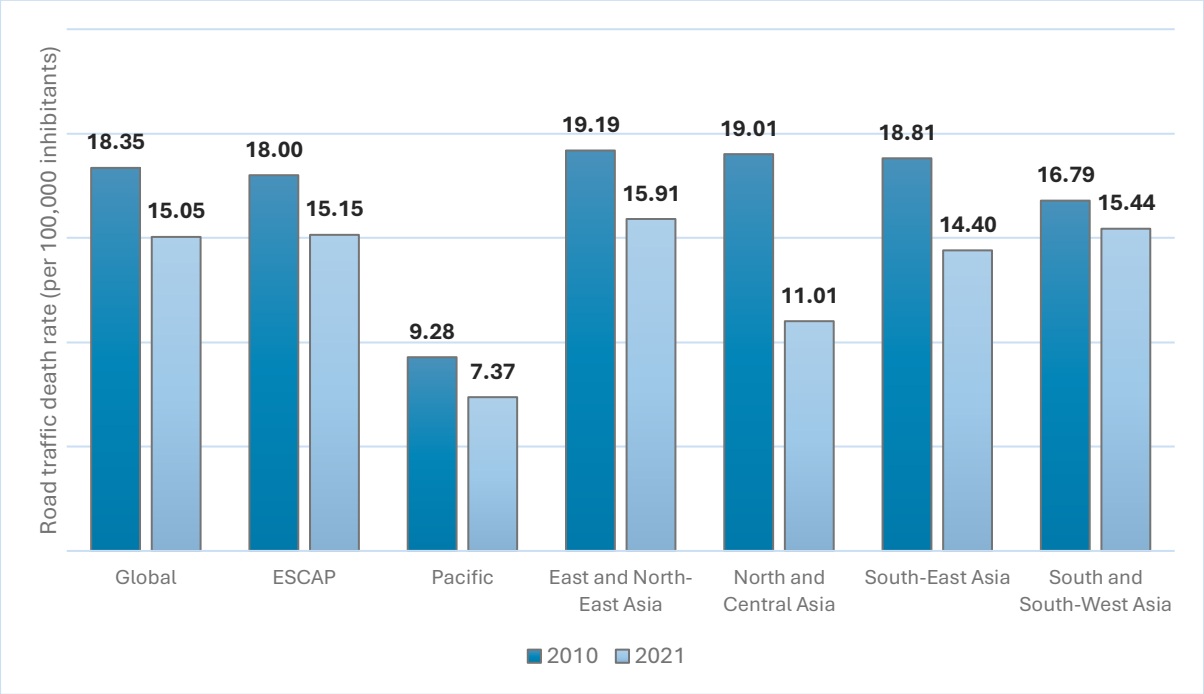


Figure 2.4 Comparison of road traffic death rates per 100,000 inhabitants (2010-2021) by ESCAP subregions

Source: ESCAP analysis based on the data from the Global Status Report on Road Safety 2013 (for 2010 data) and Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023 (for 2021 data), WHO, respectively.

South and South-West Asia: The South and South-West Asia subregion accounted for 44.74 per cent of the region's population but 45.60 per cent of road traffic deaths. The number of deaths in the South and South-West Asia subregion fell in 2019 and rose again in 2021. India accounted for roughly 68 per cent of road traffic deaths in this subregion, while having around 68 per cent of the subregion's total population. In 2021, the South and South-West Asia subregion saw a modest reduction in the road traffic death rate, falling from 16.79 to 15.44.

East and North-East Asia: East and North-East Asia accounted for 34.63 per cent of the population but 36.37 per cent of road traffic deaths. this subregion shows a gradual but persistent downward trend since 2010. Due in part to the size of its population (about 89 per cent of the subregion), China accounted for 97 per cent of the subregion's road traffic deaths. Despite experiencing a moderate decline in road traffic deaths, dropping from 19.19 to 15.91, East and North-East Asia still recorded the highest road traffic death rate among all subregions.

South-East Asia: South-East Asia accounted for 14.57 per cent of the population of the region, but only 13.85 per cent of deaths. There was a gradual upward trend which fell in 2021. South-East Asia achieved a significant reduction in its road traffic death rate, declining from 18.81 in 2010 to 14.40 in 2021.

North and Central Asia: North and Central Asia accounted for 5.13 per cent of the population but only 3.73 per cent of deaths. There has been a gradual trend downwards since 2013. North and Central Asia made substantial progress, with its death rate dropping from 19.01 to 11.01, marking the most significant improvement within the Asia-Pacific region.

Pacific: The Pacific subregion had only 0.46 per cent of deaths against 0.94 per cent of the region's population, which could reflect better road safety conditions or lower road traffic density. The number of deaths dropped very slightly between 2010 and 2021. . The number of deaths declined slightly between 2010 and 2021, with the road traffic death rate decreasing from 9.38 to 7.37 during this period.

These differences highlight the heterogeneity of road safety issues across the ESCAP region. Notably, all the sub-regions made remarkable advancements in reducing road traffic death rates. The reductions in road traffic deaths in the sub-regions suggest improvements in road safety protocols, infrastructure, and emergency care.

Country Level Data

A closer look at individual country data shows a more varied picture. Figure 2.5 shows ESCAP Member States with over 2000 deaths in 2021, while Figure 2.6 shows ESCAP Member States with less than 2000 deaths in 2021. The left axis measures road traffic death numbers, while the right axis measures the road traffic death rate per 100,000 inhabitants. This longitudinal data provides a nuanced understanding of road safety trends over the 11-year period in various ESCAP countries. As can be seen, the majority of countries in the ESCAP region saw a decline in the total number of deaths between 2010 and 2021, as well as a fall in the road traffic death rate.

The decline in the death rate was particularly noticeable in Fiji, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Mongolia, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, the Solomon Islands, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Turkmenistan, and Viet Nam. However, this progress is overshadowed by significant increases in death rates, notably in Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Federated States of Micronesia, Nepal, and Tonga.

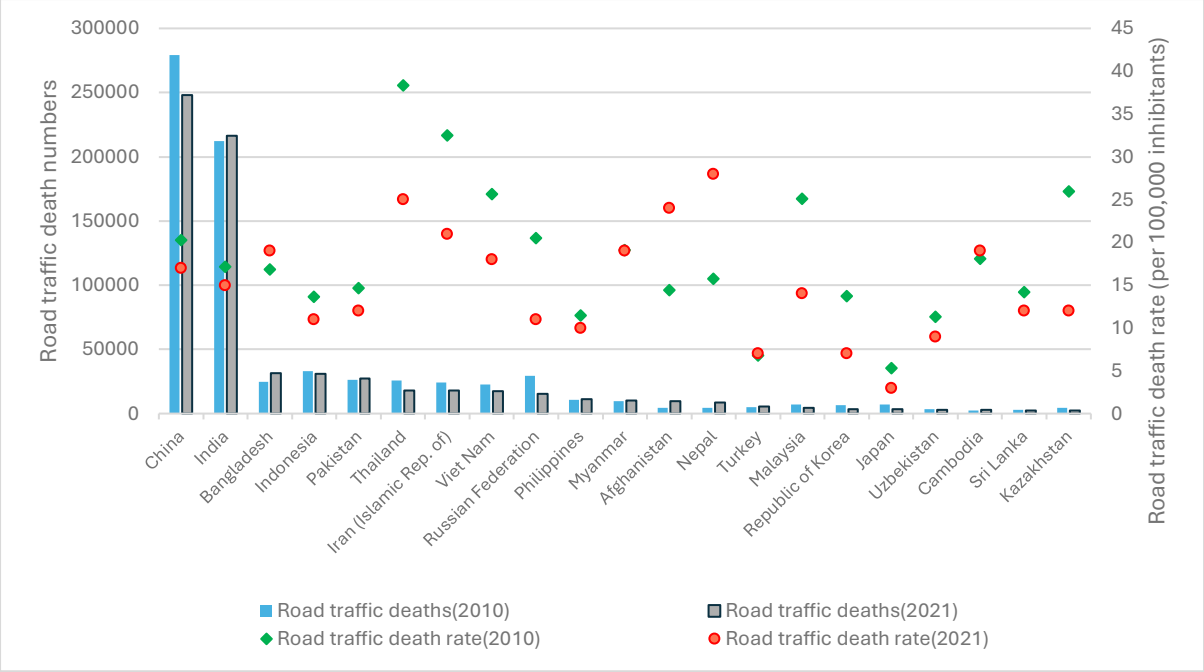


Figure 2.5 Number of road traffic deaths compared to death rates (per 100,000 inhabitants) in 2010 and 2021 (ESCAP countries with more than 2000 deaths in 2021)

Source: ESCAP analysis based on the data from the Global Status Report on Road Safety 2013 (for 2010 data) and Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023 (for 2021 data), WHO, respectively.

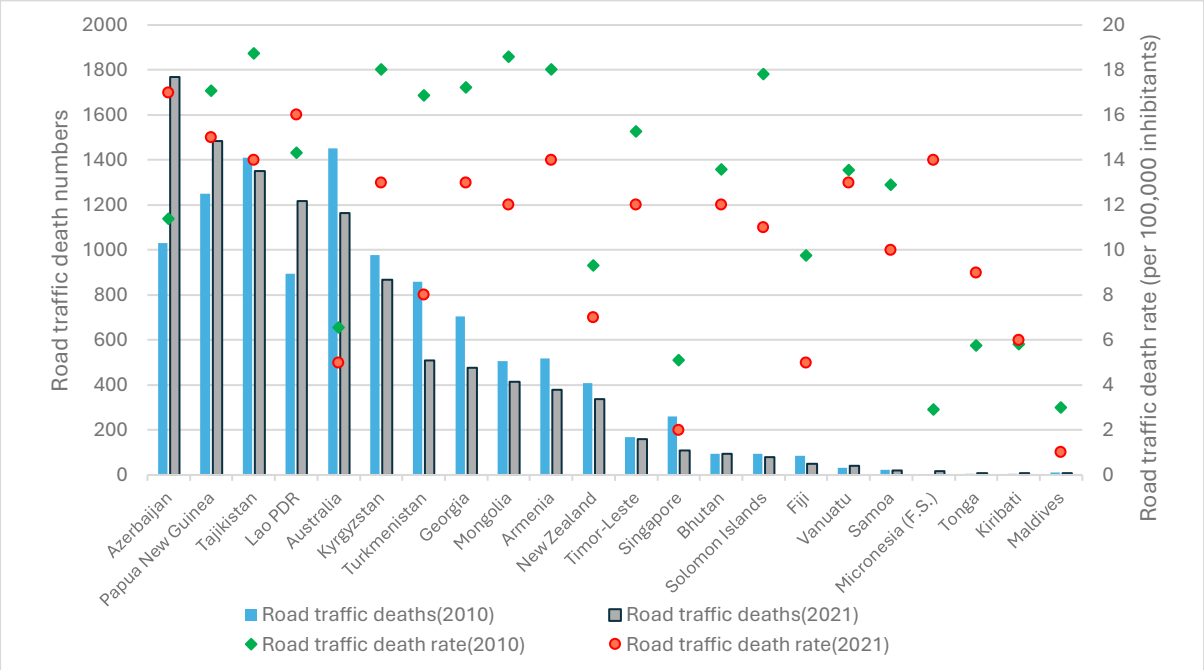


Figure 2.6 Number of road traffic deaths compared to death rates (per 100,000 inhabitants) in 2010 and 2021 (ESCAP countries with less than 2000 deaths in 2021)

Source: ESCAP analysis based on the data from the Global Status Report on Road Safety 2013 (for 2010 data) and Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023 (for 2021 data), WHO, respectively.

2.2 Road Traffic Death Trends Across Income Categories

This section presents the road traffic deaths by income categories in the Asia-Pacific region (see Appendix B for classification of countries by different income group category, based on the World Bank classification for the 2022 fiscal year).[15]

There are 5 high-income countries, 13 upper-middle income countries, 24 lower-middle income countries and 1 low-income country in the Asia-Pacific[16] region in 2021. This distribution emphasizes the predominance of middle-income countries within the region.

Low-income: Low-income countries, which constitute a relatively smaller population size of 0.86 per cent, also encountered a lower proportion of road traffic deaths, accounting for about 1.38 per cent (see Figure 2.7).

