50% of road deaths in European cities are pedestrians & cyclists

(1) Killed on urban roads: pedestrians = 39%; (motorcyclists = 19%); cyclists = 12%. 51%
(2) Seriously injured on urban roads: pedestrians = 25%; (motorcyclists = 22%); cyclists = 23% 48%

Nearly 5,000 pedestrians and cyclists were killed on urban roads in the EU in 2017 and over 50,000 were seriously injured.

Annual progress in reducing serious injuries slower than reducing deaths

Serious injury data, still an often overlooked issue despite the life-long challenges that such injuries cause. Annual progress in reducing serious injuries slower than reducing deaths which itself is slower than reducing deaths on roads outside urban areas.

PROGRESS IN REDUCING ROAD DEATHS ON URBAN ROADS IS SLOWER COMPARED TO OTHER ROADS

On urban roads has been just 0.6% since 2010, compared to a 2.2% annual reduction in the number of road deaths on those roads.

MORTALITY ON URBAN ROADS DIFFERS BY A FACTOR OF NINE BETWEEN COUNTRIES
The restricted space in urban areas must be used intelligently and effectively to enable increased mobility without putting road users in danger. This might require dedicating some of the space currently reserved for motor vehicles, to walking and cycling.

Adopt and promote a policy of modal priority for road users, the hierarchy being based on safety, vulnerability and sustainability.

Walking should be at the top of the hierarchy, followed by cycling and use of public transport.

Revise the Directive 2015/413 concerning cross-border exchange of information on road safety related traffic offences to strengthen the enforcement chain, with the priority on speeding.

As pedestrian your risk of serious injuries is highest on Bulgaria they account for 44% of all seriously injured on urban roads in Israel, 42% in Bulgaria, 41% in Latvia and 39% in Romania. Pedestrians account for just 7% of all recorded serious injuries in Sweden, cyclists for as many as 61%.

Safety potential of 30 km/h zones

Speeds of below 30 km/h pedestrians and cyclists can mix with motor vehicles in relative safety.

As well as reducing impact severity in the case of a collision, a maximum speed of 30 km/h creates opportunities for positive interaction among road users through visual communication, and it gives drivers more time to both make use of their visual field to see potential hazards and to react to these. Lower speed also reduces feelings of danger for pedestrians and cyclists and might encourage more people to walk and cycle.

Traffic calming measures are known to be very influential in encouraging drivers to comply with the 30 km/h speed limit.

A combination of traffic calming measures, such as roundabouts, road narrowing, chicanes or road humps in 30 km/h zones are essential to discouraging drivers from exceeding the speed limit, together with enforcement.

The reason for the rising popularity of 30 km/h zones could also be that as well as decreasing severe road collisions, 30 km/h zones can contribute to a modal shift towards walking and cycling which brings health and environmental benefits and an overall increased quality of life in urban areas.

Jeannot Mersch FEVR president: “if we consider pedestrians and cyclists, environment friendly and good for health, they make up over half of the killed and seriously injured in urban areas. This has to be stopped.”