



Australian Government
Australian Transport Safety Bureau



Safe Transport

Young People and Road Crashes

December 2004

YOUNG PEOPLE AS ROAD USERS

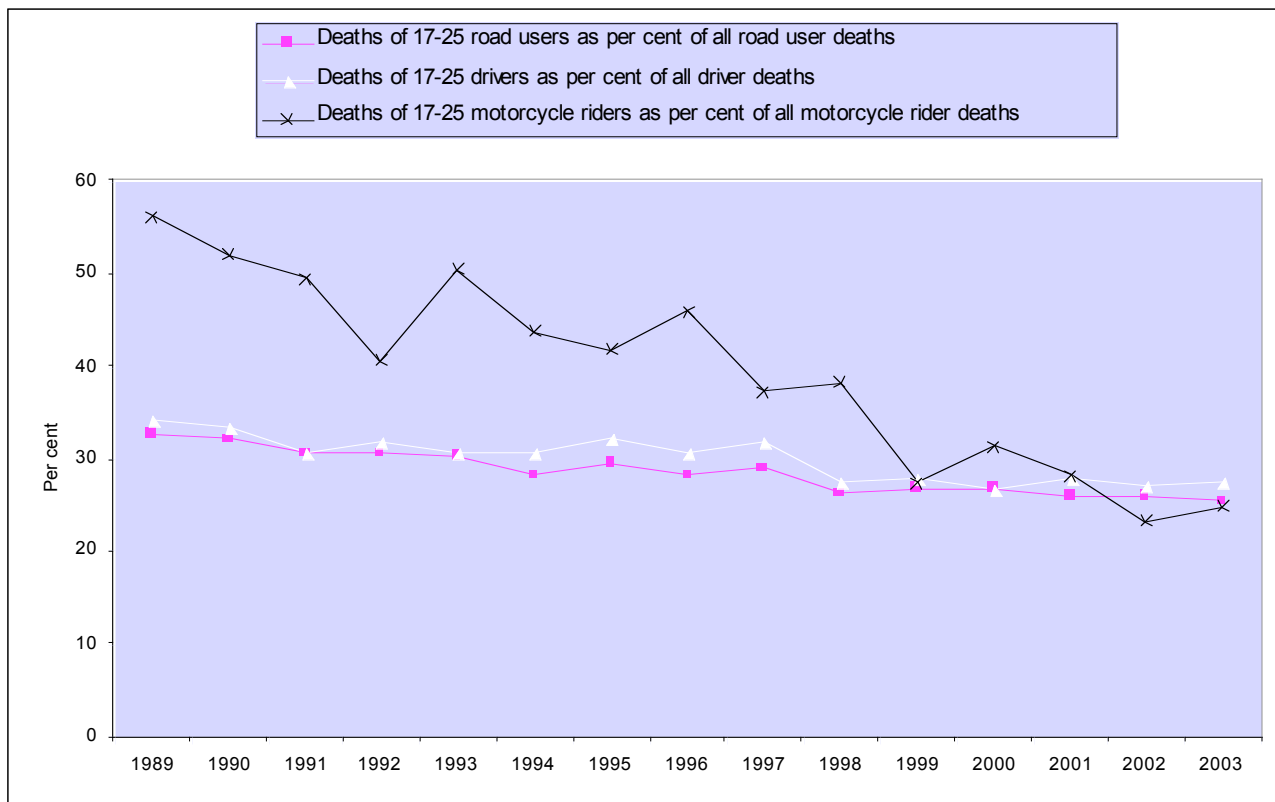
A vulnerable group on the roads

Road deaths 2003			
	All road users	17-25 year olds	Deaths of 17-25s as per cent of all road user deaths
Males	1,151	324	28%
Females	470	88	19%
Persons	1,621	412	25%
Persons seriously injured in road crashes 2002			
	All road users	17-25 year olds	17-25s seriously injured as per cent of all road users seriously injured
Males	14,816	3,844	26%
Females	7,432	1,640	22%
Persons	22,248	5,484	25%

- In 2003, 17-25 year olds represented 25 per cent of road deaths.
- In 2002, 17-25 year olds represented 25 per cent of persons seriously injured in road crashes.

A significant but declining proportion of road user deaths

Deaths of 17-25 year old road users as a proportion (per cent) of deaths of selected road user groups: all road users, drivers and motorcycle riders



- 17-25 year old road users have dropped from being 33 per cent of all road user deaths in 1989 to 25 per cent in 2003.
- 17-25 year old drivers have dropped from being 34 per cent of all driver deaths in 1989 to 28 per cent in 2003.
- 17-25 year old motorcycle riders have dropped from being 56 per cent of all motorcycle rider deaths in 1989 to 25 per cent in 2003.

YOUNG PEOPLE AS ROAD USERS

A vulnerable group on the roads but the problem is not unique to Australia

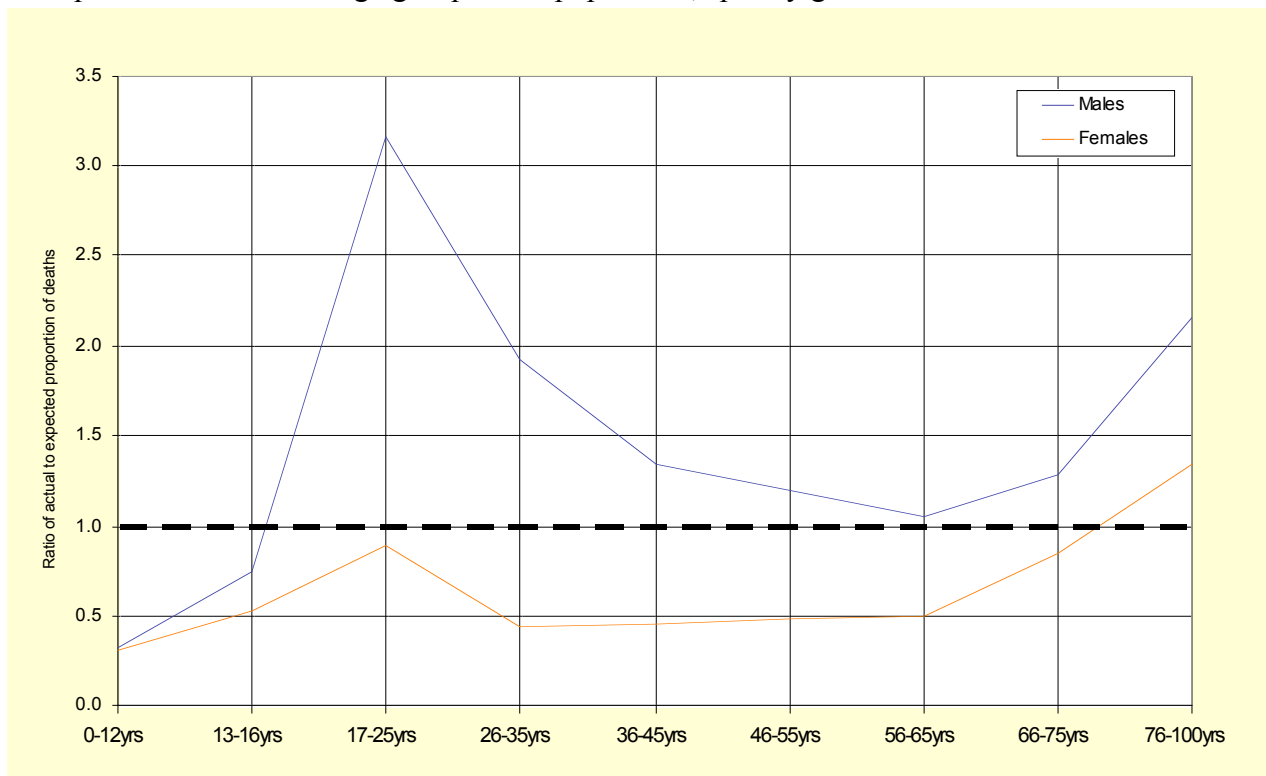
Road deaths per 100,000 population in 2002 by age group: Australia compared with countries in the European Union