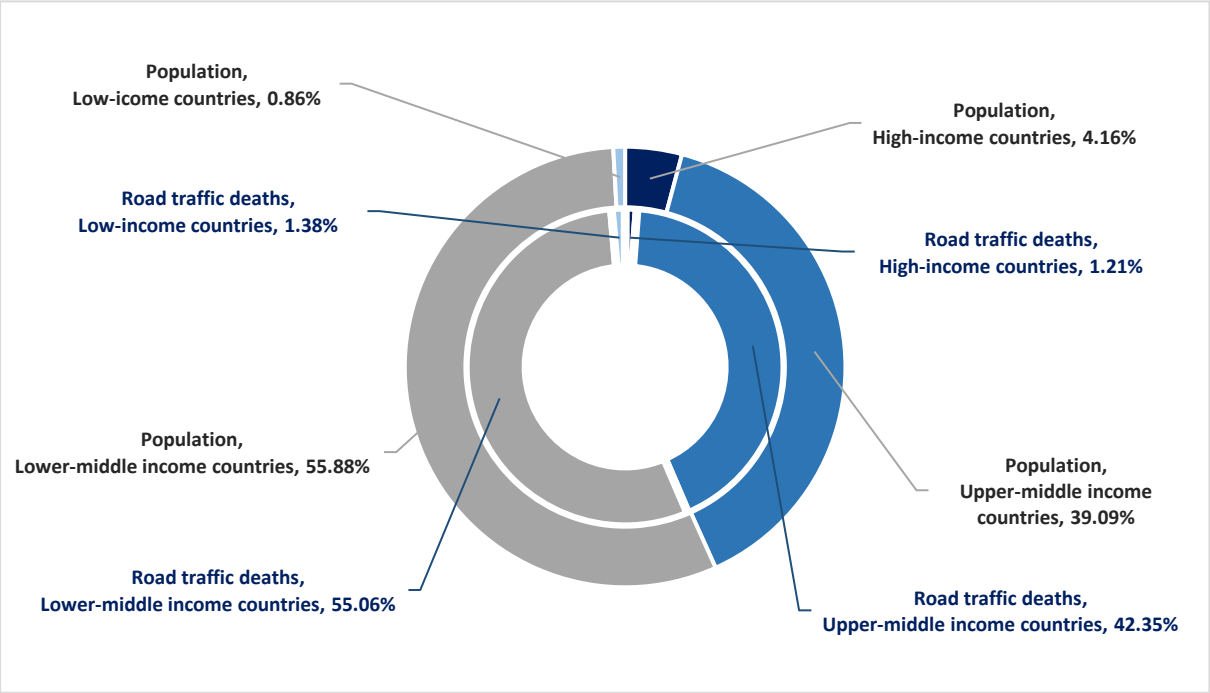


Figure 2.7 Proportion of road traffic deaths by income category in the ESCAP region, 2021

Source: ESCAP analysis based on the data from the Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023, WHO.

Middle income: As depicted Figure 2.7, middle-income countries in the ESCAP region bear a substantial share of the road traffic deaths burden. Most notably, lower-middle-

[15] *New World Bank country classifications by income level: 2022-2023. World Bank Blogs. (2022, July). Available at https://blogs.worldbank.org/en/opendata/new-world-bank-country-classifications-income-level-2022-2023.*

[16] *The Asia-Pacific region here refers to 43 reporting countries in 2021.*

income countries, constituting about 56 per cent of the population, accounted for 55 per cent of road traffic deaths, while upper-middle-income countries, home to 39 per cent of the population, accounted for about 42 per cent of road traffic deaths.

High income: Despite making up 4.16 per cent of the population, high-income countries reported only 1.21 per cent of road traffic deaths. This significant disparity highlights the relative safety of road networks and the effectiveness of road safety measures in high-income nations, where better infrastructure, stricter enforcement of traffic laws, and improved emergency response systems contribute to fewer fatalities compared to lower-income regions.

In 2021, the ESCAP region exhibited a diverse composition of countries across different income categories. There has been more progress in reducing the number of road traffic deaths among upper-middle-income and high-income countries than lower-middle-income and low- income countries since 2016.

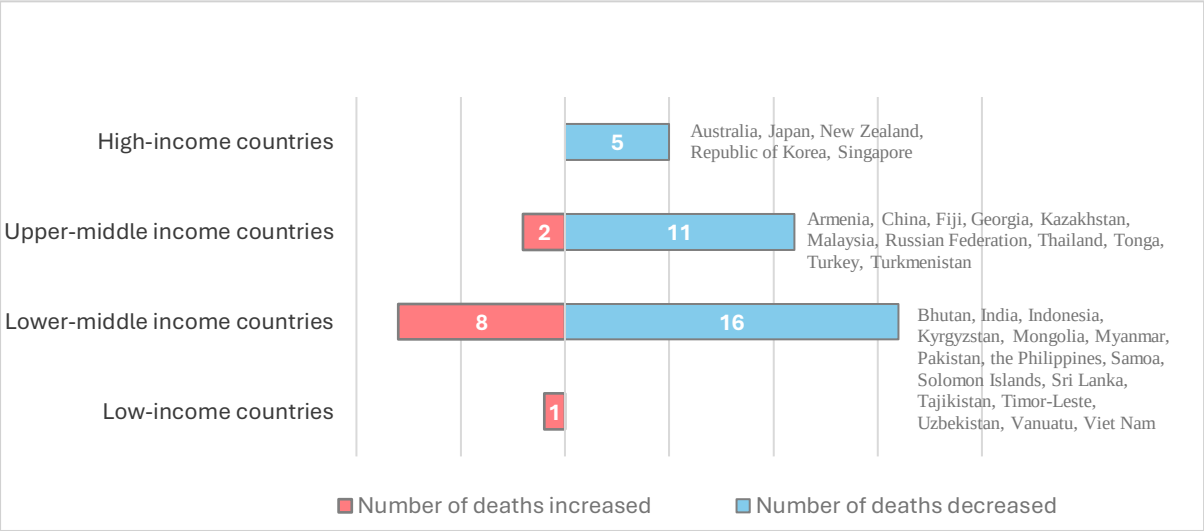


Figure 2.8 ESCAP countries that experienced a change in road traffic death numbers between 2016 and 2021 (by income category)

Source: ESCAP analysis based on the data from the Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023, WHO.

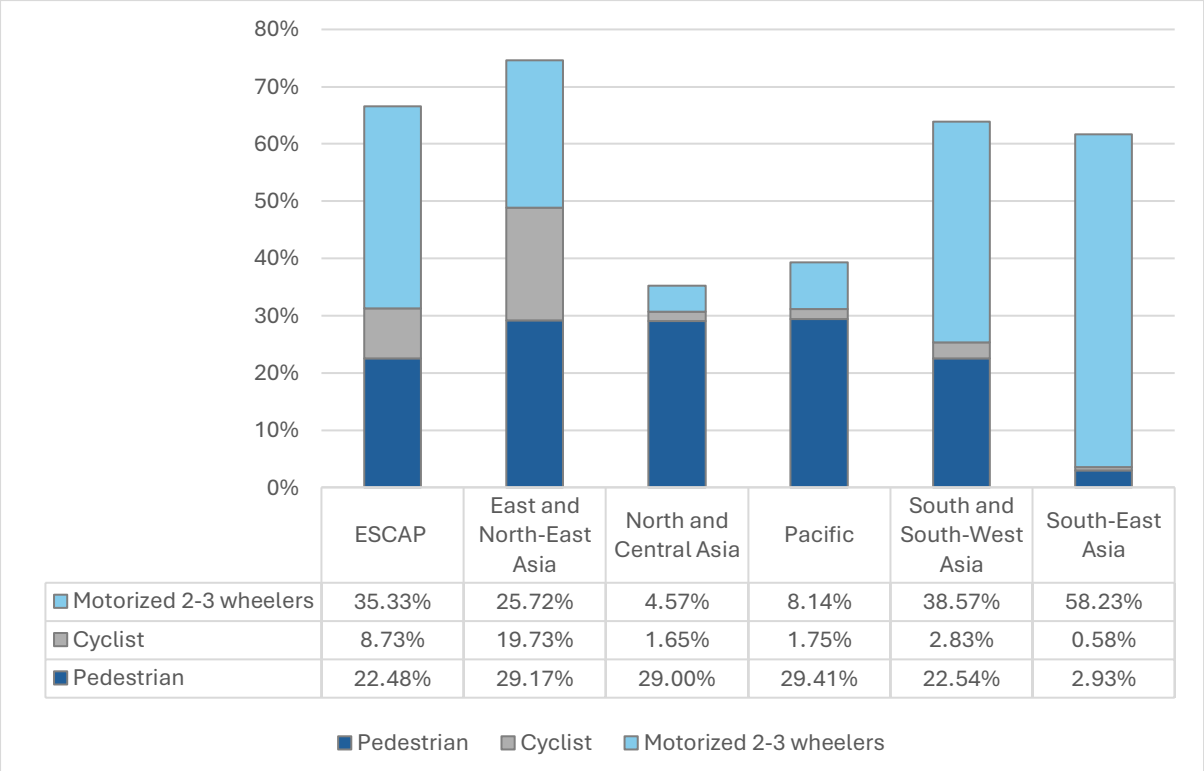
Between the years 2016 and 2021, changes in road traffic deaths across these income groups have been noteworthy. As indicated in Figure 2.8, high-income countries, predominantly saw a decrease in road traffic deaths, with five countries reporting a reduction. While upper-middle-income countries saw a reduction in road traffic deaths in eleven countries, two countries experienced an increase. Similarly, lower-middle-income countries showed improvements in sixteen countries, yet eight countries witnessed a rise in the number of road deaths. However, the sole low-income country in this region did not experience any improvement in terms of road traffic death numbers. Appendix C shows the list of countries that have experienced a change in

road traffic death numbers from 2016 to 2021. Overall, the number of road traffic deaths increased in 11 countries during this period.

2.3 Road Safety Trends Among Vulnerable Road Users

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), more than half of all road traffic deaths are among vulnerable road users, or VRUs.[17] Vulnerable Road Users (VRU) include those road users who have less protection than other motorized vehicles, including 1) non-motorized road users such as pedestrians and cyclists, and 2) riders of motorized (powered) two- and three-wheelers. According to some definitions, it also includes those who are more vulnerable due to their degree of mobility, such as the young, the elderly, and people with disabilities or special needs.[18]

To develop more targeted policies, governments have begun collecting disaggregated data on the types of vehicles and users involved in traffic accidents. However, relatively few governments collect the complete breakdown of different users (4-wheel; motorized 2- and 3-wheel; pedestrians; cyclists; and others). Data on vulnerable road users was reported by 37 countries in the Asia-Pacific region. Figure 2.9 presents a detailed breakdown of the countries with available data on vulnerable road users.



	ESCAP	East and North-East Asia	North and Central Asia	Pacific	South and South-West Asia	South-East Asia
Motorized 2-3 wheelers	35.33%	25.72%	4.57%	8.14%	38.57%	58.23%
Cyclist	8.73%	19.73%	1.65%	1.75%	2.83%	0.58%
Pedestrian	22.48%	29.17%	29.00%	29.41%	22.54%	2.93%

Figure 2.9 Proportion of vulnerable road user deaths in the Asia-Pacific sub-regions, 2021

Source: ESCAP analysis based on the data from the Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023, WHO.

[17] *World Health Organization. (2023). Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023.*
[18] *National Road Safety Strategy, Australia. (2021, December 22). Fact sheet: Vulnerable Road Users. Available at* https://www.roadsafety.gov.au/nrss/fact-sheets/vulnerable-road-users#:~:text=Vulnerable%20road%20users%20(VRU)%20are,no%20protection%20from%20crash%20forces.

The variation in rates of death observed across sub-regions and countries also corresponds with differences in the types of road users most affected. Figure 2.9 depicts that pedestrian, cyclists and motorized two- and three-wheelers represented more than half of all Asia-Pacific region road traffic deaths. South-East Asia subregion had the highest proportion of motorized 2- and 3-wheelers road traffic death of 58.23 percent. The East and North-East Asia subregion had the highest proportion of cyclist road traffic deaths, accounting for 19.73 percent. The Pacific subregion recorded the highest proportion of pedestrian road traffic deaths at 29.41 percent. However, it is important to consider the region's relatively small population and the limited number of road traffic deaths.

Picture 3. Pedestrian crossing in Beijing, China. Credit: Ishtiaque Ahmed, PhD.

Motorized Two- and Three-wheel Vehicles

According to the WHO, approximately 21 per cent of road deaths globally involve motorized two- and three-wheelers, a figure which had tripled in the decade up to 2021.[19] ESCAP's analysis reveals that motorized two- and three-wheel vehicles account for the majority of road traffic deaths in Malaysia, Myanmar and Singapore, while in Nepal it accounts for over one third (34 per cent). Meanwhile, in Thailand, over 50 per cent of road traffic deaths in 2021 involved motorized two- and three-wheel vehicles.[20] Given the relative lack of attention given to this user group, WHO established a technical advisory group on motorized two- and three-wheeled vehicle safety in 2023 to improve laws, policies, regulations and research on this topic,

[19] *World Health Organization. (2023). Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023.*
[20] Ibid.

including experts from countries with high numbers of motorized two-and three-wheeled vehicles, such as Viet Nam, Malaysia and Thailand from Asia.[21]

Picture 4. Segregation of traffic modes in Beijing, China. Credit: Ishtiaque Ahmed, PhD.

Pedestrians and Cyclists

Other vulnerable user groups which are attracting attention are pedestrians and cyclists. According to WHO, pedestrian deaths globally rose 3 per cent between 2010 and 2021, accounting for almost one quarter (25 per cent) of global road traffic deaths, while deaths among cyclists rose nearly 20 per cent to 71,000, which accounts for approximately 6 per cent of global deaths.[22] Pedestrians account for close to or over 50 per cent of traffic-related deaths in Samoa, Federated States of Micronesia, and Papua New Guinea, and over 30 per cent of deaths in Fiji, Japan, Republic of Korea, Mongolia, and Armenia.[23]

There are a variety of factors contributing to these trends. One is the poor quality of road infrastructure. Even in some roads in high-income countries, pedestrian pathways are not always segregated from the road, which increases the risks of pedestrians being hit by motorized vehicles. The demographic make-up of countries

[21] *World Health Organization. (2024, February). World's first Global Technical Advisory Group on motorcycle safety convened by WHO. World Health Organization. Available at https://www.who.int/news/item/29-02-2024-world-s-first-global-technical-advisory-group-on-motorcycle-safety-convened-by-who.*
[22] *World Health Organization. (2023). Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023.*
[23] Ibid.

also affects the risk to pedestrians. In particular, countries with ageing populations are seeing an increase in traffic accidents involving elderly people.[24]

Another group which is likely to attract more attention into the future is riders of personal micromobility vehicles such as e-scooters. WHO's Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023 included questions on personal micromobility in their survey for the first time, and reported that globally, 3% of deaths were among users of these modes.

