

Brussels, 19 February 2026
(OR. en)

6516/26
ADD 22

TRANS 86

COVER NOTE

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

date of receipt: 13 February 2026

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

Subject: COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT Monitoring Road Safety Progress in the EU - Portugal Accompanying the document COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS Report on the Implementation of the EU Road Safety Policy Framework at the Mid-Point

Delegations will find attached document SWD(2026) 54 final.

Encl.: SWD(2026) 54 final

Brussels, 13.2.2026
SWD(2026) 54 final

COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT

Monitoring Road Safety Progress in the EU - Portugal

Accompanying the document

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

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

{COM(2026) 77 final} - {SWD(2026) 33 final} - {SWD(2026) 34 final} -
{SWD(2026) 35 final} - {SWD(2026) 36 final} - {SWD(2026) 37 final} -
{SWD(2026) 38 final} - {SWD(2026) 39 final} - {SWD(2026) 40 final} -
{SWD(2026) 41 final} - {SWD(2026) 42 final} - {SWD(2026) 43 final} -
{SWD(2026) 44 final} - {SWD(2026) 45 final} - {SWD(2026) 46 final} -
{SWD(2026) 47 final} - {SWD(2026) 48 final} - {SWD(2026) 49 final} -
{SWD(2026) 50 final} - {SWD(2026) 51 final} - {SWD(2026) 52 final} -
{SWD(2026) 53 final} - {SWD(2026) 55 final} - {SWD(2026) 56 final} -
{SWD(2026) 57 final} - {SWD(2026) 58 final} - {SWD(2026) 59 final}

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1. Summary

In 2024, Portugal was **substantially above the EU average** (45) with 58 road fatalities per million inhabitants. Compared to 2019, a decrease of 10% in road fatalities was achieved. In 2023, 2,500 people were seriously injured which is 5% higher than the respective figure in 2019.

Compared to the EU average, the distribution of fatalities in Portugal shows a relatively high proportion of fatalities among riders of powered two wheelers (PTWs) and on urban roads.

In the National Road Safety Strategy of Portugal (Vision Zero 2030), the **targets of halving the numbers of road fatalities and serious injuries by 2030** compared to 2019 have been set. The Vision Zero 2030 sets out the long-term vision for road safety policy and establishes the corresponding strategic and operational goals, which are implemented through biennial action plans. In addition, 62 potential road safety interventions are proposed in the strategy, grouped into eight areas, which can be included in the action plans. The Strategy has not been formally approved which makes it challenging to implement.

Based on the latest available data, Portugal **is currently not yet on track to meet the 2030 targets**.

2. Road Safety Strategy and Measures

2.1 Road Safety Strategy

The National Road Safety Authority (ANSR), in the context of carrying out its planning and coordination work to support the Government's Road Safety policy, prepared the National Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030 – **Vision Zero 2030**, in accordance with the European Commission's road safety policy 2021-2030, the Stockholm Declaration, the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the Safe System approach. The Vision Zero 2030 sets out the **long-term vision for road safety policy** of the country and establishes the corresponding strategic and operational goals, which are **implemented through biennial action plans**¹.

A document on the methodology for the preparation of biennial action plans has also been published².

¹ <https://visaozero2030.pt/en/>

² https://visaozero2030.pt/wp-content/uploads/Phase_2.3-Methodology_for_the_preparation_of_biennial_action_plans.pdf

Table 23.1: National road safety strategy

Portugal	
Timeframe	2021-2030
Lead Authority	National road safety authority with scientific support from the National Laboratory for Civil Engineering (LNEC) and Prof. Fred Wegman from Delft University
Link	https://visaozero2030.pt/en/

2.2 Road Safety Governance

The National Road Safety Authority (ANSR), the Executive Council of Experts, the Non-Executive Council of Experts, the National Consultation Council and the International Consultation Council are responsible for the **formulation of the national road safety strategy**.

The National Road Safety Authority is responsible for the **monitoring of road safety developments** in the country.

2.3 Main Safety Issues

According to the National Road Safety Strategy of Portugal, and based on the crash statistics of the period 2010-2019, the following main issues arise, which also form some of the main challenges for the decade 2021-2030:

- In the period 2010-2019, 54% of fatalities and 60% of killed and serious injured casualties (KSI) occurred in **urban areas**.
- **PTW riders** represented 30% of fatalities on streets and through roads in the period 2015-2019.
- The **pedestrian** mortality rate in Portugal (13.9 fatalities per million habitants) is higher than the EU average (10.4).
- In 2015-2019, a high increase of 15% was recorded in the mortality rate in **age group 20-24 years**, which can be partially explained by the increase in the number of motorcyclists.
- The percentage of drivers killed in crashes who had **BAC above 0.5 g/l** increased in the period 2015-2019.
- **Speeding** is most prevalent on all road types in Portugal, compared to other European countries.