	0-17yrs	18-24yrs	25-44yrs	45-64yrs	65+yrs	Total
Sweden	2.0	14.0	6.3	5.3	7.9	6.0
United Kingdom	2.7	14.3	6.9	4.4	7.0	6.1
Netherlands	2.8	15.3	6.0	4.3	9.7	6.1
Finland	2.9	15.8	7.4	7.5	12.6	8.0
Ireland	3.7	17.3	10.3	7.1	13.8	9.6
Denmark	3.4	17.8	9.2	7.1	13.0	8.6
AUSTRALIA	3.9	18.5	10.3	6.8	10.5	8.7
Italy	3.7	22.3	12.4	9.2	13.3	11.7
Spain	4.4	23.0	15.4	12.1	12.0	13.2
Germany	3.5	23.4	8.5	6.6	8.8	8.3
Austria	4.2	25.6	11.5	10.9	17.0	11.9
France	4.2	30.6	15.3	10.2	13.9	12.9

- In countries in the European Union, young people in the 18-24 age group have a rate (per 100,000 population) of dying in a road crash that is, on average, twice as high as that for the remainder of the population.
- The road crash death rate for 18-24 year old road users in Australia sits roughly in the middle when compared with the rates for 18-24 year olds in these countries.

Males are the main problem

Ratio of actual proportion of road deaths in each age group in 2003 to expected proportion based on the representation of each age group in the population, split by gender

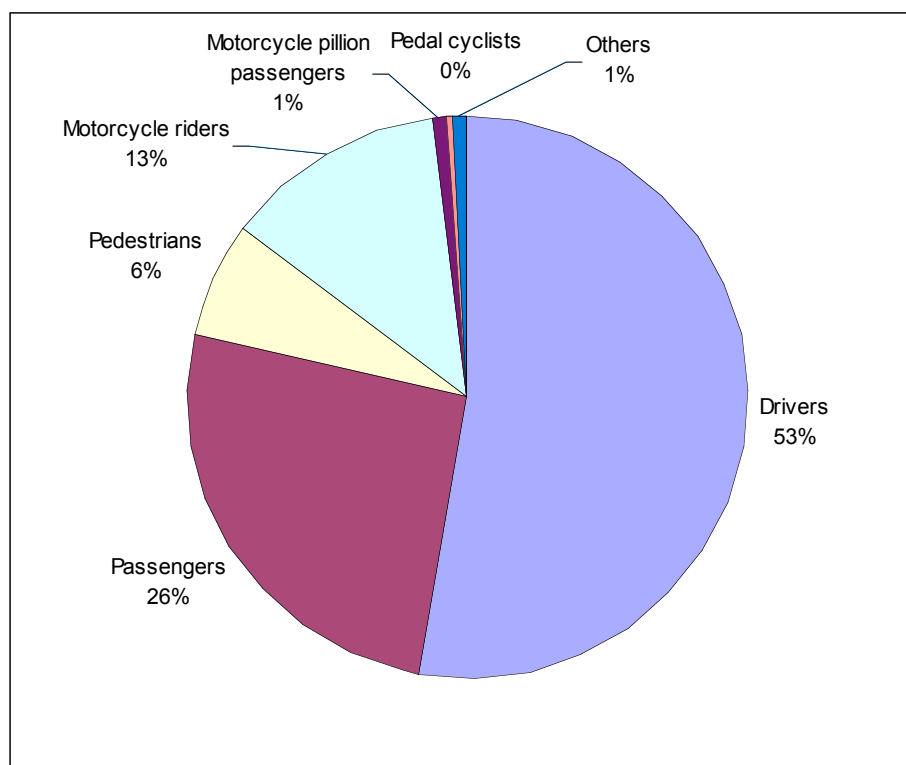


- In 2003, 17-25 year old males represented 6 per cent of the population but 20 per cent of road deaths. In other words, the number of road crash deaths of 17-25 year old males was more than 3 times what would be expected based on their representation in the population (ratio of 3:1 rather than 1:1).