Picture 5. Bicycle is in mixed traffic in urban Tokyo, Japan. Credit: Ishtiaque Ahmed, PhD.

2.4 Gender Disparities in Road Safety

In line with global trends, the reported proportion of males in road traffic deaths in Asia and the Pacific is significantly higher in almost every country that reported gender disaggregated deaths. As can be seen in Figure 2.10 (only the reported countries are presented here), the proportion of males in road traffic deaths in 2021 was 80% or over in Uzbekistan (which reported the highest at 99%); India; Malaysia; the Philippines; Sri Lanka; Singapore; Nepal; Cambodia; Viet Nam; the Islamic Republic of Iran; and Myanmar.[25] Only Bhutan reported a higher proportion of road traffic deaths for females, at 78% of the total. According to the Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023, the ratio of female to male road traffic deaths at the global level is 1 to 3, which

[24] ITF-OECD. (2002, February). Transport and Ageing of the Population. Available at https://www.itf-oecd.org/sites/default/files/docs/06rt130_0.pdf.

[25] *Note that data for Cambodia and the Philippines is from 2020, while data for Myanmar is from 2019.*

suggests that the ratio in Asia and the Pacific is slightly lower in most countries than the global ratio.

There are several possible reasons for this, but unfortunately, without gender disaggregated data on variables such as vehicle ownership, patterns of use, and type of user involved in accidents, it is not possible to state any with certainty. For example, according to the European Road Safety Observatory (2022), the proportion of female pedestrian road traffic deaths is two times that of male deaths, while the proportion of female car passenger deaths is three times that of males.[26] At the same time, the share of motorized two-wheelers and heavy vehicles is lower for females. Another salient finding was that female deaths proportionally occur more on rural roads than on urban roads, compared to all road traffic deaths. This suggests the need for data on accidents to be further analyzed for gender differences, and for such analyses to be made available to the public and to policymakers so more targeted interventions can be designed.

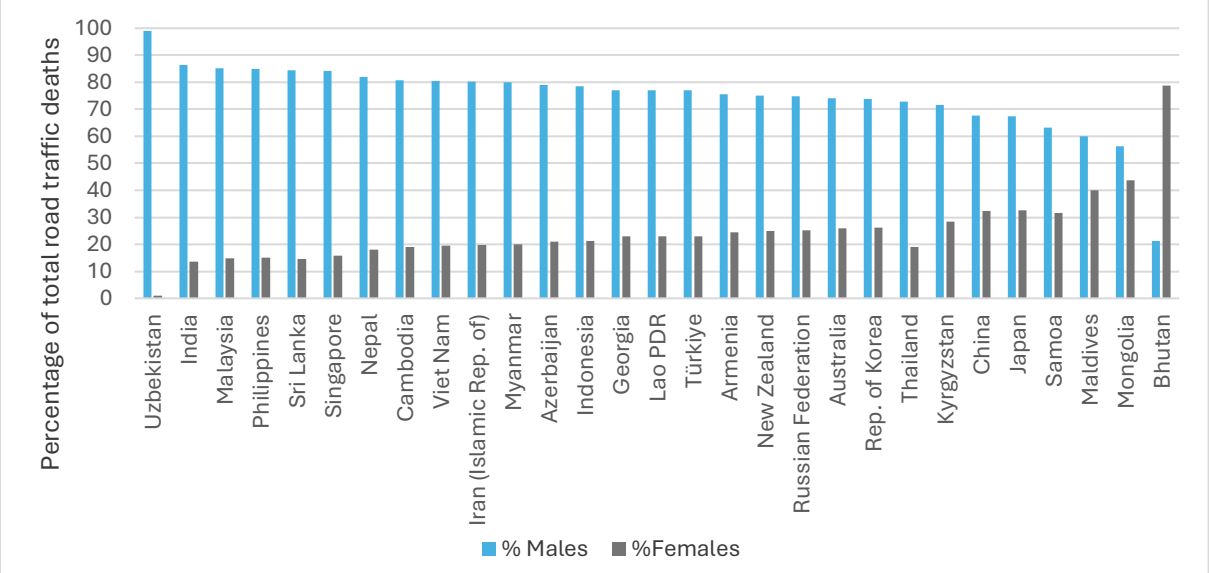


Figure 2.10 Gender distribution of total reported fatalities in the Asia-Pacific region, 2021.
Source: ESCAP analysis based on the data from the Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023, WHO.

2.5 Future Projections: Anticipated Road Safety Trends in the Asia-Pacific Region

Figure 2.11 provides a projection of road traffic deaths under different scenarios over the ten-year period from 2021 to 2030. Initially, the data reveals a fluctuating pattern in the number of deaths, starting with 755,314 deaths in 2010, peaking to 765,565 in 2016—a 0.23 per cent annual increase over six years—before descending to 702,259 in 2021, marking a 1.65 per cent annual decrease from 2016. This fall in 2021 is likely to be due to the fall in trips made and changing travel patterns associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. This trajectory is illustrated by the solid purple line on the graph.

[26] *European Road Safety Observatory. (2022, May). Facts and figures – gender - 2022. Available at https://road-safety.transport.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-07/ff_gender_20220706.pdf.*

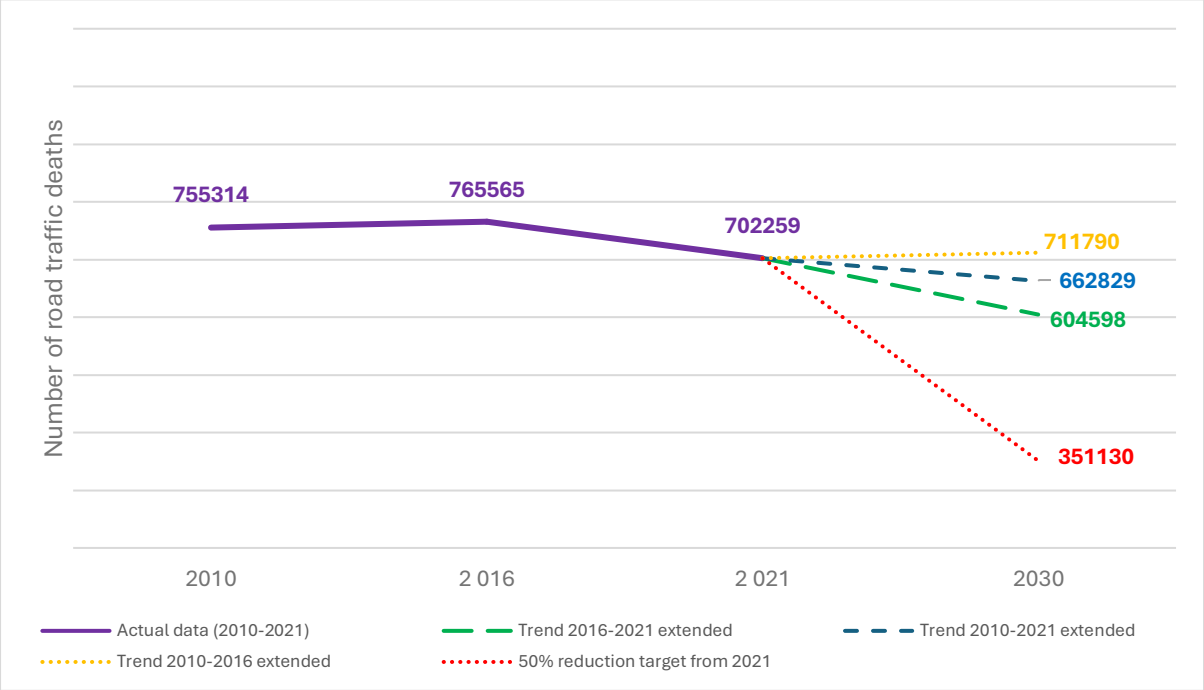


Figure 2.11 Projected Road Traffic Death Trends in ESCAP Region (2010-2030)

Source: ESCAP analysis based on the data from different editions of the "Global Status Reports on Road Safety" published by the World Health Organization (WHO).

The projection introduces three hypothetical scenarios extrapolated from the trends observed within distinct time frames:

1. **Trend 2010-2016 Extended**: This scenario anticipates a continuation of the increase observed between 2010 and 2016 and forecasts a substantial escalation in road deaths by 2030 (orange dotted line).

2. **Trend 2016-2021 Extended**: Contrary to the previous scenario, this analysis is based on the decrease observed from 2016 to 2021. If this downward trend continues, road deaths are projected to significantly decrease to around 600,000 deaths by 2030 (green dotted line).

3. **Overall Trend 2010-2021 Extended**: Combining the entire dataset from 2010 to 2021, this scenario illustrates a mild but steady decrease in road deaths extending to 2030 (blue dotted line).

4. **Pathway for 50% reduction by 2030**: Finally, the figure shows the pathway of a 50 per cent reduction in road traffic deaths by 2030 from the 2021 figures (red dotted line). To achieve the Second Decade of Action for Road Safety's goal of cutting the number of deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents in half by 2030 (SDG Target 3.6), overall road traffic deaths in Asia and the Pacific must be reduced by an average of 7.41% every year.

However, it is difficult to predict the long-term impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. In Japan, the number of accidents, deaths, and injuries fell significantly between 2019 and 2020, and curiously, the number of accidents remained steady at 2020 levels in 2022 and 2023, even after all restrictions were lifted.[27] However, it is too early to say what the longer-term effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are on road safety, but researchers are continuing to monitor them.

Picture 6. Helmet wearing is a safety risk for motorcyclists in Beijing, China. Credit: Ishtiaque Ahmed, PhD.

[27] *Japan, National Police. Traffic accident data (annual). Available at https://www.npa.go.jp/publications/statistics/koutsuu/toukeihyo.html (in Japanese)*

3 Road Safety Legislations in the Asia-Pacific Region

3.1 Progress on Key Road Safety Legislations in the Asia-Pacific Region

The ESCAP region has seen significant progress in the adoption and enforcement of laws aimed at reducing traffic-related risks. Figure 3.1 illustrates the changes in the legislative landscape regarding seven key risk factors (speeding, drink-driving, drug-driving, mobile phone use, use of motorcycle helmets, seat belts, and child restraints systems) within the ESCAP region between 2010 and 2021 (see Appendix C for the list of ESCAP region countries with laws on “Seven Key Risk Factors”, 2021). Some salient changes can be observed:

- In the ESCAP region, one new country has enacted laws on speed limit, and two new countries have adopted laws on drink-driving in 2021, compared to 2010.
- According to the Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023, 39 countries had legislation addressing drug driving in 2021. Comparable data for 2010 was not available.There has been an increase in the number of countries that enacted laws to restrict mobile phone use while driving from 32 in 2010 to 35 in 2021.
- The number of countries with laws on motorcycles helmet use and seat belt use also increased by two countries, respectively.
- Six additional countries adopted child restraint law.

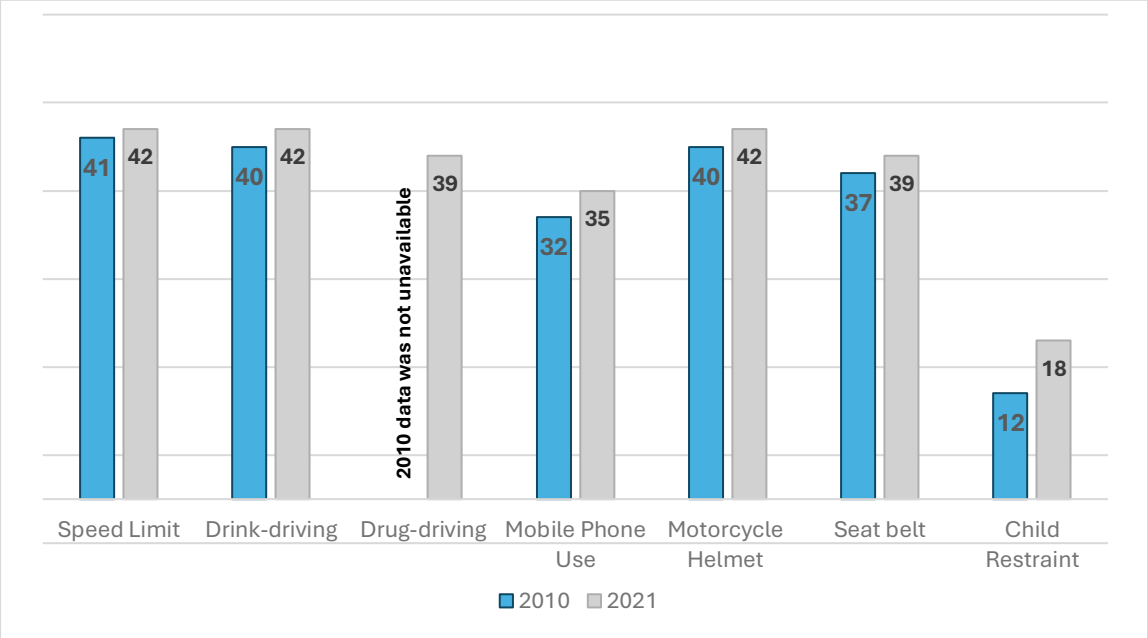


Figure 3.1 Number of Asia-Pacific countries with laws on 7 key risk factors, (2010 and 2021)

Source: ESCAP analysis based on the data from the Global Status Report on Road Safety 2013 (for 2010 data) and Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023 (for 2021 data), WHO, respectively.