2.4 Road Safety Targets

The following general targets have been set in the Road Safety Action Plan 2021-2030 of Portugal:

- By 2030, a **50% reduction in fatalities**, compared to 2019.
- By 2030, a **50% reduction in serious injuries**, compared to 2019.

2.5 Road Safety Measures

A total of **62 potential interventions** divided in **eight areas** are proposed in the road safety strategy, which can be included in the road safety action plans. The potential effects of these interventions have been estimated based on literature findings³.

Table 23.2: Road safety areas and number of potential interventions

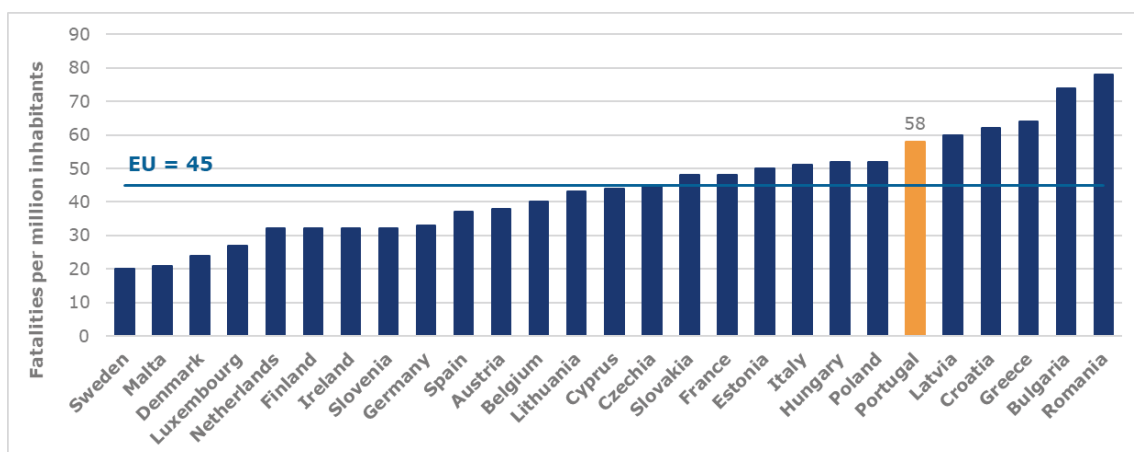
Area	Interventions
1. Urban areas	6
2. Rural roads	7
3. All road categories	10
4. PTW riders	15
5. Speeding	8
6. Education and driver training and licensing	8
7. Alcohol	6
8. Exposure and travel mode	2
Total	62

3. Road Safety Progress

3.1 Road Safety Outcomes

In Portugal, 618 people were killed in 2024 based on provisional data and 2,500 were seriously injured in road crashes in 2023. Based on preliminary data for 2024, Portugal ranked **22nd out of the 27 EU countries in terms of the lowest numbers of fatalities** per million inhabitants. In fact, 58 road fatalities per million inhabitants were recorded that year, which was well above the EU average (45).

Figure 23.1 Mortality rates by country, 2024



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

³https://visaozero2030.pt/wp-content/uploads/PHASE2-Technical_Scientific_Foundations_2021-2030_Road_Safety_Strategy-Framework_potential_interventions.pdf

Compared to 2019, which is the baseline, the number of fatalities decreased by 10% in 2024, while the number of serious injuries increased by 5% in 2023. Thus, based on the latest available data, Portugal needs **further actions to meet the 2030 targets of halving the numbers of road fatalities and serious injuries.**