Road users in the 17-25 age group in the fatal injury figures

Males

Male 17-25 year old road users killed in road crashes in 2003: proportion (per cent) in each road user group

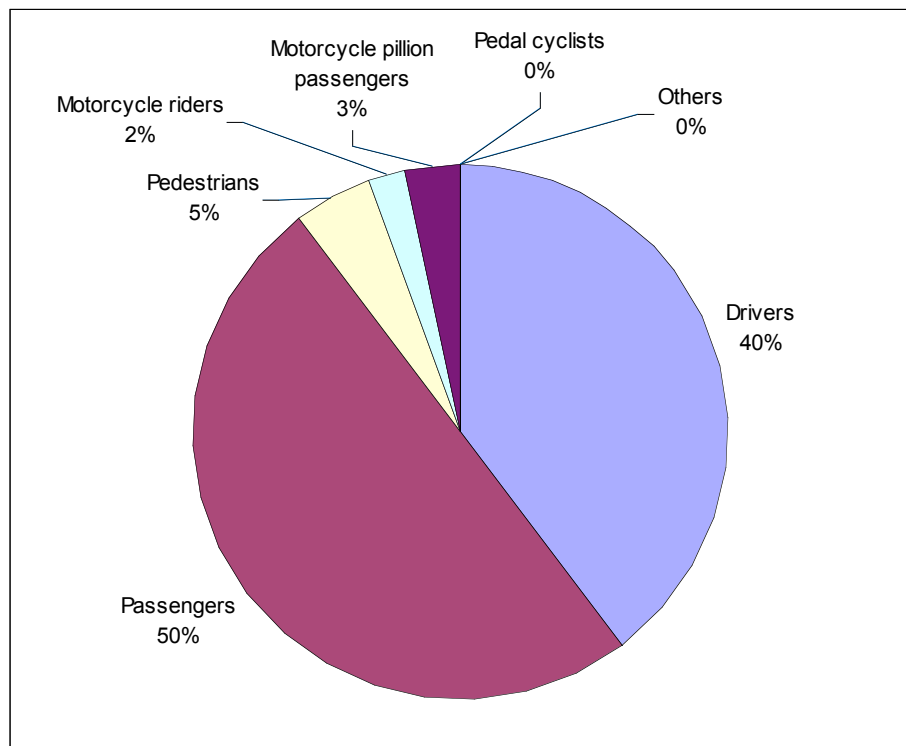


- In 2003, the latest calendar year for which road deaths data are available, a total of 1,621 road users were killed in road crashes. Of these, 1,151 were males and 324 males in the 17-25 age group.
- Within the 17-25 age group of road users, the males who were killed in road crashes in 2003 were mainly drivers (53 per cent), passengers (26 per cent) and motorcycle riders (13 per cent).

Road users in the 17-25 age group in the fatal injury figures

Females

Female 17-25 year old road users killed in road crashes in 2003: proportion (per cent) in each road user group

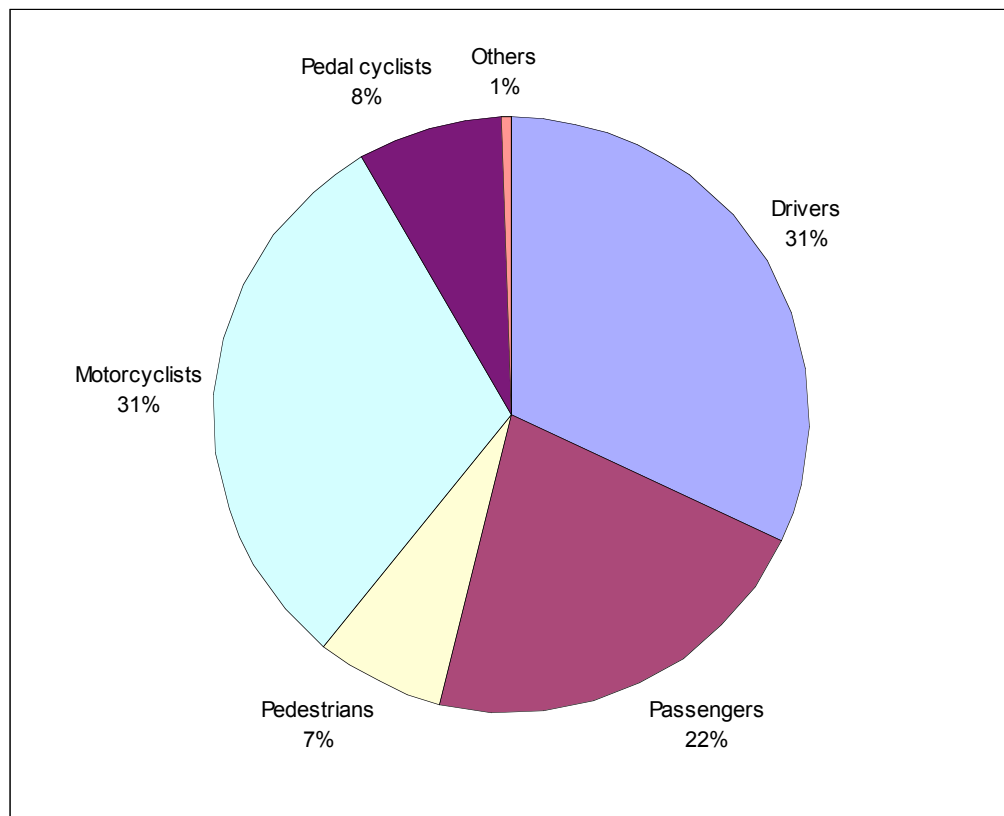


- In 2003, the latest calendar year for which road deaths data are available, a total of 1,621 road users were killed in road crashes. Of these, 469 were females and 88 females in the 17-25 age group.
- Within the 17-25 age group of road users, the females who were killed in road crashes in 2003 were mainly passengers (50 per cent) and drivers (40 per cent).
- Within the 17-25 age group of road users, the total number of female road deaths (all female road users) in 2003 was 88, while there were 84 male passenger deaths alone in 2003.

Road users in the 17-25 age group in the serious injury figures

Males

Male 17 to 25 year old road users seriously injured in road crashes in 2002: proportion (per cent) in each road user group