Figure 3.2 shows the proportion of the population living in the Asia and Pacific region who are covered by laws on the seven risk factors. Legislation on child restraint system fall short compared to other measures as they only cover 76.94 per cent of the population. The data suggests that more focus is required to elevate child safety to the high standards seen in other categories.

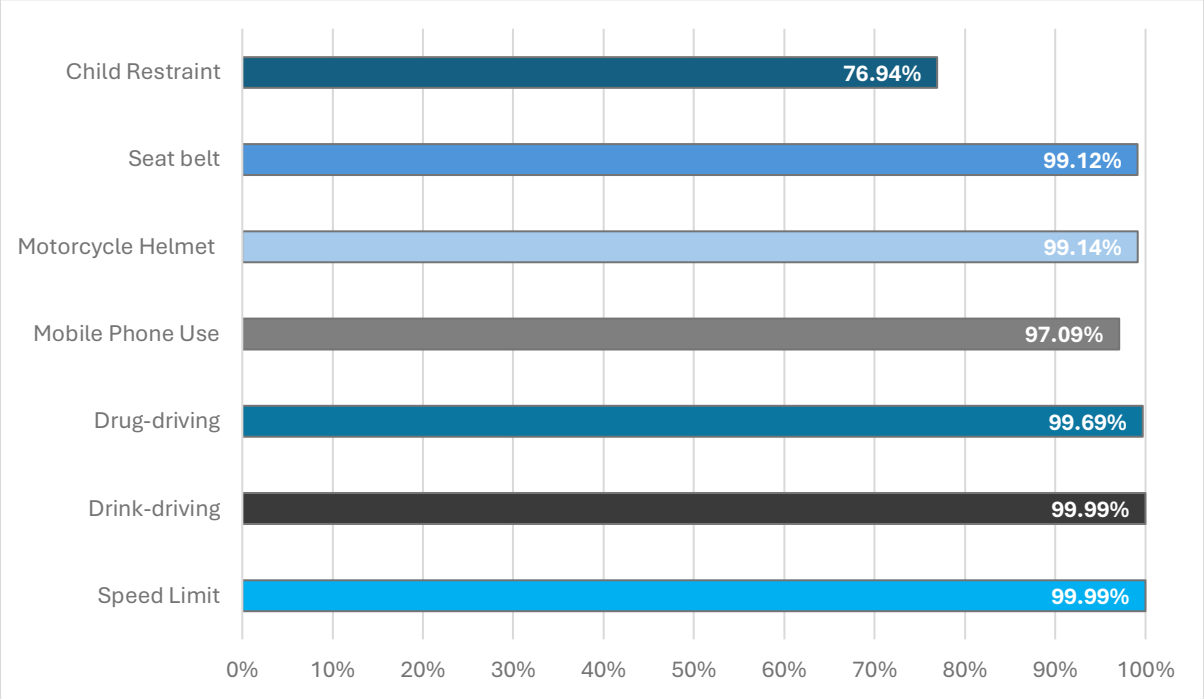


Figure 3.2 Population covered by laws on 7 risk factors in the Asia-Pacific region, 2021

Source: ESCAP analysis based on the data from the Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023, WHO.

However, the existence of a law alone is insufficient to have an impact on road safety outcomes. In this regard, the WHO proposed a set of best practices in road traffic legislation in light of available evidence for the respective areas of concern.

Figure 3.3 shows the percentage of ESCAP Member States whose national laws meet all criteria for best practices. As shown in Figure 3.3, 18.60 percent of the member countries (8 countries) rated enforcement of speed limit as “Good” in 2021. 13.95 percent of the member countries (6 countries) rated the enforcement of drink-driving and drug-driving as “Good” enforcement. Also, 13.95 percent of the member countries (6 countries) rated enforcement of mobile phone use law as “Good” in 2021. 37.21 per cent of member countries (16 countries) identified motorcycle helmet legislation enforcement as “Good” in 2021. Seat-belt laws were comparatively well enforced in many countries. As can be observed, 58.14 per cent of member countries (25 countries) identified seat-belt legislation enforcement as “Good” in 2021. Enforcement of child restraint system law was weak in many countries. 9.30 percent of the member countries (only 4 countries) rated the enforcement of child restraint system law as “Good” enforcement.

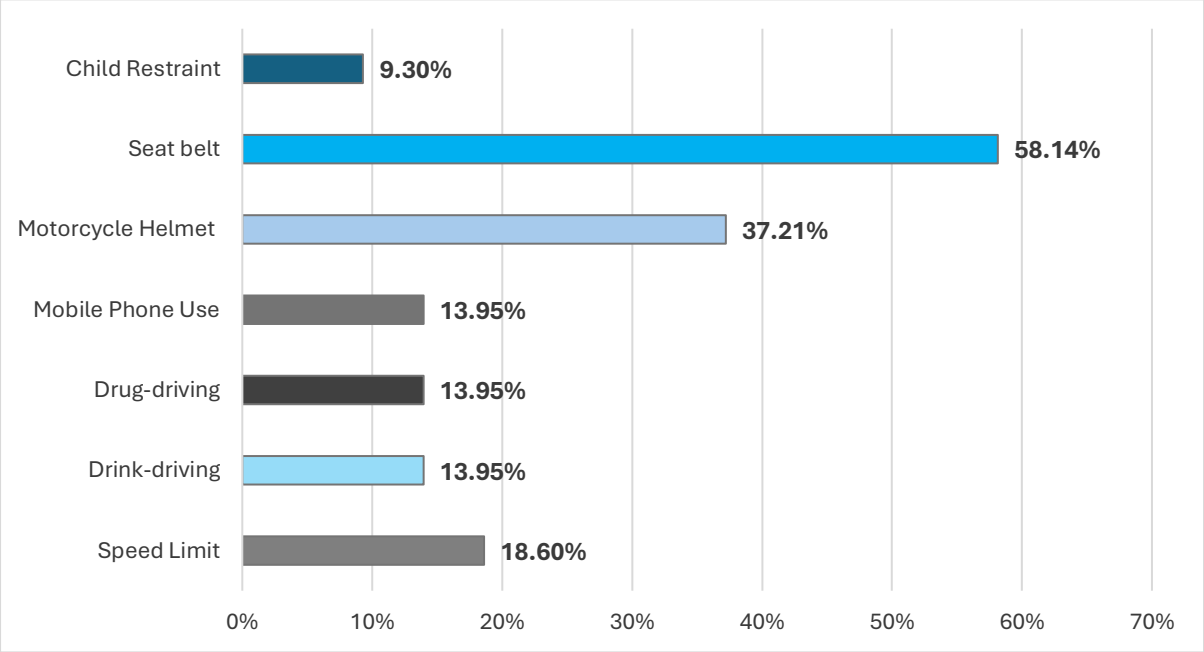


*Figure 3.3 Proportion of Asia- Pacific countries rated as *Good enforcement* on laws, 2021*

Source: ESCAP analysis based on the data from the Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023, WHO.

Enforcement of road safety related laws was still limited in most countries. As can be seen, most countries have the basic laws in place but still fall behind other criteria. The following sections will examine several of these areas in more detail.

See Appendix D for the list of ESCAP region countries with 'Good Enforcement' of laws, 2021. Also see Appendix K for WHO Criteria for best practices in road traffic legislation for “Good Enforcement” of laws.

3.2 Speed Management Law and Enforcement

Speed is a key risk factor in road traffic crashes. The speed at which the vehicle travels increase the risk of roads and the likelihood of collisions leading to death. A vehicle travels at high speed will increase the risk of crash and severity of injures. Vulnerable road users such as pedestrians, cyclists, moped riders, and motorcyclists are particularly at high risk of severe or fatal injury when motor vehicles collide with them because of their lack of protection.

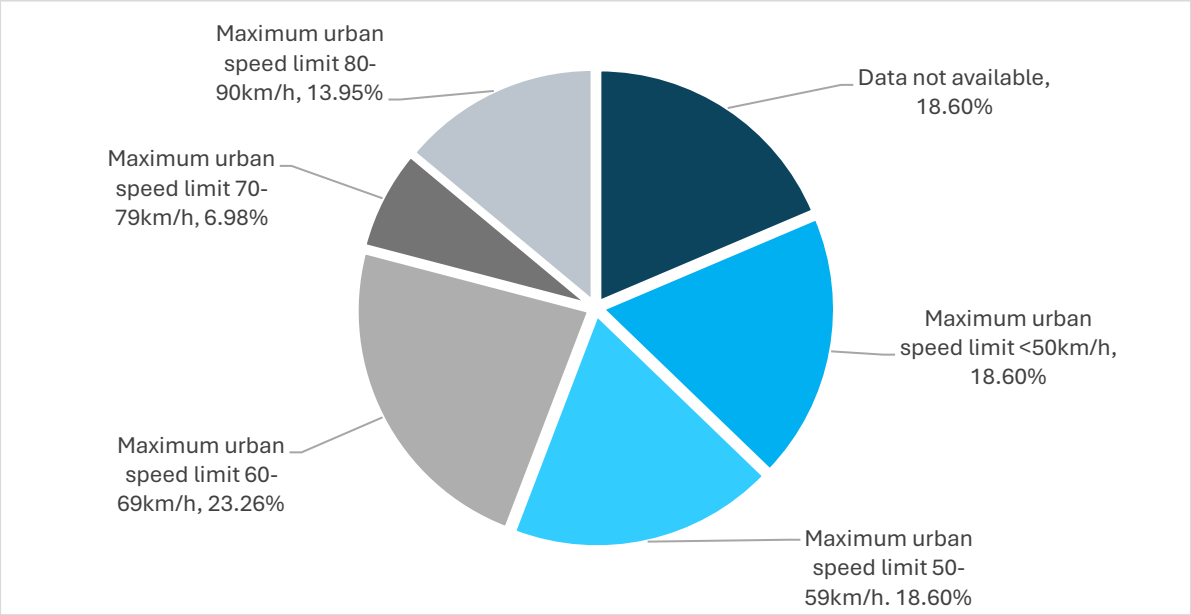


Figure 3.4 Proportion of reported Asia-Pacific countries by urban speed limit range, 2021

Source: ESCAP analysis based on the data from the Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023, WHO.

Therefore, setting the national speed limit is very necessary. The maximum city speed limit should be less than or equal to 50 km / h. In addition, the government should have the right to further adjust the speed limit, allowing them to consider local conditions, such as the winding road. ESCAP's analysis indicates that only 8 countries align with best practice criteria for speed limit legislation (see Appendix D).

Figure 3.4 depicts the current status of maximum urban speed limits in the Asia-Pacific region. In 2021, around 19 percent of the member countries (only 8 countries) had reported urban speed limits of below 50km/h. More than 81 percent of the member countries (35 countries) reported setting urban speed limits to 50km/h or exceeding 50km/h or had no data available.

At the subnational level, it is important to set different speed limits according to the situation of certain areas or roads. The provincial or local authority should be provided with the power to modify speed limits in different contexts, such as winding roads, residential areas, and school zones with a high volume of pedestrians, cyclists, and other vulnerable road users. However, as of 2021, only approximately 40 percent of member countries (17 nations) reported granting local authorities the ability to modify speed limits when necessary.[28]

[28] ESCAP analysis based on the data from the Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023, WHO.

Picture 7. Speed enforcement in Tehran by the law enforcement agency. Credit: Ishtiaque Ahmed, PhD, Tehran, I. R. of Iran.

Within the ESCAP region, 42 countries have enacted speed limit statutes, but there are many differences in terms of type of area (for example, between urban areas, rural areas, and motorways); how they are monitored and enforced (for example, manually or using some form of technology to capture); and whether the government is planning to reduce the national speed limits. In 2021, only eight countries in the ESCAP region met all three of the "good practices" criteria set by the WHO in speed management: comprehensive national speed limits; urban speed limits of 50 km/h or lower; and local authorities are empowered to adjust speed limits according to the specific needs of their communities. As Table 1 shows, a significant number of countries have plans to reduce their national speed laws, but only a few have set a specific date.

Table 1 List of ESCAP countries which have plans to reduce their national speed laws

Country name	Year by targets to reduce speeds nationally
Afghanistan	2025
Armenia	Not specified
Australia	2030
Bhutan	Not specified
Cambodia	2030
China	Not specified
Georgia	Not specified
India	Not specified
Indonesia	Not specified
Japan	Not specified
Kiribati	2023
Lao People's Democratic Republic	2030

Malaysia	2030
Maldives	2024
Mongolia	Not specified
Myanmar	2030
Nepal	Not specified
New Zealand	2030
Niue	Not specified
Philippines	Not specified
Singapore	Not specified
Sri Lanka	Not specified
Thailand	2027
Türkiye	2030
Uzbekistan	Not specified
Viet Nam	Not specified

Source: World Health Organization. (2023). Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023.

