



# Press release

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## ***Dramatic decline fatal road accidents in 2008***

- **750 road deaths in 2008**
- **Substantial decline among children, young people and young adults**
- **Far fewer pedestrians killed in road accidents**
- **No further decline among car passengers**
- **Netherlands has lowest number of traffic deaths in Europe after Malta**

Last year, 750 people died on Dutch roads. This is a decrease by 41 (more than 5 percent) relative to 2007. The number of road victims fell significantly in extra vulnerable categories like children, young people and young adults. In 2007, the traffic death toll was 791. According to the latest figures released today by Statistics Netherlands and the Centre for Transport and Navigation of the Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management, the downward trend observed in recent years still continues. Eurostat data show that the Netherlands has the lowest number of traffic deaths per million inhabitants within the European Union (EU) after Malta.

Last year, 750 people died in traffic accidents. In the 1970s, more than 3 thousand people annually died in traffic, the highest numbers ever recorded. In the early 21st century, the annual traffic death toll was approximately 1,100. The downward trend in recent years continued in 2008.

In 2008, the number of deaths dropped dramatically in groups regarded as vulnerable, like children, young people and young adults. There is a huge decline in the 0-15 age category. The number of victims in this age group plummeted from 36 to 25. Across nearly all age categories, the number of pedestrians who died in traffic accidents diminished except among people in their forties and over-80s.

Most road deaths are recorded among people in their twenties. The death toll in this age group was also lower, but remains high with 129 fatal accidents. In the 20-30 age category, the proportion (68 percent) of car drivers and passengers involved in fatal accidents was strikingly high. Overall, 42 percent died in cars. For the first time in many years, there is no decline in the number of car passenger victims.

The robust increase recorded last year in the number of people killed in road accidents in the province of Limburg was in 2008 back to the level of the preceding years.

Just like in previous years, North Brabant had the highest death toll of all Dutch provinces. This is partly due to the extensive road system. In the period 1996-2008, fewer people were killed on roads in North Brabant. The number

of victims fell by over 40 percent, the decline was about the same as for the Netherlands as a whole. There is a remarkable increase in fatal road accidents in the province of Groningen. Half of them were cyclists.

The number of road deaths per million inhabitants in the Netherlands is among the lowest in the EU. According to data provided by Eurostat, the European statistical office, Malta had the lowest ratio in 2007, with the Netherlands holding second place. With 218 deaths per million inhabitants, Lithuania had the highest ratio. The Netherlands also performs well in comparison to surrounding countries. Belgium's ratio was more than twice as high, France's nearly twice as high as the Dutch ratio.