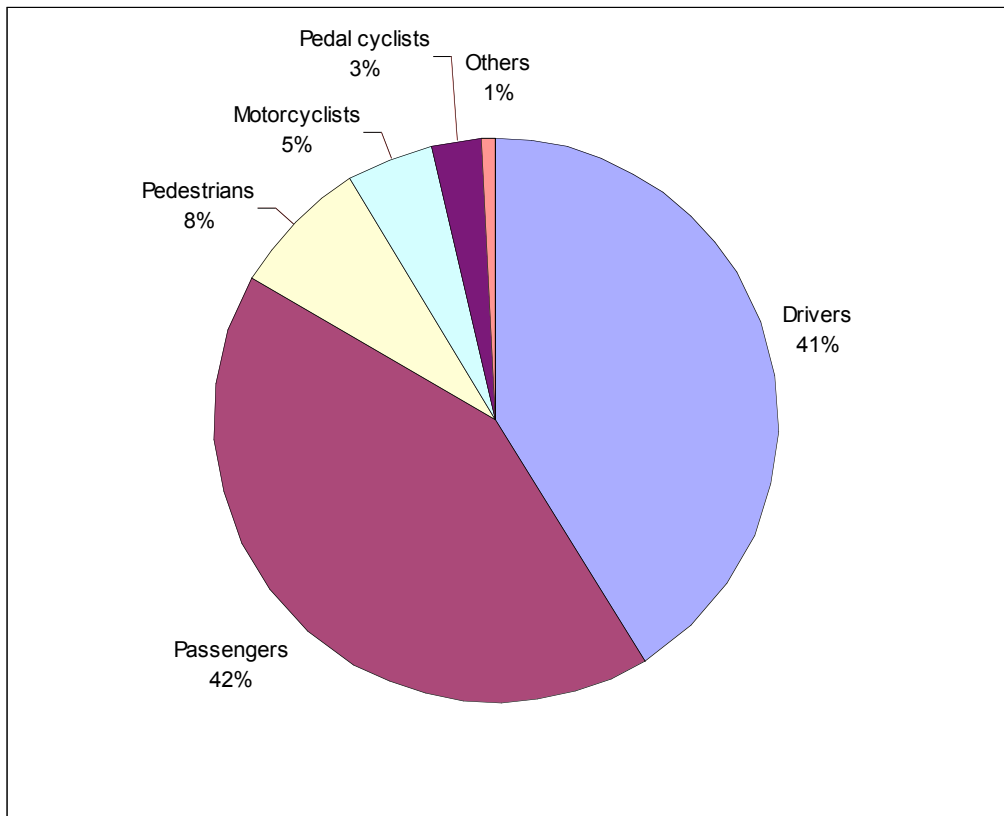


- In 2002, the latest calendar year for which serious injury data are available, a total of 22,248 road users were seriously injured in road crashes. Of these, 14,816 were males and 3,844 females.
- Within the 17-25 age group of road users, the males who were seriously injured in road crashes in 2002 were mainly drivers (31 per cent) and motorcyclists (31 per cent).

Road users in the 17-25 age group in the serious injury figures

Females

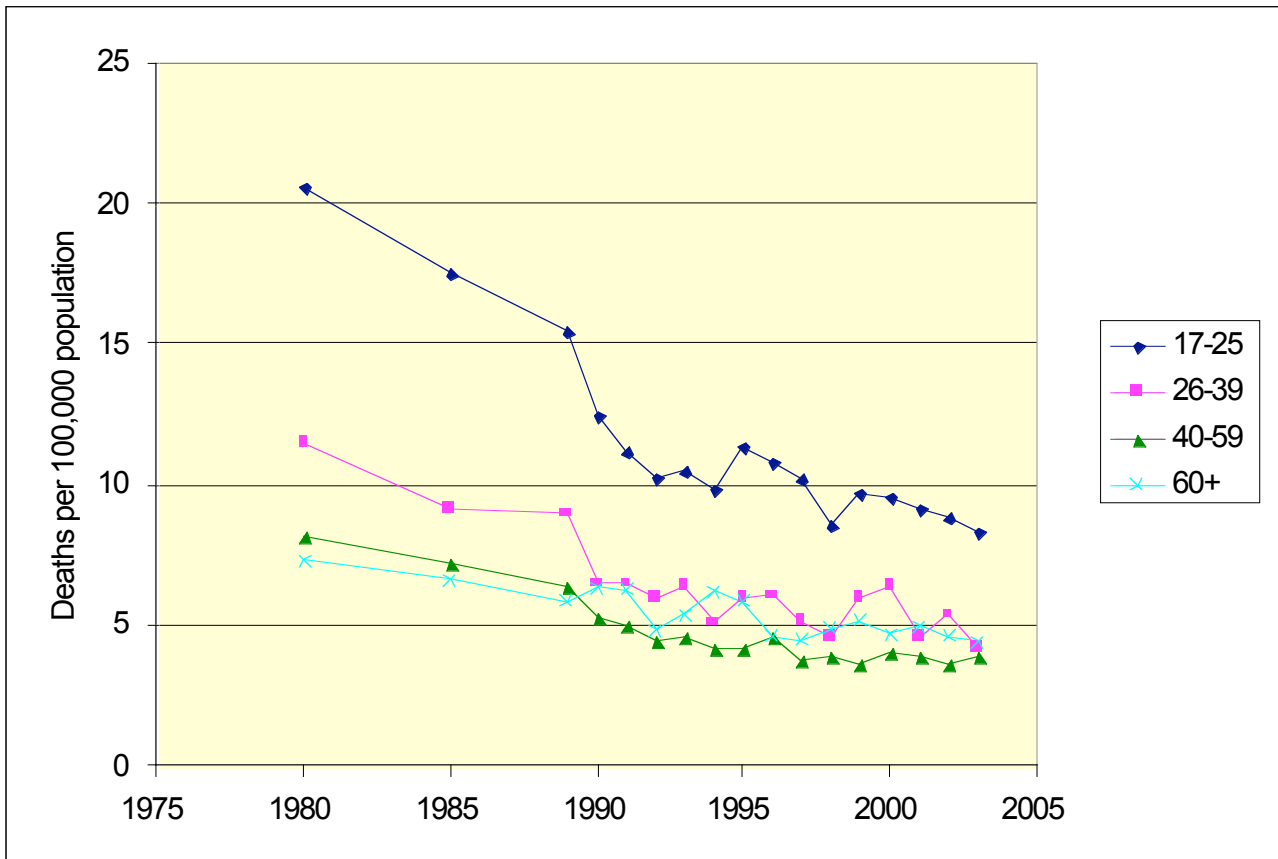
Female 17 to 25 year old road users seriously injured in road crashes in 2002: proportion (per cent) in each road user group



- In 2002, the latest calendar year for which serious injury data are available, a total of 22,248 road users were seriously injured in road crashes. Of these, 7,432 were females and 1,640 females in the 17-25 age group.
- Within the 17-25 age group of road users, the females who were seriously injured in road crashes in 2002 were mainly drivers (41 per cent) and passengers (42 per cent).
- Within the 17-25 age group of road users, the combined number of female drivers and passengers seriously injured in road crashes in 2002 was 1368. Male motorcyclists in this age group seriously injured in road crashes alone numbered 1191 in 2002. Male drivers in this age group seriously injured in road crashes in 2002 numbered 1228.