3.3 Drink-driving and Drug-driving Laws and Enforcement

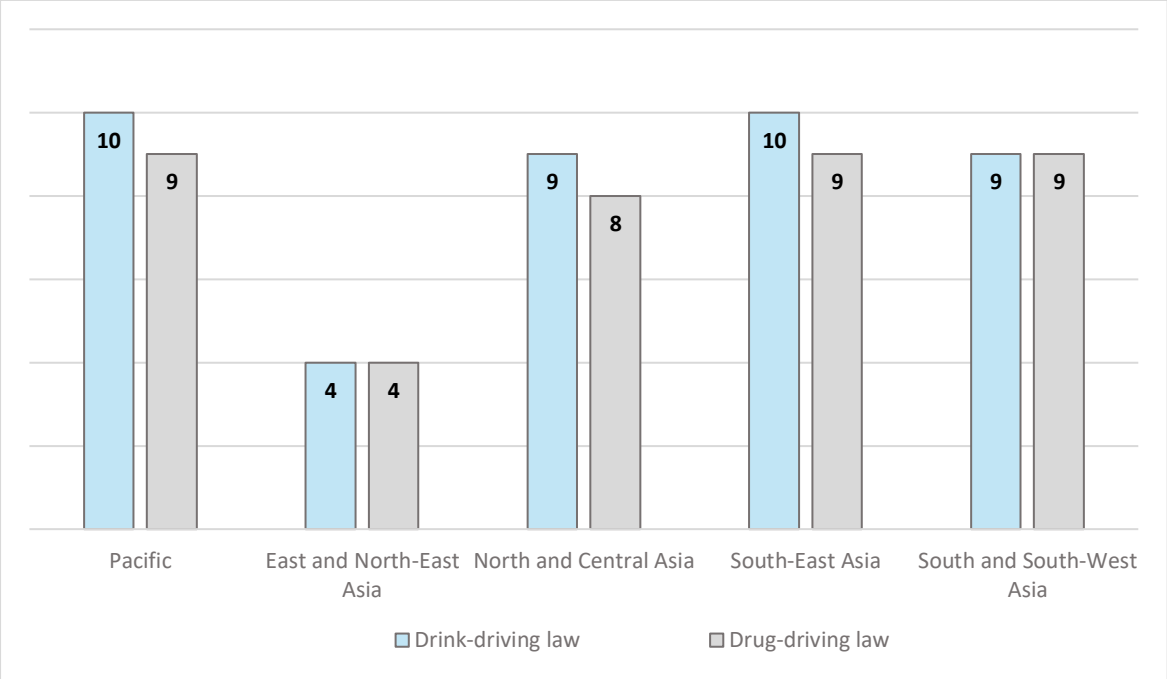


Figure 3.5 Number of Asia-Pacific countries with legislation on drink-driving and drug-driving, 2021

Source: ESCAP analysis based on the data from the Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023, WHO.

Effective drink-driving laws have been proven to save lives. Appendix C lists countries with drink-driving and drug-driving laws in the ESCAP region countries. Figure 3.5 illustrates the numbers of countries that apply laws on drink-driving and drug-driving in the ESCAP region in 2021:

- All ten countries in the Pacific region have enacted legislation on drink-driving, while nine countries have drug-driving laws.
- All four countries in East and North-East Asia subregion have enacted legislation on drink-driving laws and drug-driving.
- All nine countries in North and Central Asia subregion have adopted legislation on drink-driving and eight countries (except Turkmenistan) have adopted legislation on drug-driving.
- All ten countries in South-East Asia subregion have laws on drink-driving and nine countries (except Lao PDR) have legislation against drug-driving.
- Nine out of the total ten countries in South and South-West Asia subregion have legislation against both drink-driving and drug-driving.

In high-income countries, data suggests that approximately 20 per cent of drivers

Picture 8. Don't Drink and Drive campaign in Samoa. Credit: Ishtiaque Ahmed, PhD, Samoa.

involved in fatal collisions have a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) surpassing the legal threshold. Meanwhile, in countries with lower and middle economic statuses, the range is even broader, with 33 per cent to 69 per cent of drivers who suffered fatal injuries and 8 per cent to 29 per cent of those who incurred nonfatal injuries having consumed alcohol prior to their accidents.[29]

Overall, the ESCAP region's widespread implementation of laws against drink and drug-driving by 2021 suggests significant progress in recognizing the dangers associated with impaired driving. The leap in the number of countries with legislation on drug-impaired driving is an example of how governments can act decisively and relatively quickly if they want. However, there remains a noticeable disparity between

[29] *World Health Organization. (2023). Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023.*

subregions. There is still scope for fine-tuning legislation on drink and drug-driving. According to WHO's best practices, countries should strive for a BAC limit of ≤0.05 g/dl for the general driving public and an even more stringent ≤0.02 g/dl for inexperienced drivers.[30]

3.4 Distracted Driving Law and Enforcement

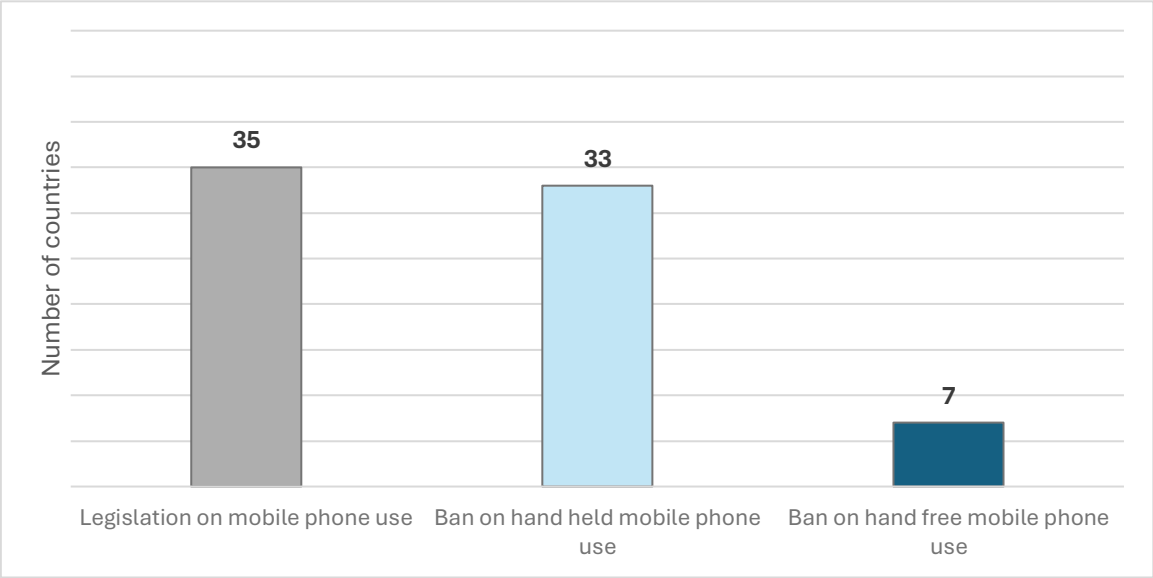


Figure 3.6 Number of Asia-Pacific countries with legislation on use of mobile phones while driving, 2021

Source: ESCAP analysis based on the data from the Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023, WHO.

Figure 3.6 addresses the legislative response to distracted driving due to mobile phone use in the ESCAP region as of 2021 (see Appendix E for the status of legislation on the use of mobile phones in countries in the ESCAP region in 2021). The use of mobile phones while driving has been widely recognized as a significant contributor to road accidents, due to the distraction they cause to the driver.

A total of 35 countries have legislation banning mobile phone use, which underscores the recognition of mobile phone use while driving as a serious road safety issue. There are 33 countries with specific bans on handheld mobile phone use while driving. This law is crucial because holding a phone while driving divides the driver's attention and increases the chance of an accident. The slightly lower number for this category suggests that while there is substantial acknowledgment of the risk, there may still be some resistance or challenges in completely banning handheld use. While only 7 countries have legislation against hands-free mobile phone use, significantly less than the other categories. This smaller number might reflect the common perception that

[30] ibid.

Picture 9. Mobile phone use while driving is a road safety issue. Credit: Ishtiaque Ahmed, PhD, Metro Manila.

hands-free devices are less distracting than handheld ones, although research indicates that any phone conversation while driving can be distracting.

The data from Figure 3.6 highlights the urgent need for action in the region to address distracted driving. While the legislative framework appears to be in place for the majority of countries in the region, the enforcement of these laws and public education on the risks of distracted driving remain crucial for reducing road traffic accidents associated with mobile phone use.

3.5 Motorcycle Helmet Law and Enforcement

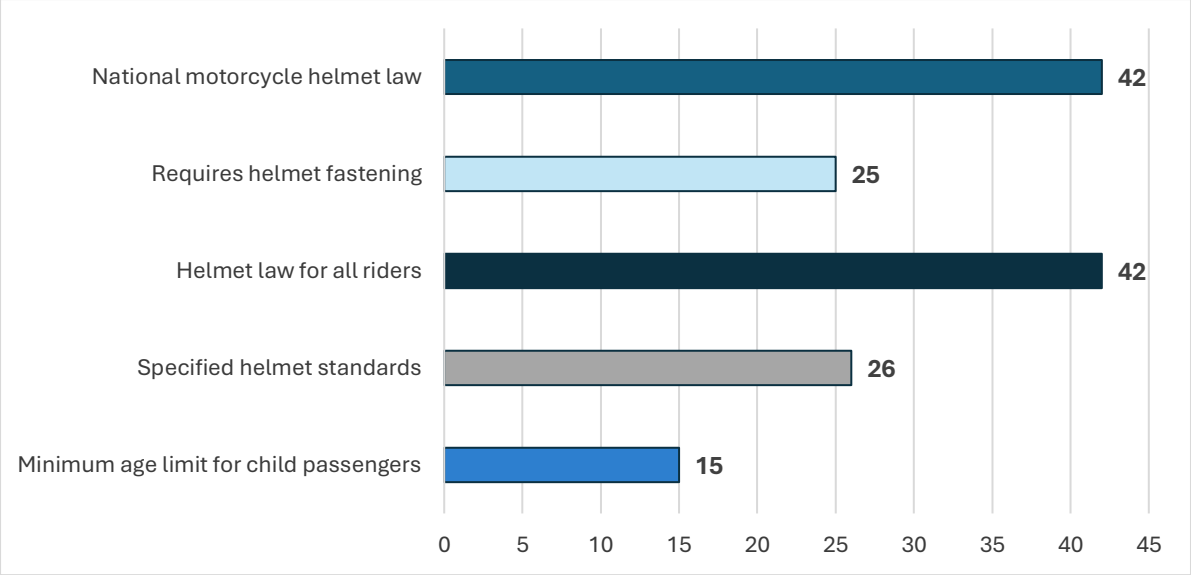


Figure 3.7 Number of Asia-Pacific countries with legislation on helmets for motorcycle riders, 2021

Source: ESCAP analysis based on the data from the Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023, WHO.

WHO's Global Safety Report 2023 points out that 21 per cent of road deaths globally involve riders of motorized two- and three-wheel vehicles.[31] The fatalities involving these riders are disproportionately high, accounting for 21 per cent of global road traffic

[31] *World Health Organization. (2023). Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023.*

deaths[32] and an even more alarming 35 percent in the ESCAP region.[33] Predominantly, head and brain injuries are the leading causes of fatalities among these individuals, underscoring the critical importance of helmet usage. Helmets, especially those with an impact-absorbing liner and comfort padding, play a vital role in injury mitigation.

Picture 10. Overloading of motorcycles is a risk factor in Lao PDR. Credit: Ishtiaque Ahmed, PhD, Vientiane, Lao PDR.

Figure 3.7 shows that 42 countries have adopted laws mandating helmet use for all riders, aligning with the proactive measures to curb the high incidence of injuries among motorcyclists. Furthermore, 25 countries require the fastening of helmets, a crucial practice for increasing the effectiveness of helmets in protecting riders and 42 countries enacted helmet use law for all riders (both drivers and passengers). Additionally, 26 countries have taken the significant step of specifying helmet standards, which is fundamental to guaranteeing the quality of helmets (see Appendix F for the status of laws on helmets for motorcycle riders in 2021 in countries in the ESCAP region). However, only 15 countries have set a minimum age limit for child passengers on motorcycles, which is a pivotal factor in child safety on roads.

[32] Ibid.

[33] *ESCAP analysis based on the data from the Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023, WHO.*

3.6 Seat-Belt Law and Enforcement

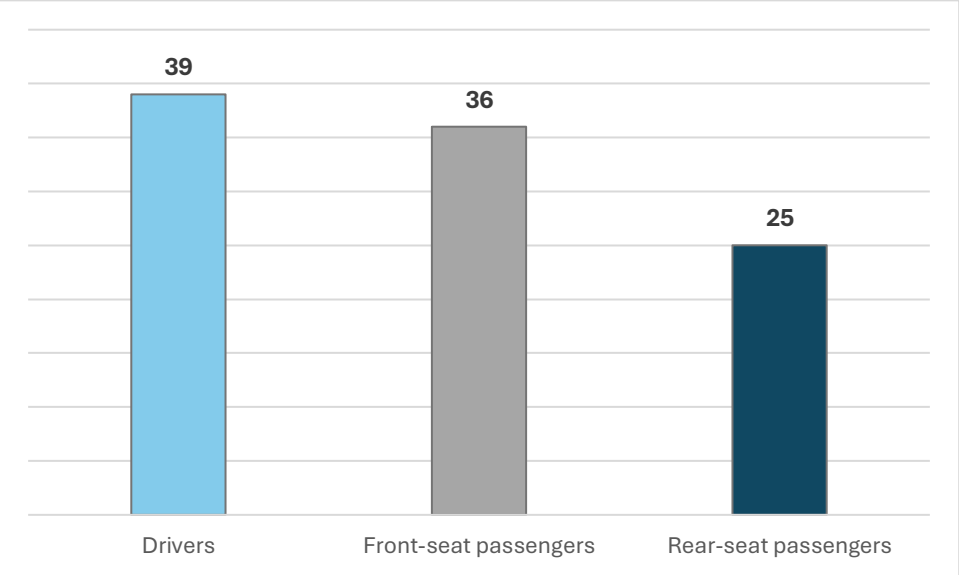


Figure 3.8 Number of Asia-Pacific countries with legislation on seatbelts for motor vehicle occupants, 2021

Source: ESCAP analysis based on the data from the Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023, WHO.