Figure 23.2 Road fatalities and target 2030
(Source CARE database)⁴

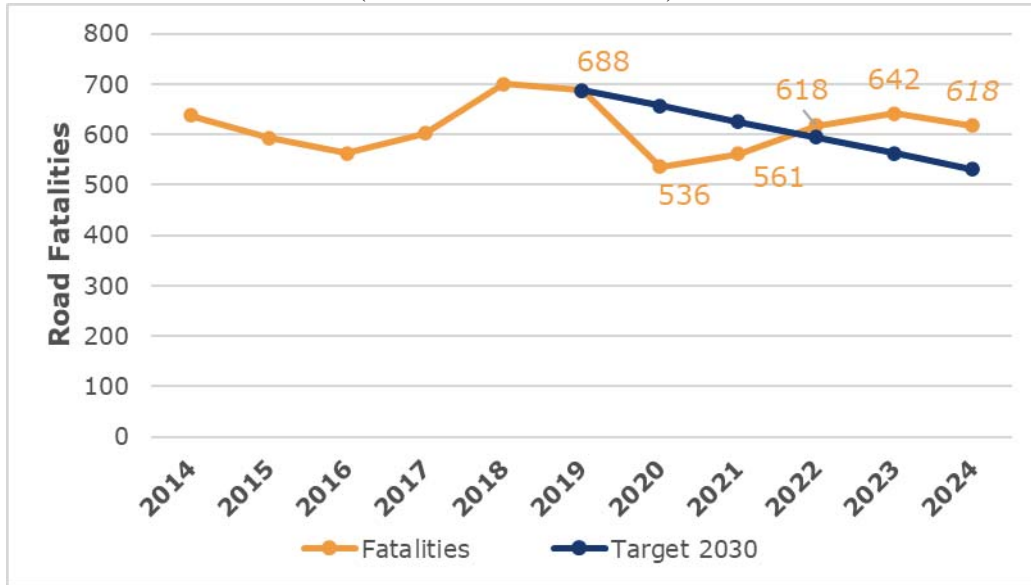
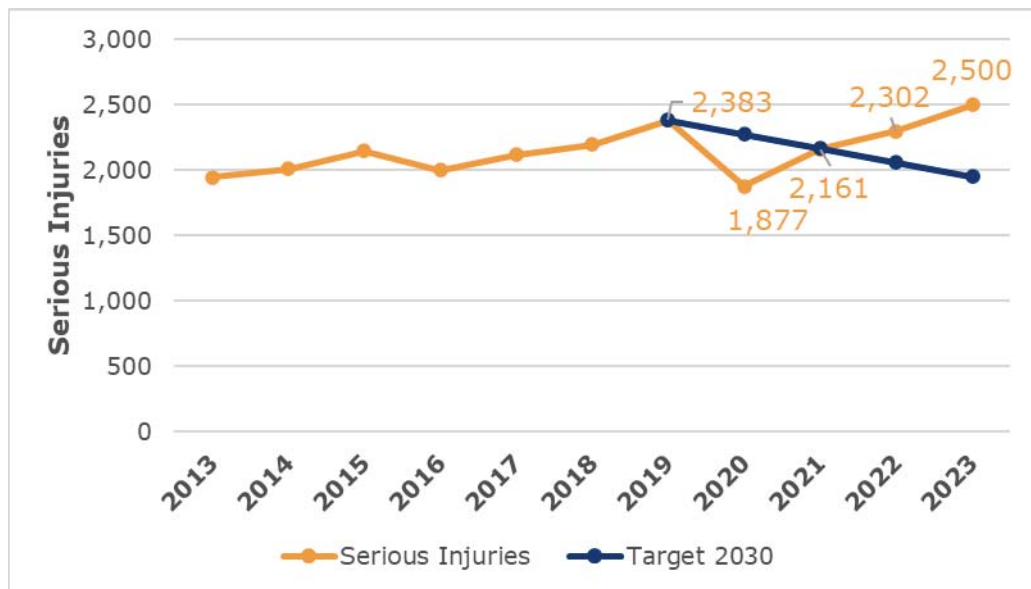


Figure 23.3 Serious road injuries
(Source: CARE database)⁴



⁴ It is noted that the global COVID-19 pandemic had an impact on the CARE data for 2020 and 2021 for many European countries. Traffic volumes dropped sharply during the pandemic due to traffic restrictions, which was associated with a significant drop in road traffic crashes and fatalities.

Compared to the EU average, the distribution of fatalities in Portugal shows that a relatively high proportion of fatalities are registered among powered two-wheelers. Also, a higher-than-average proportion of the fatalities occur on urban roads⁵. In fact, fatalities on urban roads accounted for 55% of all road fatalities in 2023 and powered two-wheelers for 30%.

An overview of the evolution of road fatalities and serious injuries during the period 2019-2023 (year with the latest available data) is provided below for specific types of roads, crashes and road users. Overall, in Portugal, road fatalities declined for almost all groups, except on roads outside urban areas and among powered two-wheeler (PTW) riders and cyclists. The highest increase was recorded for cyclists (22%) and PTW riders (19%), while the highest decrease was recorded on motorways (27%) and among pedestrians (22%).

On the other hand, the number of serious injuries increased between 2019 and 2013. Increases are observed for all groups examined, except serious injuries on motorways and pedestrians. The largest increase of serious injuries was recorded for cyclists (49%), followed by PTW riders (29%).