High road crash death rates

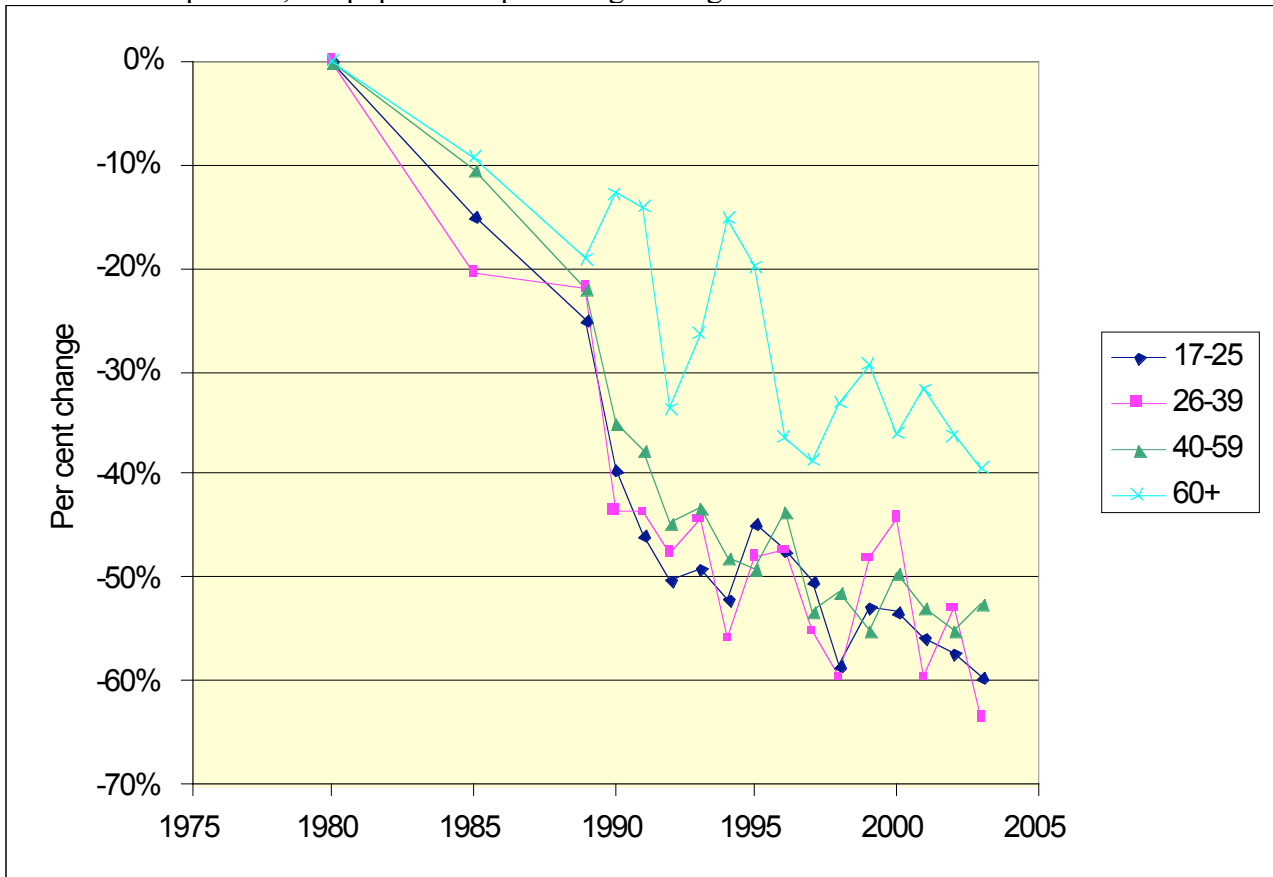
Driver deaths per 100,000 population from 1980 to the present



- Drivers in the 17-25 age group have had higher road crash death rates than drivers in other age groups – about twice as high from 1990 to the present.

High road crash death rates but they are improving

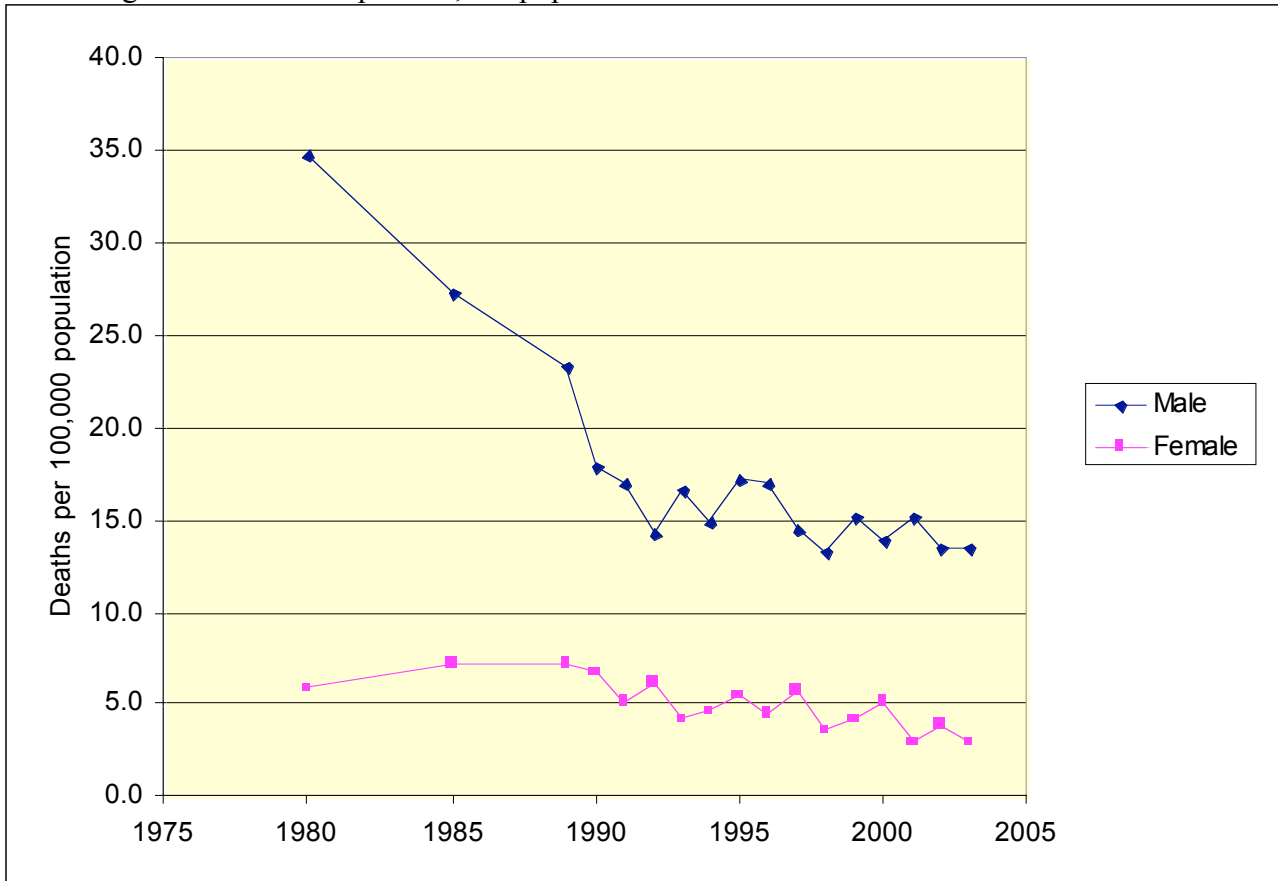
Driver deaths per 100,000 population: percentage change since 1980