A significant number of countries in the ESCAP region have established laws to ensure drivers and passengers wear seat belts, which is one of the most basic and effective road safety measures (Figure 3.8) (see Appendix G for further information on legislation on seatbelt usage in countries in the ESCAP region in 2021). For drivers, 39 countries have legislation mandating their use. Of these, 36 countries have legislation specifying front seat passenger use. However, only 25 countries have law enforcement for rear-seat passengers.

While there is a strong legislative base for the use of seatbelts among drivers and front-seat passengers in the ESCAP region, the lower numbers for rear-seat passenger legislation highlight an area for improvement. Ensuring that laws are not only in place but also well-enforced remains a key priority for enhancing road safety across the region.

Picture 11. Seat belt use is often neglected in Thailand. Credit: Ishtiaque Ahmed, PhD, Pattaya, Thailand.

3.7 Child Restraint Law and Enforcement

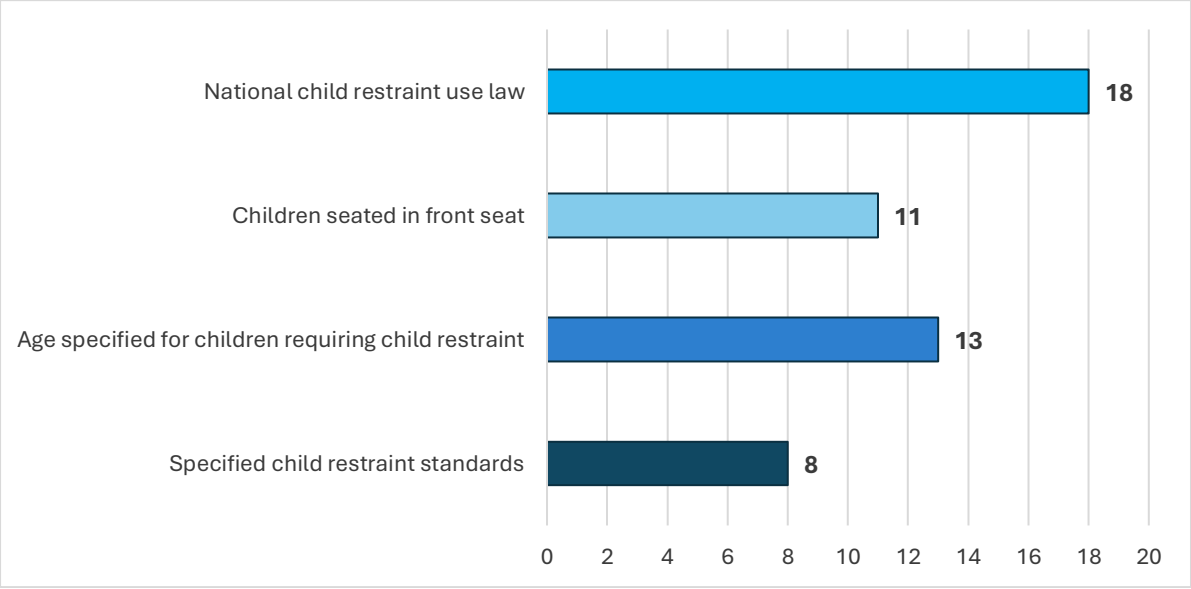


Figure 3.9 Number of Asia-Pacific countries with legislation on child restraint systems, 2021

Source: ESCAP analysis based on the data from the Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023, WHO.

Child restraints are crucial for ensuring the safety of child passengers in vehicles, as they significantly reduce the risk of injury in the event of a crash. Figure 3.9 displays the legislative efforts within the ESCAP region concerning child restraint systems in

2021 (see Appendix H for further information on child restraint legislation in countries in the ESCAP region in 2021). The graph reveals that 18 countries have established national laws requiring the use of child restraints. Laws specifying the need for children to be seated in the front seat are present in 11 countries, while 13 countries have gone a step further by specifying the age for children to use restraints. More detailed regulations concerning child restraints are in place in 8 countries, showing a commitment to ensuring that the restraints used are suitable for the age and size of the child, which is essential for effective protection. While legislation is an essential first step, the ultimate goal is the practical and consistent application of these laws to safeguard children's lives across all member countries.

3.8 Post-Crash Response

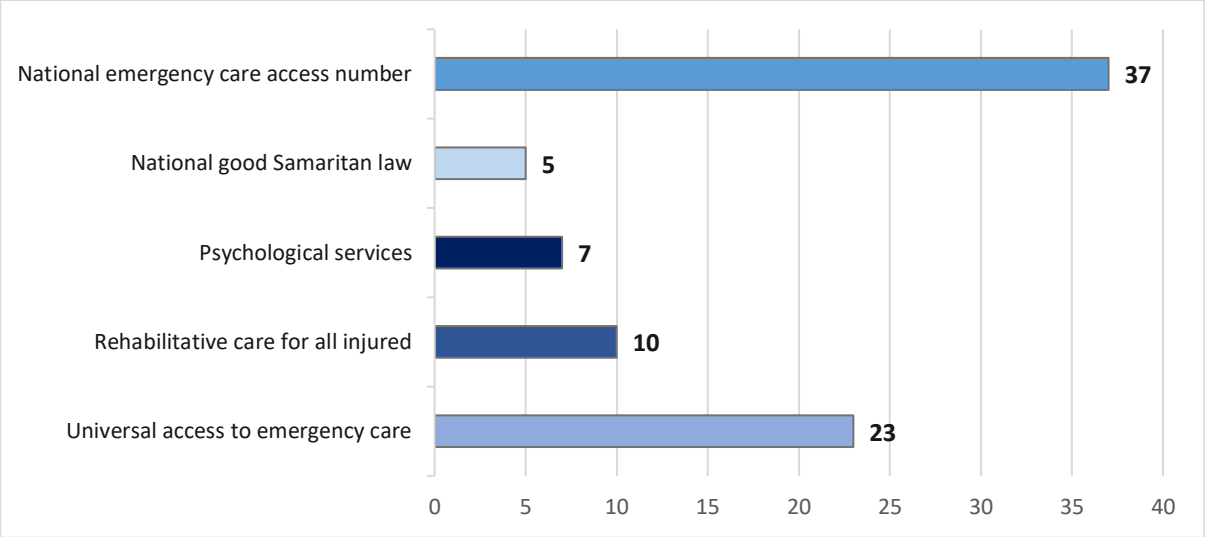


Figure 3.10 Number of Asia-Pacific countries with legislative and policy measures for post-crash response, 2021

Source: ESCAP analysis based on the data from the Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023, WHO.

As the “Safe System” approach to road safety has gained acceptance, interest in policies to improve post-crash care has also grown. According to the Safe System approach, “those who design and maintain the roads, manufacture vehicles, and administer safety programs … share responsibility for safety with road users, so that when a crash occurs, remedies are sought throughout the system, rather than solely blaming the driver or other road users.”[34] This includes policies on post-crash care. Figure 3.10 shows the number of countries within the ESCAP region that have implemented various laws regarding post-crash response and care (see Appendix I for further information on legislative and policy measures enforcement for post-crash response in countries in the ESCAP region in 2021).

[34] Swedish Transport Administration. (2019, October). Saving lives beyond 2020: - road safety conference. Available at https://www.roadsafetysweden.com/contentassets/c65bb9192abb44d5b26b633e70e0be2c/200113_final-report-single.pdf.

Out of 43 countries surveyed, 37 have established a national emergency care access number, while 23 have introduced universal access to emergency care, which ensures that all crash victims receive needed medical services regardless of their ability to pay. However, only 5 countries have a national Good Samaritan law. Such laws are designed to offer legal protection to bystanders who provide aid in emergency situations, encouraging more people to assist without fear of legal repercussions.

Psychological services, which are vital for the mental health recovery of crash survivors, are offered in 7 countries. The relatively small number emphasizes the need for greater recognition of the psychological impact of road crashes and the integration of mental health services into post-crash care frameworks. Meanwhile, rehabilitative care, essential for the physical recovery of crash survivors, is available in 10 countries. There is a strong need to further develop comprehensive post-crash care policies to ensure that all aspects of a victim's recovery—physical, psychological, and legal—are adequately addressed.

3.9 Safer Vehicle Standards

In order to improve road safety and reduce traffic accidents, the Decade of Action requires the improvement of passive and active vehicle safety technologies through a combination of harmonization of relevant global standards, consumer information schemes and incentives to encourage the use of new technologies. It is of great significance to ensure that the design of vehicles meets safety standards. Vehicles that reached standards contribute to the avoidance of road traffic crashes and a reduction in the likelihood of serious injury in the event of a crash.The priority UN vehicle safety standards include frontal impact protection, side impact protection, electronic stability control, pedestrian protection, seatbelts, seat-belt anchorages, child seats, and motorcycle anti-lock braking system (ABS).[35]

The adoption of vehicle safety standards reduces road traffic deaths and injuries by ensuring vehicles are equipped with essential safety features. Figure 3.11 illustrates the numbers of countries within the ESCAP region that have implemented the United Nations vehicle safety standards as of 2021 (see Appendix J for status of adoption of UN vehicle safety standards in countries in the ESCAP region in 2021). This analysis excluded the inclusion of 'child seats' as a vehicle standard in the region due to the lack of sufficient available information.

[35] *World Health Organization. (2018). Global Status Report on Road Safety 2018.*

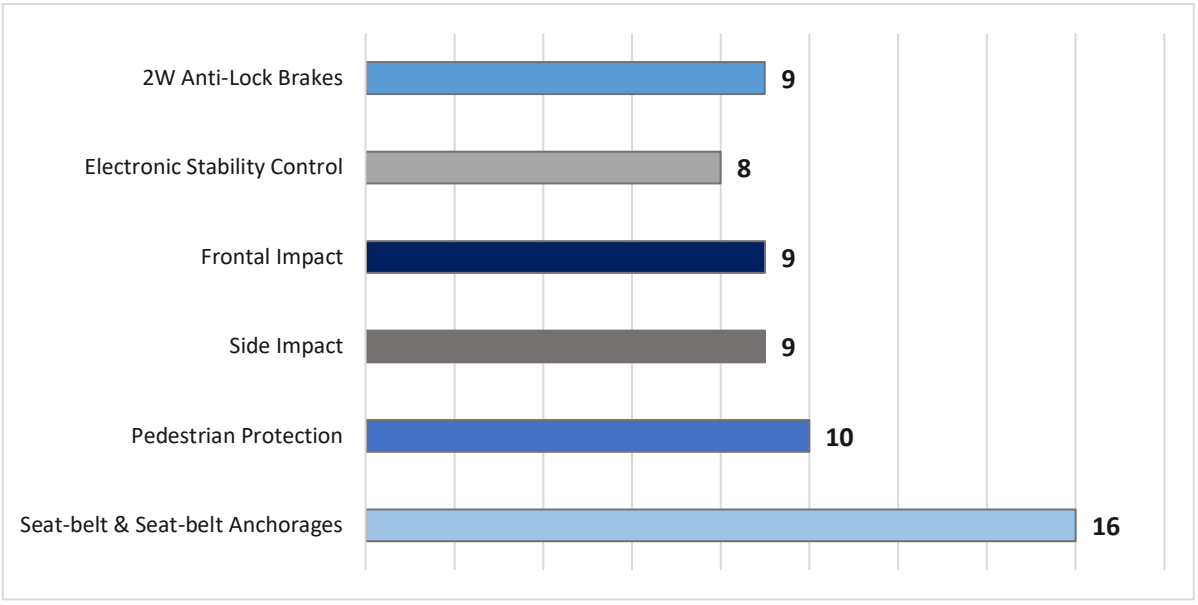


Figure 3.11 Number of Asia-Pacific countries which have adopted UN vehicle standards, 2021
Source: ESCAP analysis based on the data from the Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023, WHO.

- 16 countries (37 per cent of the Asia-Pacific countries) have adopted seatbelt and seat-belt anchorages.
- 10 countries (23 per cent of the Asia-Pacific countries) having implemented pedestrian protection standards to minimize injuries to pedestrians, showing a proactive approach to safeguarding not just vehicle occupants but also those outside the vehicle.
- 9 countries (21 per cent of the Asia-Pacific countries) have adopted frontal impact and side impact protection standards for minimizing the effects of crashes (as with impact protections).
- The adoption rates for another critical safety feature is 2W Anti-Lock Brakes. This feature is fundamental for preventing accidents (as with ABS). 9 countries (21 per cent of the Asia-Pacific countries) have adopted this vehicle standard.
- However, Electronic Stability Control (ESC) stands at 19 per cent (adopted by 8 countries), indicating a slight lag behind other safety measures. ESC is a technology that improves a vehicle's stability by detecting and reducing loss of traction, preventing skids or slides during oversteering or understeering. Its lower adoption rate may point to various challenges such as cost, complexity, or lack of awareness of its benefits.

Overall, the figure shows a positive trend towards the adoption of critical safety features governed by UN vehicle safety standards in the ESCAP region, but there is still considerable room for improvement, especially in promoting and enforcing technologies like ESC. The data suggests a need for countries in the ESCAP region to accelerate their efforts in applying these proven safety measures.

3.10 Road Safety Management

Building strong institutions should be a key part of every country's road safety strategy because such institutions must take the lead in designing and implementing road safety measures. For example, developing having a national road safety strategy is only the start for really addressing road safety issues; without having strong institutions such as the police, the legislature, emergency services, and health care providers, the strategy is likely to be ineffective.