Table 23.3: Evolution of road fatalities, 2019-2023

Fatalities	2019	2023	% in 2023	% change 2019-2023
Total road fatalities	688	642	-	-7%
Inside urban areas	394	350	55%	-11%
Outside urban areas	227	243	38%	+7%
Motorways	67	49	8%	-27%
Single vehicle crashes	282	257	40%	-9%
Multi vehicle crashes	279	290	45%	+4%
Car occupants	235	230	36%	-2%
PTW riders	163	194	30%	+19%
Cyclists	27	33	5%	+22%
Pedestrians	140	109	17%	-22%

⁵ European Commission (2023), Country Profile Portugal. Road Safety Observatory. Brussels, European Commission, Directorate General for Transport.

Table 23.4: Evolution of serious injuries, 2019-2023

Serious Injuries	2019	2023	% in 2023	% change 2019-2023
Total serious injuries	2,383	2,500	-	+5%
Inside urban areas	1,559	1,682	67%	+8%
Outside urban areas	656	668	27%	+2%
Motorways	168	150	6%	-11%
Single vehicle crashes	921	957	38%	+4%
Multi vehicle crashes	1,048	1,215	49%	+16%
Car occupants	790	805	32%	+2%
PTW riders	715	925	37%	+29%
Cyclists	121	180	7%	+49%
Pedestrians	450	350	14%	-22%

3.2 Road Safety Performance Indicators

Portugal performs better than the EU average on seat-belt use among front car occupants, but the respective rate for rear passengers is at the same level as the EU average. Self-reported drink-driving is slightly higher than the EU average. Also, the average age of the passenger car fleet in Portugal is higher than the EU average, at 13.6 years.

Table 23.5: Road Safety Performance Indicators, 2022 – 2025 (Source: ERSO, Country Profiles)

	Portugal		EU	
	2022	2025	2022	2025
Speeding⁶				
% of passenger cars travelling within speed limits ^a				
Motorways	44.0	69.0	-	-
Rural Roads	36.0	52.0	-	-
Urban Roads	73.0	76.0	-	-
Seat belt & CRS use rates (%) ^{a,b}				
Front	98.0	97.7	93.1	92.4
Rear	78.3	73.8	75.3	69.9
Child restraint systems (roadside observations)	90.7	-	67.0	83.3
Child restraint systems (in-vehicle inspections)	/	/	-	-
Helmet use rates (%) ^a				
PTW driver	99.8	99.9	97.0	97.6
PTW passenger	99.5	99.4	94.4	97.0
Cyclist	47.7	38.2	37.8	34.5
DUI of Alcohol^c (self-reported)				
% of car drivers who have driven at least once in the last 30 days over the legal limit	12.7	-	11.8	11.8
Driver Distraction ^a				
% of drivers not using hand-held mobile device/phone while driving	96.7	95.3	94.8	94.5
Vehicle Safety				
^a % of new passenger cars rated with 4 EuroNCAP stars and above	69.7	82.0	83.6	82.7
Average age of passenger car fleet (years) ^d	13.6	13.6	12.3	12.5

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

⁶ An EU average is not available for speeding, due to different legal speed limits among countries, which does not allow for a straightforward comparison.

4. Monitoring Road Safety Strategy Implementation

This section is based on the self-assessment provided by the country. Since Portugal did not provide a self-assessment, the sections below are left intentionally empty.

4.1 Implementing progress

4.2 Best practices

4.3 Gaps

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

In the Portuguese road traffic safety strategy for the decade 2021-2030, the **targets of halving the numbers of road fatalities and serious injuries by 2030**, compared to 2019, have been set. A total of 62 potential interventions grouped into eight road safety areas are included in the road safety strategy, which can be included in the biennial road safety action plans.

In 2024, Portugal, with 58 road fatalities per million inhabitants, ranked **22nd out of the 27 EU countries in terms of the lowest numbers of fatalities per population**. Compared to the EU average, the distribution of fatalities in Portugal shows a relatively high proportion of fatalities on urban roads and among riders of powered two-wheelers.

Compared to 2019, the number of fatalities decreased by 10% in 2024, while an increase of 5% in serious injuries was recorded in 2023. In addition, the number of killed and seriously injured cyclists and PTW riders was considerably increased over the period 2019-2023. Thus, based on the latest available data, Portugal needs **further actions to meet the 2030 targets**.

Progress is arguably hampered by the fact that since 2022 the National Strategy has not been formally approved. A lack of empowerment makes implementation challenging. For example, the ANSR has no powers to convene other stakeholders such as infrastructure managers, municipalities, schools. Approval of the Strategy would appear to be an important step forward.