- The road crash death rate (per 100,000 population) for 17-25 year old drivers has declined since 1980 along with declines in the road crash death rates for all other age groups except the 60+ group, which has had a lower rate of decline.

Young male drivers have been improving, but still have higher rates of fatal injury on the roads than young female drivers

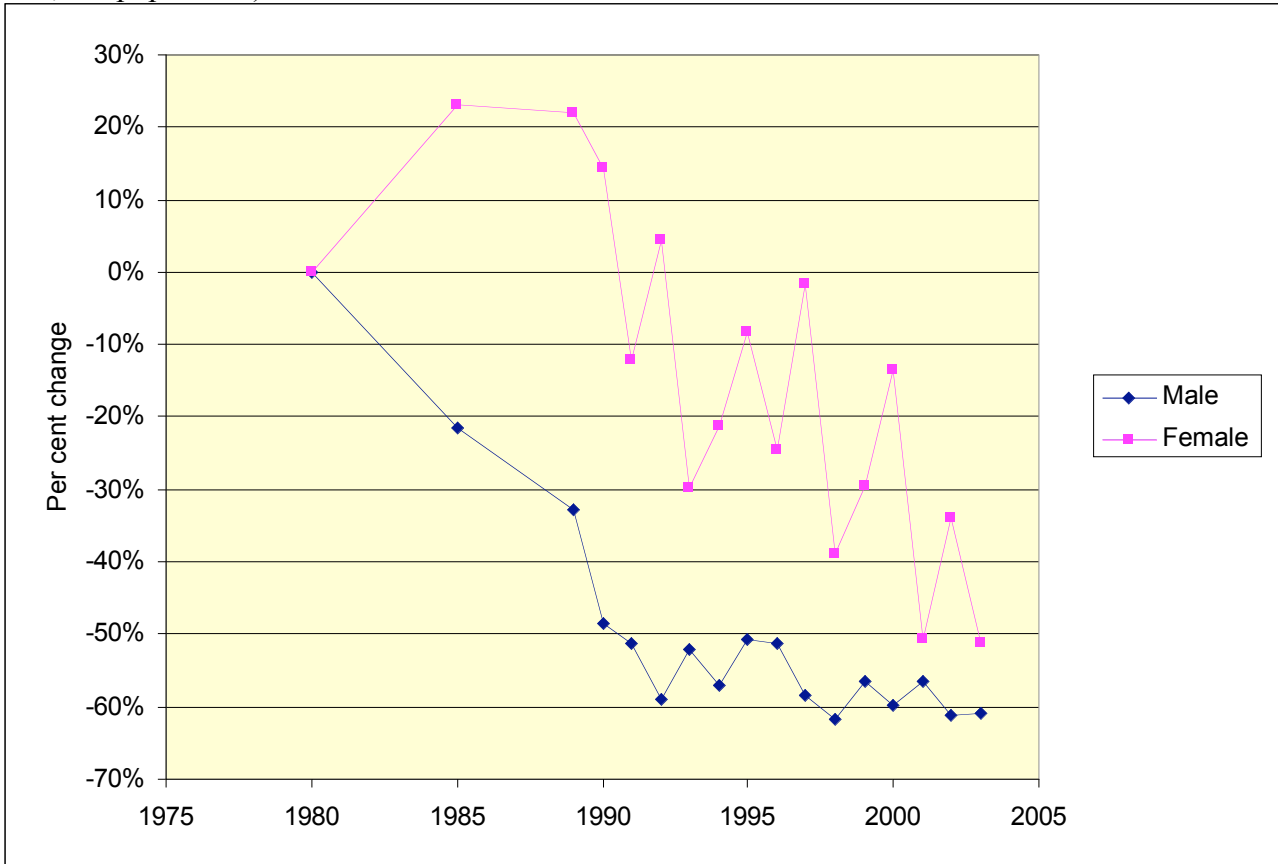
Drivers aged 17-25: deaths per 100,000 population



- The road crash death rate for young male drivers remains higher than that for young female drivers, though the gap narrowed considerably in the 1980s, only to remain fairly constant from 1990 to the present.

A marked improvement in the 1980s for young male drivers

Drivers aged 17-25: percentage change in road crash death rate from the 1980 rate (deaths per 100,000 population)



- The road crash death rate for young male drivers declined markedly in the 1980s, but levelled out after that.

YOUNG DRIVERS – DEATHS

Alcohol

Proportion (per cent) of fatally injured drivers with BAC >0.05 by age and gender, Australia, 1996-1999

	<17 years	17-25 years	26-39 years	40-59 years	60+ years	All ages
Males						
1996	0.0	42.9	45.7	28.7	3.3	34.1
1997	44.4	41.9	43.1	21.7	3.7	31.3
1998	25.0	31.0	43.7	19.0	9.1	27.0
1999	33.3	34.5	38.2	23.1	3.7	27.5
Females						
1996	33.3	15.7	19.3	7.1	0.0	11.5
1997	50.0	18.8	28.6	9.8	2.9	17.0
1998	0.0	11.6	23.9	14.9	0.0	12.6
1999	0.0	23.4	16.1	5.5	4.9	12.4
Persons						
1996	9.1	37.5	39.4	22.6	2.3	28.5
1997	45.5	35.2	38.7	18.1	3.4	27.1
1998	18.2	26.8	38.7	17.9	6.3	23.3
1999	16.7	32.1	32.7	17.2	4.0	23.5

Source: ATSB Fatal Crash Database 1996-1999

Note 1. Drivers include drivers of cars, utes, 4WDs, buses and trucks.

Note 2. Included in the denominator are 14.2% (431) fatally injured drivers with unknown BAC.