The governance of road safety in the ESCAP region is improving, but the number of ESCAP member States who have national road safety strategies is still only 34 out of the 43 countries that submitted reports for the WHO Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023 (See Table 2). However, what is even more notable is that only 24 countries reported having a national lead agency to implement the national road safety strategy. Furthermore, only 5 countries reported being fully funded to implement their strategy, while 19 reported having partial funding. 26 countries have set fatality reduction target, and 17 countries have set non-fatal reduction target.

As noted by the Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023, having a lead agency is not essential in order to have a national strategy. As WHO states[36]:

> *Management should not be pursued as a standalone goal but as a means to govern – through coordination, legislation, funding and resource allocation, promotion, monitoring and evaluation, research and development, and knowledge transfer. How this function is organized is each country's own decision, but it is necessary to ensure shared multisectoral responsibility for results through an integrated road safety approach.*

However, a large part of the success in bringing down accident and fatality rates stems from the collective and coordinated actions of the various stakeholders, and this type of coordination is often easier when one agency takes charge. The provision of effective emergency and health services is also facilitated by having a coordinating agency for such services, but only 26 ESCAP Member States had such an agency as of 2021 (24 countries have it in national level while 2 countries have it in sub-national level). Countries can learn from the good practices in institutional capacity building and coordination mechanisms through regional forums such as ESCAP.

[36] *World Health Organization. (2023). Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023.*

Table 2 Different elements of road safety governance

Elements of road safety governance	**Number of ESCAP member States which meet criteria**
National road safety strategy	34
Fatality reduction target	26
Non-fatal reduction target	17
Funding to implement strategy	24 (5 fully funded, 19 partially funded
Presence of national lead agency to implement national road safety strategy	24
Presence of agencies that coordinate pre-hospital and emergency medical services	26 (24 national level, 2 subnational level)

Source: World Health Organization. (2023). Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023.

4 Conclusions and Policy Recommendations

The ESCAP region's road safety initiatives have demonstrated meaningful progress, establishing a trajectory towards enhanced protection for all road users. The enactment of comprehensive legislation has provided a solid base, but there is considerable scope for improving implementation and enforcement that will determine the real-world impact. Ensuring the safety of every person on our roads requires not only perseverance but also a deepening of efforts to close the gap between policy and practice. Concrete outcomes will depend on the region's ability to integrate technology with robust safety measures, backed by a commitment to data-driven policy development and community-focused initiatives.

Within the dynamic landscape of the ESCAP region, our report also casts a spotlight on the substantial advancements in road safety legislation and enforcement mechanisms made over the past decade. Strategic actions to combat the perils of high speeds, alcohol-impaired driving, and non-compliance with helmet and seatbelt regulations have firmly established a baseline for safer travel conditions. However, our investigation also surfaces persistent shortcomings, especially in protecting vulnerable demographics, including children—a group for whom safety measures are not only a necessity but also a gauge of societal commitment to safeguarding young lives.

The COVID-19 pandemic prompted governments across the world to impose an unprecedented degree of restrictions on mobility. These policies are likely to have affected the data for 2020, 2021, and even 2022 (in countries that still experienced COVID-19 cases), and it is still too early to ascertain the effects of the pandemic in the longer run. However, road safety data from 2016 suggest that at the global level, there has been an overall downward trend in traffic fatalities, and country-level data also reveal which countries have been successful in bringing down fatality numbers and rates. Nonetheless, the data presented in this report suggest that more action is needed, particularly in the following areas:

Emphasizing Vulnerable Road User Protection

Vulnerable road users continue to bear a disproportionate burden of road traffic injuries and fatalities, particularly motorized two-wheeler riders, who are often more exposed to risks on the road. This demographic encompasses not only motorcyclists but also scooter riders and other forms of powered two-wheel vehicles, all of which face unique challenges in the transportation ecosystem. To address this urgent issue, ESCAP recommends the adoption of comprehensive policies that prioritize the safety of pedestrians, cyclists, and motorcyclists, with a particular focus on motorized two-wheelers. This includes designing roads and transport systems with a 'safe systems' approach at the forefront, which emphasizes the need for infrastructure that accommodates the specific vulnerabilities of motorized two-wheeler users.

Key elements of this approach should involve improving road surfaces and implementing effective signage and lighting. Additionally, integrating protective measures such as better crash barriers, speed limits tailored to the capabilities of two-wheelers, and increased enforcement of traffic regulations can further enhance safety for these riders.

Moreover, promoting rider education and awareness campaigns can play a critical role in reducing risks associated with motorized two-wheeler usage. Training programs focused on safe riding practices, the importance of wearing helmets, and understanding road rules can empower riders to make safer choices.

By integrating these road safety considerations into all aspects of urban and transportation planning, we can significantly enhance the protection of motorized two-wheeler users. This holistic approach will not only reduce the risk of injuries and fatalities but also contribute to more inclusive and sustainable urban mobility solutions.

Reinforcement of Legislative Frameworks

As is discussed in this report, there has been significant progress in the adoption of key road safety legislation by ESCAP member states, such as regulating speed limits and curbing impaired driving through strict drink-driving and drug-driving laws. In summary, there has been progress in the following areas:

- There has been a concerted legislative response to the use of mobile phoneswhile driving, reflecting a growing understanding of the risks tied to distracted driving.

- The post-crash response shows widespread adoption of national emergency access numbers. Nonetheless, the lesser emphasis on comprehensive post-crash care components, such as psychological and rehabilitative services, points to gaps that must be bridged for a more holistic approach to crash aftermath management.

- There remain significant gaps concerning the safety of vulnerable groups. In particular, many countries in the region have considerable scope for strengthening standards for child restraints.

- Moving forward, member countries should renew their commitment to refining these legal instruments and following the WHO-recommended best practices.

- Most countries in the Asia-Pacific region have enacted legislation addressing key road safety risk factors. However, enforcement is still a challenge. Only a handful of countries exhibit strong law enforcement practices, advanced technology adoption, and comprehensive legal frameworks, which together contribute to improved road safety outcomes

Adopting and Strengthening the Safe System Approach

A Safe System Approach remains the cornerstone of modern road safety strategies. ESCAP members should adopt an integrated approach that engages all sectors, fostering a culture of safety that permeates through every level of society. At the center of this approach lie strong institutions that can coordinate and lead actions among the various stakeholders. Coordinated action, rather than isolated interventions, will be more effective in reducing road traffic injuries and fatalities.

Advancing Road Infrastructure for Safety

The enhancement of road infrastructure to meet safety standards is vital. ESCAP encourages member countries to employ road safety audits and apply star ratings to assess and uplift the safety levels of new and existing roads. An alignment with international safety protocols, such as the specifications of the Asian Highway Network, should be seen as a priority to ensure uniformity and safety across the region.

Securing Funding for Road Safety Initiatives

While there have been commitments at various levels, funding for road safety remains insufficient. ESCAP calls for increased allocation of domestic budgets towards road safety and urges international partners, including development banks, to contribute to meeting the needs of the region, especially in low- and middle-income countries.

Fostering Regional and International Cooperation

In the spirit of the United Nations' resolutions and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, enhanced cooperation and partnership in road safety are imperative. ESCAP calls for its member countries to engage in constructive dialogue, share best practices, and implement joint initiatives to significantly improve road safety standards.

This report underscores the imperative for cohesive, well-supported strategies that will cement a safer future on our roads. It aligns with global road safety mandates, including SDG Targets 3.6 and 11.2 and the General Assembly Resolution 74/299, calling for an all-encompassing approach to road safety that keeps pace with both technological advances and societal changes. It highlights the need for ongoing research, innovative policy-making, and active community participation to create a network of safer roads. By fortifying their commitment to road safety, countries in the ESCAP region can shape an enduring legacy of life preservation, which in turn will contribute to the broader goals of sustainable development.

Improving Data Quality for Effective Road Safety Policies

The quality of road crash and road safety-related data in the ESCAP region varies significantly across member states, reflecting differences in economic development, institutional capacities, and data collection systems. For the Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023, 36 ESCAP members states reported 354,869 road deaths in 2021 which was only 50.69 percent of the total fatality number estimated by the World Health Organization. Reported road traffic death figures often differ from WHO's estimates due to several factors, including underreporting in official data, varying definitions of road traffic deaths, and differences in data collection methods. Many countries, especially low- and middle-income ones, lack reliable data systems, leading to underreporting, while WHO uses standardized definitions and multiple data sources (e.g., health records, surveys) to provide more accurate estimates. WHO also adjusts for delays and inconsistencies and uses modeling techniques to better approximate fatalities. As a result, WHO's figures tend to be higher and more reflective of the real burden of road traffic accidents than official reports.

Effective monitoring and evaluation of progress on road safety is contingent upon accurate data systems to measure and monitor road safety performance. To address data discrepancies in the region, the secretariat continued to work with the Asian Development Bank, the World Bank, and other partners, towards the strengthening of the Asia Pacific Road Safety Observatory (APRSO) which had 27 members as of July 2024.

Picture 12. Speed management campaign in Samoa. Credit: Ishtiaque Ahmed, PhD, Samoa.

Appendices

Note: The data presented in the appendices cover regional ESCAP Member States that responded to the WHO survey for the Global Status Report 2023.

Appendix A: List of ESCAP Member States that provided information for the Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023, WHO

Country	ESCAP Subregion	Road Traffic Mortality Data Reported in 2021	Data on Distribution of Road Traffic Deaths Reported in 2021
Afghanistan	South and South-West Asia	✓	---
Armenia	North and Central Asia	✓	✓
Australia	Pacific	✓	✓
Azerbaijan	North and Central Asia	✓	---
Bangladesh	South and South-West Asia	✓	---
Bhutan	South and South-West Asia	✓	---
Brunei Darussalam	South-East Asia	---	---
Cambodia	South-East Asia	✓	---
China	East and North-East Asia	✓	---
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	East and North-East Asia	---	---
Fiji	Pacific	✓	✓
Georgia	North and Central Asia	✓	---
India	South and South-West Asia	✓	---
Indonesia	South-East Asia	✓	---
Iran (Islamic Rep. of)	South and South-West Asia	✓	✓
Japan	East and North-East Asia	✓	✓
Kazakhstan	North and Central Asia	✓	✓
Kiribati	Pacific	✓	---
Kyrgyzstan	North and Central Asia	✓	---
Lao PDR*	South-East Asia	✓	---
Malaysia	South-East Asia	✓	✓
Maldives	South and South-West Asia	✓	✓
Marshall Islands	Pacific	---	---
Micronesia (FSM)**	Pacific	✓	✓
Mongolia	East and North-East Asia	✓	✓
Myanmar	South-East Asia	✓	✓
Nauru	Pacific	---	---
Nepal	South and South-West Asia	✓	✓
New Zealand	Pacific	✓	✓
Pakistan	South and South-West Asia	✓	---
Palau	Pacific	---	---
Papua New Guinea	Pacific	✓	✓
Philippines	South-East Asia	✓	✓
Republic of Korea	East and North-East Asia	✓	✓
Russian Federation	North and Central Asia	✓	✓
Samoa	Pacific	✓	✓
Singapore	South-East Asia	✓	✓
Solomon Islands	Pacific	✓	---
Sri Lanka	South and South-West Asia	✓	✓
Tajikistan	North and Central Asia	✓	---
Thailand	South-East Asia	✓	✓
Timor-Leste	South-East Asia	✓	---
Tonga	Pacific	✓	✓
Türkiye	South and South-West Asia	✓	✓

Turkmenistan	North and Central Asia	✓	---
Tuvalu	Pacific	---	---
Uzbekistan	North and Central Asia	✓	✓
Vanuatu	Pacific	✓	✓
Viet Nam	South-East Asia	✓	✓

Notes: *✓: Countries that reported to WHO. ---: Countries that did not report to WHO*

** Lao PDR: Lao People's Democratic Republic; ** Micronesia FSM: Federated States of Micronesia*

Appendix B: List of ESCAP countries by "Sub-regions" and "Income Group Category" (as classified by the World Bank), 2021

Sub-region	High-income	Upper-middle income	Lower-middle income	Low-income
East and North-East Asia	Japan	China	Mongolia	
	Republic of Korea			
North and Central Asia		Armenia	Kyrgyzstan	
		Azerbaijan	Tajikistan	
		Georgia	Uzbekistan	
		Kazakhstan		
		Russian Federation		
		Turkmenistan		
Pacific	Australia	Fiji	Kiribati	
	New Zealand	Tonga	Micronesia (FSM)	
			Papua New Guinea	
			Samoa	
			Solomon Islands	
			Vanuatu	
South and South-West Asia		Maldives	Bangladesh	Afghanistan
		Türkiye	Bhutan	
			India	
			Iran (Islamic Rep.of)	
			Nepal	
			Pakistan	
			Sri Lanka	
South-East Asia	Singapore	Malaysia	Cambodia	
		Thailand	Indonesia	
			Lao PDR	
			Myanmar	
			Philippines	
			Timor-Leste	
			Viet Nam	

Source: World Bank country classifications by income level: 2022-2023
https://blogs.worldbank.org/opendata/new-world-bank-country-classifications-income-level-2022-2023
Low-income: GNI per capita of $1,085 or below
Lower middle-income: GNI per capita ranging from $1,086 to $4,255
Upper middle-income: GNI per capita ranging from $4,256 and $13,205
High-income: GNI per capita exceeding $13,205.