- Alcohol usage in the late 1990s was particularly prevalent (around 40 per cent) among fatally injured male drivers in the 17-25 and 26-39 age groups. Among female drivers, it was prevalent in these age groups as well, but to a lesser degree.
- Data are available for the late 1990s only.

YOUNG DRIVERS – DEATHS

No seatbelt

Proportion (per cent) of fatally injured drivers not wearing a seatbelt by age and gender, Australia, 1996-1999

	<17 years	17-25 years	26-39 years	40-59 years	60+ years	All ages
Males						
1996	37.5	27.3	28.8	28.7	12.1	25.9
1997	44.4	21.6	30.0	22.6	14.6	23.2
1998	50.0	25.2	27.4	20.6	13.1	22.7
1999	33.3	20.1	25.3	29.6	16.7	22.9
Females						
1996	33.3	7.8	15.8	7.1	2.4	9.1
1997	100.0	21.7	25.0	15.7	14.7	20.8
1998	33.3	11.6	17.4	14.9	7.0	13.2
1999	33.3	17.0	12.5	9.1	7.3	11.9
Persons						
1996	36.4	23.4	25.7	22.6	9.1	21.8
1997	54.5	21.6	28.5	20.5	14.7	22.5
1998	45.5	22.2	24.9	19.1	11.3	20.2
1999	33.3	19.5	22.1	22.7	14.1	20.0

Source: ATSB Fatal Crash Database 1996-1999

Note 1. Drivers include drivers of cars, utes, 4WDs, buses and trucks.

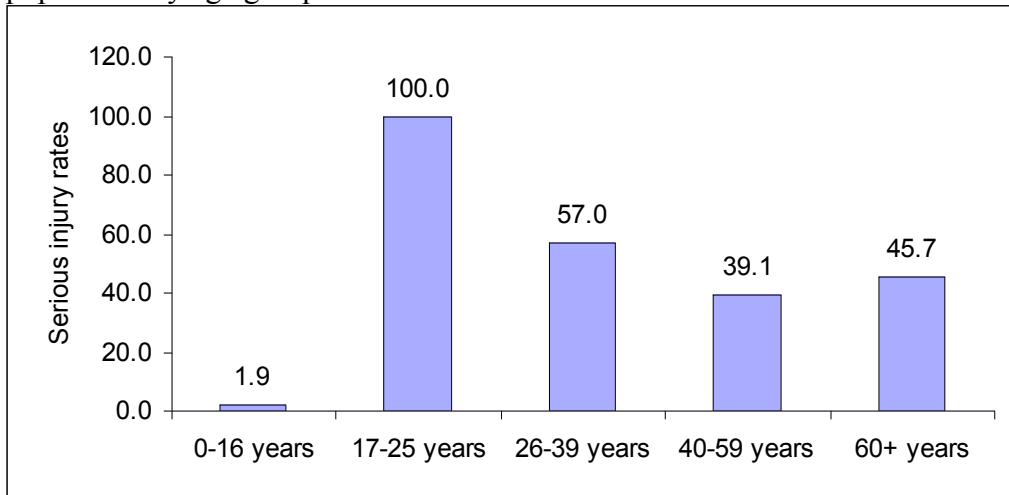
Note 2. Included in the denominator are 33.8% (1026) of fatally injured drivers with unknown seatbelt usage.

- About a quarter of all fatally injured male drivers in the 17-25, 26-39 and 40-59 age groups were known to be not wearing a seatbelt. Lower proportions of female drivers in these age groups were known to be not wearing a seatbelt.

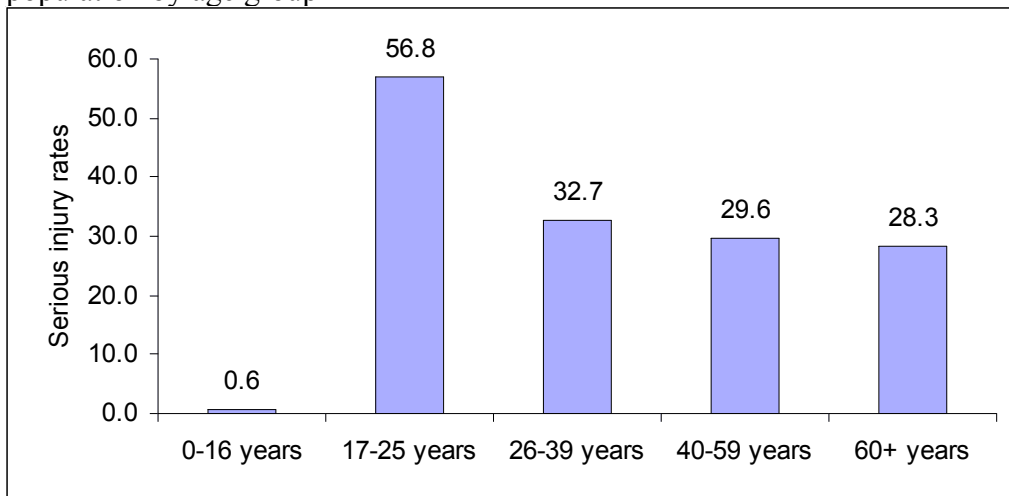
YOUNG DRIVERS – SERIOUS INJURY

High road crash serious injury rates

Male drivers seriously injured in road crashes in 2002: numbers seriously injured per 100,000 population by age group



Female drivers seriously injured in road crashes in 2002: numbers seriously injured per 100,000 population by age group