Appendix C: List of ESCAP region countries with laws on "Seven Key Risk Factors", 2021

Country	Speed limit	Drink-driving	Drug-driving	Mobile phone use	Motorcycle helmet	Seat belt	Child restraint
Afghanistan	✓	✓	✓	---	---	---	---
Armenia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	---
Australia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Azerbaijan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	---
Bangladesh	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	---
Bhutan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	---
Cambodia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
China	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fiji	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Georgia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
India	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Indonesia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	---
Iran (Islamic Rep.of)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	---
Japan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Kazakhstan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Kiribati	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	---
Kyrgyzstan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	---
Lao PDR	✓	✓	---	✓	✓	✓	✓
Malaysia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Maldives	✓	---	---	✓	✓	✓	---
Micronesia (FSM)	✓	✓	✓	---	✓	---	---
Mongolia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	---
Myanmar	✓	✓	✓	---	✓	✓	✓
Nepal	✓	✓	✓	---	✓	✓	---
New Zealand	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pakistan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	---
Papua New Guinea	✓	✓	✓	---	✓	✓	---
Philippines	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Republic of Korea	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	---
Russian Federation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Samoa	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	---
Singapore	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Solomon Islands	✓	✓	✓	---	✓	---	---
Sri Lanka	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Tajikistan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	---
Thailand	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Timor-Leste	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	---
Tonga	✓	✓	---	---	✓	---	---
Turkey	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Turkmenistan	✓	✓	---	✓	✓	✓	---

Uzbekistan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	---
Vanuatu	---	✓	✓	---	✓	✓	---
Viet Nam	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	---

Appendix D: List of ESCAP region countries with 'Good Enforcement' of laws, 2021

Country	Speed limit	Drink-driving	Drug-driving	Mobile phone use	Motorcycle helmet	Seat belt	Child restraint
Afghanistan							
Armenia						✓	
Australia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Azerbaijan							
Bangladesh					✓	✓	
Bhutan					✓	✓	
Cambodia							
China	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Fiji						✓	
Georgia						✓	
India					✓	✓	
Indonesia	✓						
Iran (Islamic Republic of)						✓	
Japan						✓	
Kazakhstan						✓	
Kiribati		✓	✓	✓		✓	
Kyrgyzstan							
Lao PDR							
Malaysia					✓		✓
Maldives	✓					✓	
Micronesia (FSO)	✓						
Mongolia						✓	
Myanmar					✓	✓	
Nepal							
New Zealand	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Pakistan							
Papua New Guinea					✓	✓	
Philippines	✓					✓	✓
Republic of Korea						✓	
Russian Federation					✓	✓	
Samoa							
Singapore					✓	✓	✓
Solomon Islands					✓		
Sri Lanka					✓		
Tajikistan							
Thailand		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Timor-Leste					✓	✓	
Tonga					✓		
Turkey	✓					✓	✓

Turkmenistan						✓	
Uzbekistan							
Vanuatu							
Viet Nam		✓	✓	✓	✓		

Appendix E: List of ESCAP region countries with legislation on distracted driving (mobile phones), 2021

Country	Legislation on use of mobile phones	Ban on hand-held mobile phone use	Ban on hand-free mobile phone use
Afghanistan			
Armenia	✓	✓	
Australia	✓	✓	
Azerbaijan	✓	✓	
Bangladesh	✓		
Bhutan	✓	✓	
Cambodia	✓	✓	
China	✓	✓	
Fiji	✓	✓	✓
Georgia	✓	✓	
India	✓	✓	✓
Indonesia	✓		
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	✓	✓	✓
Japan	✓	✓	
Kazakhstan	✓	✓	
Kiribati	✓	✓	
Kyrgyzstan	✓	✓	
Lao People's Democratic Republic	✓	✓	✓
Malaysia	✓	✓	
Maldives	✓	✓	
Micronesia (Federated States of)			
Mongolia	✓	✓	
Myanmar			
Nepal			
New Zealand	✓	✓	
Pakistan	✓	✓	
Papua New Guinea			
Philippines	✓	✓	
Republic of Korea	✓	✓	
Russian Federation	✓	✓	
Samoa	✓	✓	
Singapore	✓	✓	
Solomon Islands			
Sri Lanka	✓	✓	
Tajikistan	✓	✓	
Thailand	✓	✓	
Timor-Leste	✓	✓	

Tonga			
Turkey	✓	✓	✓
Turkmenistan	✓	✓	✓
Uzbekistan	✓	✓	✓
Vanuatu			
Viet Nam	✓	✓	

Appendix F: List of ESCAP region countries with legislation on helmets for motorcycle riders, 2021

Country	National motorcycle helmet law	Legislation requires helmet fastening	Helmet for all riders	Specified helmet standards	Minimum age limit for child passengers
Afghanistan					
Armenia	✓	✓	✓		12
Australia	✓	✓	✓	✓	8
Azerbaijan	✓		✓		12
Bangladesh	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Bhutan	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Cambodia	✓		✓	✓	
China	✓		✓	✓	12
Fiji	✓	✓	✓		8
Georgia	✓	✓	✓		12
India	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Indonesia	✓		✓	✓	
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	✓		✓	✓	
Japan	✓		✓	✓	
Kazakhstan	✓	✓	✓		12
Kiribati	✓		✓	✓	
Kyrgyzstan	✓	✓	✓		12
Lao People's Democratic Republic	✓		✓		
Malaysia	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Maldives	✓		✓		3
Micronesia (Federated States of)	✓		✓		
Mongolia	✓		✓		
Myanmar	✓	✓	✓	✓	8
Nepal	✓		✓		
New Zealand	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Pakistan	✓		✓		
Papua New Guinea	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Philippines	✓		✓	✓	
Republic of Korea	✓		✓	✓	
Russian Federation	✓	✓	✓	✓	12
Samoa	✓	✓	✓		
Singapore	✓	✓	✓	✓	10
Solomon Islands	✓	✓	✓	✓	

Sri Lanka	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Tajikistan	✓	✓	✓		12
Thailand	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Timor-Leste	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Tonga	✓	✓	✓		
Turkey	✓		✓	✓	
Turkmenistan	✓		✓	✓	12
Uzbekistan	✓	✓	✓		12
Vanuatu	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Viet Nam	✓	✓	✓	✓	

Appendix G: List of ESCAP region countries with legislation on seat-belts for motor vehicle occupants, 2021

Country	National seat-belt law	Legislation applies to drivers	Legislation applies to front-seat passengers	Legislation applies to rear-seat passengers
Afghanistan				
Armenia	✓	✓	✓	✓
Australia	✓	✓	✓	✓
Azerbaijan	✓	✓		
Bangladesh	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bhutan	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cambodia	✓	✓	✓	
China	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fiji	✓	✓	✓	✓
Georgia	✓	✓	✓	✓
India	✓	✓	✓	✓
Indonesia	✓	✓	✓	
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Japan	✓	✓	✓	✓
Kazakhstan	✓	✓	✓	✓
Kiribati	✓	✓	✓	✓
Kyrgyzstan	✓	✓		
Lao People's Democratic Republic	✓	✓	✓	
Malaysia	✓	✓	✓	
Maldives	✓	✓	✓	✓
Micronesia (Federated States of)				
Mongolia	✓	✓	✓	✓
Myanmar	✓	✓	✓	✓
Nepal	✓	✓	✓	
New Zealand	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pakistan	✓	✓	✓	
Papua New Guinea	✓	✓	✓	✓
Philippines	✓	✓	✓	✓
Republic of Korea	✓	✓	✓	✓

Russian Federation	✓	✓	✓	✓
Samoa	✓	✓	✓	
Singapore	✓	✓	✓	✓
Solomon Islands				
Sri Lanka	✓	✓	✓	
Tajikistan	✓	✓	✓	
Thailand	✓	✓	✓	✓
Timor-Leste	✓	✓	✓	✓
Tonga				
Turkey	✓	✓	✓	✓
Turkmenistan	✓	✓	✓	✓
Uzbekistan	✓	✓	✓	
Vanuatu	✓	✓		
Viet Nam	✓	✓	✓	

Appendix H: List of ESCAP region countries with legislation on child restraint systems, 2021

Country	National child restraints use law	Children seated in front seat	Age specified for children requiring child restraint	Specified child restraint standards
Afghanistan				
Armenia				
Australia	✓	✓	7	✓
Azerbaijan				
Bangladesh				
Bhutan				
Cambodia	✓	✓	4	
China	✓			
Fiji	✓	✓	8	
Georgia	✓	✓	3	
India	✓		14	
Indonesia				
Iran (Islamic Republic of)				
Japan	✓	✓	6	✓
Kazakhstan	✓	✓		✓
Kiribati				
Kyrgyzstan				
Lao People's Democratic Republic	✓			
Malaysia	✓		12	✓
Maldives				
Micronesia (Federated States of)				
Mongolia				
Myanmar	✓			
Nepal				
New Zealand	✓	✓	7	
Pakistan				
Papua New Guinea				
Philippines	✓	✓	12	✓

Republic of Korea				
Russian Federation	✓	✓	7	✓
Samoa				
Singapore	✓	✓	6	✓
Solomon Islands				
Sri Lanka	✓			
Tajikistan				
Thailand	✓		6	
Timor-Leste				
Tonga				
Turkey	✓	✓	6	✓
Turkmenistan				
Uzbekistan				
Vanuatu				
Viet Nam				

Appendix I: List of ESCAP region countries with legislative measures for post-crash response, 2021

Country	Universal access to emergency care	Rehabilitative care for all injured	Psychological services	National good Samaritan law	National emergency care access number
Afghanistan					✓
Armenia					✓
Australia	✓	✓		✓	✓
Azerbaijan					
Bangladesh	✓			✓	✓
Bhutan	✓	✓	✓		✓
Cambodia					✓
China	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fiji					✓
Georgia	✓				✓
India	✓	✓		✓	✓
Indonesia	✓				✓
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	✓				✓
Japan					✓
Kazakhstan	✓	✓	✓		
Kiribati					✓
Kyrgyzstan	✓				
Lao PDR					
Malaysia	✓				✓
Maldives					✓
Micronesia (Federated States of)					✓
Mongolia					✓
Myanmar	✓				✓
Nepal	✓				✓
New Zealand	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Pakistan					✓
Papua New Guinea					✓
Philippines	✓				✓
Republic of Korea	✓		✓		✓
Russian Federation	✓	✓	✓		✓
Samoa	✓				✓
Singapore					✓
Solomon Islands					
Sri Lanka	✓				✓
Tajikistan					✓
Thailand	✓	✓			✓
Timor-Leste	✓	✓			✓
Tonga					✓
Turkey	✓	✓	✓		✓
Turkmenistan					✓
Uzbekistan					✓
Vanuatu					✓
Viet Nam	✓				✓

Appendix J: List of ESCAP region countries who adopted UN vehicle safety standards, 2021

Country	2W anti-lock brakes	Electronic stability control	Frontal impact	Side impact	Pedestrian protection	Seatbelt & seat-belt anchorages
Afghanistan						
Armenia						
Australia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Azerbaijan						
Bangladesh						
Bhutan						
Cambodia						
China	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fiji		✓				
Georgia		✓				
India		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Indonesia						
Iran (Islamic Republic of)						
Japan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Kazakhstan	✓	✓				✓
Kiribati						
Kyrgyzstan						
Lao PDR		✓				
Malaysia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Maldives						
Micronesia (Federated States of)						
Mongolia						
Myanmar		✓				

Nepal						
New Zealand		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pakistan	✓			✓	✓	
Papua New Guinea						
Philippines		✓				
Republic of Korea	✓			✓	✓	✓
Russian Federation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Samoa						
Singapore		✓				
Solomon Islands						
Sri Lanka		✓				
Tajikistan						
Thailand		✓				
Timor-Leste						
Tonga						
Turkey	✓	✓	✓			✓
Turkmenistan						
Uzbekistan						
Vanuatu						
Viet Nam						

Appendix K: WHO Criteria for best practices in road traffic legislation

Risk factor	Criteria representing best practices	Number of ESCAP member States which meet criteria	% which meet criteria
Speed	National speed law in place	42	*98*
	Speed limits on urban roads ≤50 km/h	18	*42*
	Local authorities have the power to modify national speed limits	17	*40*
Drink-driving	National drink-driving law in place	42	*98*
	Drink-driving law is based on blood alcohol content (BAC) or equivalent breath alcohol content (BrAC)	19	*44*
	BAC limit for general population ≤ 0.05 g/dl	25	*58*
	BAC limit for young/novice drivers ≤ 0.02 g/dl	8	*19*
Drug-driving*	Basic legislation (*currently insufficient evidence to identify best practices).*	39	*91*
Distracted driving*	Legislation on mobile phone use (*currently insufficient evidence to identify best practices on distracted driving)*	35	*81*
	Ban on handheld mobile phone use	33	*77*
	Ban on hands-free mobile phone use	7	*16*
	National motorcycle helmet law in place	42	*98*

Motorcycle helmets	Law applies to motorcycle drivers and adult passenger	42	*98*
	Law applies to all road types	40	*93*
	Law applies to all engine types	40	*93*
	Law requires helmet to be fastened properly	25	*58*
	Law requires helmet to meet a national or international standard	26	*60*
Seat belts	National seat belt law in place for drivers	39	*91*
	Law applies to all front seat passengers	36	*84*
	Law applies to rear seat passengers	25	*58*
Child restraints	National child restraint law in place	19	*44*
	Law is based on age-weight-height or a combination of these factors	13	*30*
	Law restricts children under a certain age-height from sitting in front seat	11	*26*
	Specified child-restraint standards	8	*19*

Source: WHO (2023a). * Note that for drug-driving and distracted driving, there is currently insufficient evidence for best practices to be identified.