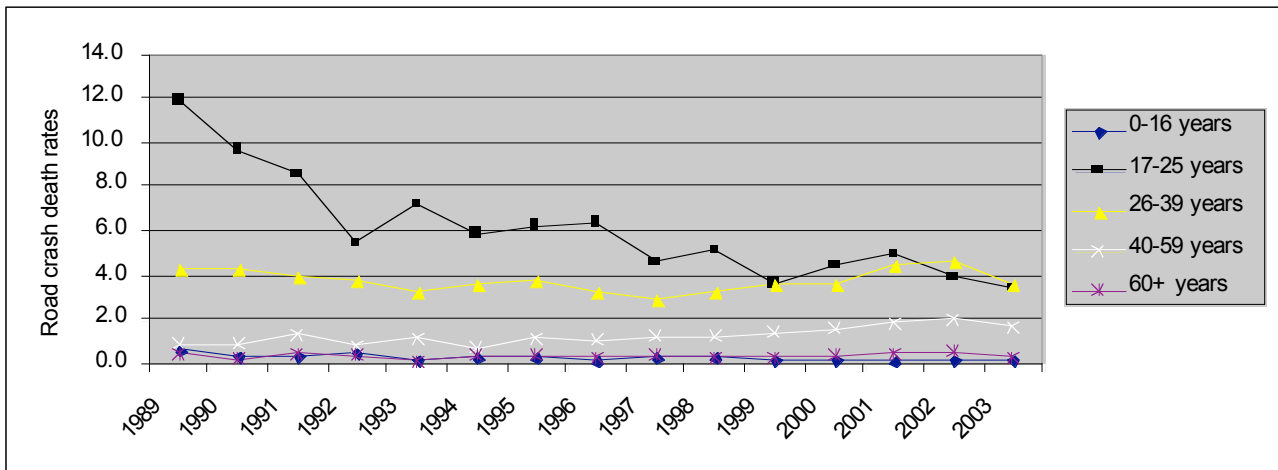


- ‘Seriously injured’ means spending at least one night in a hospital bed and subsequently being discharged.
- Drivers in the 17-25 age group have a higher road crash serious injury rate than drivers in other age groups.
- Male drivers in the 17-25 age group have a road crash serious injury rate that is about twice that for male drivers in other age groups.
- Female drivers in the 17-25 age group have a road crash serious injury rate that is about twice that for female drivers in other age groups.

YOUNG MOTORCYCLISTS – DEATHS

High road crash death rates, but they are improving

Male motorcycle riders killed in road crashes: numbers killed per 100,000 population from 1989 to 2003 in each age group

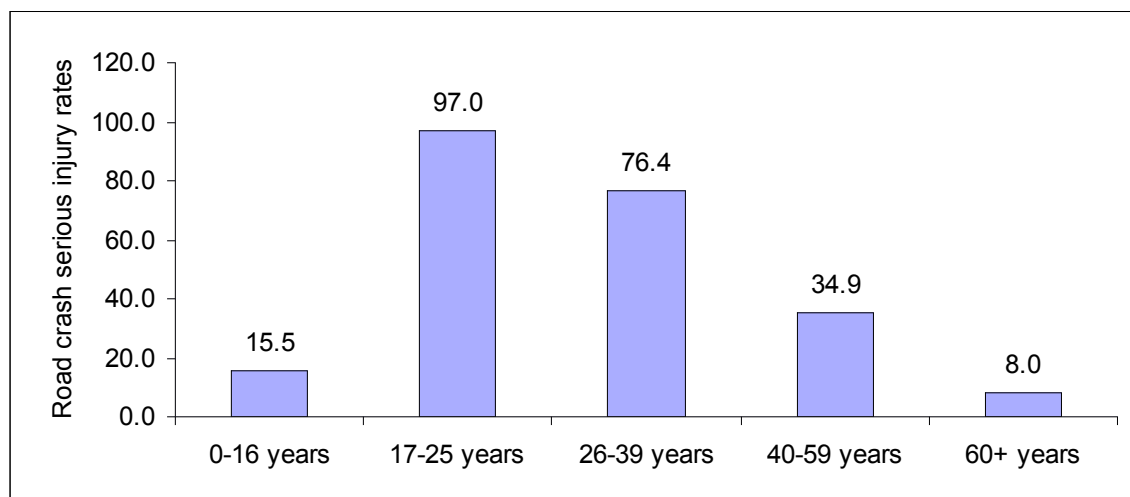


- Male motorcycle riders in the 17-25 age group have had higher road crash death rates than male motorcycle riders in other age groups.
- From 1999, the road crash death rates for male motorcycle riders in the 17-25 age group have fallen to near the rates for the 26-39 age group of male motorcycle riders, which has had the next highest road crash death rates.
- There are very few female motorcycle riders (fewer than 10) killed in road crashes each year.

YOUNG MOTORCYCLISTS – SERIOUS INJURY

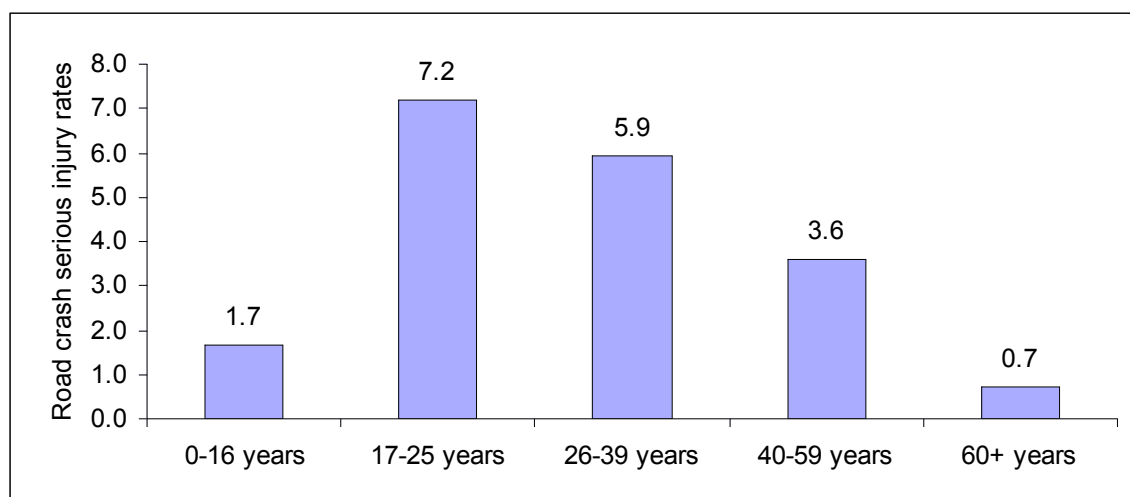
High road crash serious injury rates

Male motorcyclists seriously injured in road crashes: numbers seriously injured per 100,000 population in 2002 by age group



Note: In about one-third of the cases, whether the motorcyclist was a rider or a pillion passenger was not recorded. Over 60 per cent of male motorcyclists were recorded as riders and about 2 per cent as passengers.

Female motorcyclists seriously injured in road crashes: numbers seriously injured per 100,000 population in 2002 by age group



Note: In about one-third of the cases, whether the motorcyclist was a rider or a pillion passenger was not recorded. About 40 per cent of female motorcyclists were recorded as riders and about 25 per cent as passengers.

- Motorcyclists, both male and female, in the 17-25 age group have higher road crash serious injury rates than motorcyclists in other age groups.
- Time series data are not available.

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