

MALAYSIA

ROAD SAFETY PROFILE

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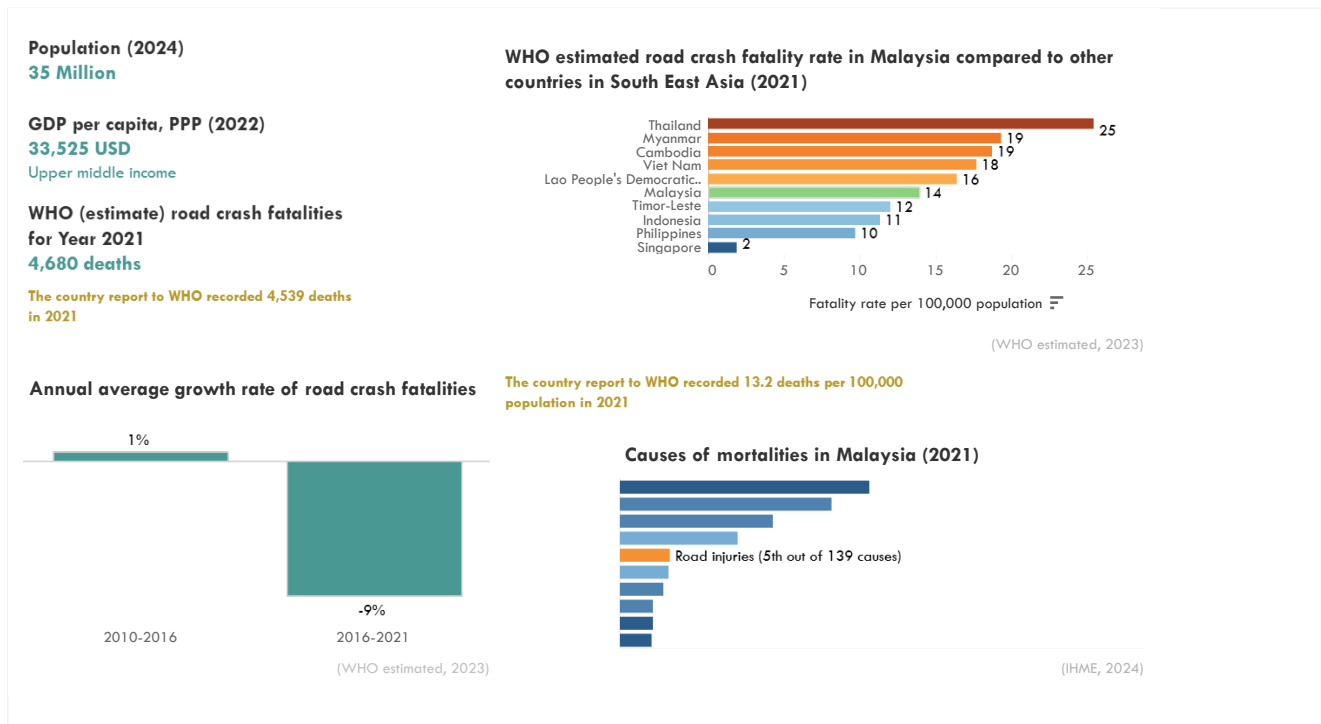


The ATO road safety profiles offer insights into the road safety in 37 Asia-Pacific countries by utilizing road safety related data from various sources and policy information extracted from a range of documents.

These road safety profiles were developed by the Asian Transport Observatory in collaboration with the Asia Pacific Road Safety Observatory (APRSO) and the International Road Federation (IRF). This September 2025 edition updates the February 2025 release—prepared for the Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety in Marrakech—to inform discussions at the Asia-Pacific Regional Road Safety Conference in Manila.

Country Summary

Road safety remains a critical concern in Malaysia. While progress has been made, the number of fatalities and serious injuries resulting from road crashes continues to be a significant burden on the nation. For the year 2021, WHO estimated about 5 thousand fatalities in Malaysia due to road crashes, accounting for 3.4% of all deaths. This translates to a road traffic crash fatality rate of 13.9 per 100,000 population in 2021.



A significant challenge in accurately assessing the road safety situation in Malaysia is the discrepancy in reported data. For 2021, the numbers reported by country statistics and the Global Burden of Disease vary significantly, at approximately 17 thousand and 8 thousand, respectively against WHO estimate of 5 thousand in 2021. This discrepancy highlights the need for improved data collection and reporting mechanisms to ensure a clear understanding of the problem and effective interventions.

Road crash fatality rate, by source

WHO (estimate) for Year 2021
13.9 per 100,000 population

WHO (country-report) for Year 2021
13.2 per 100,000 population

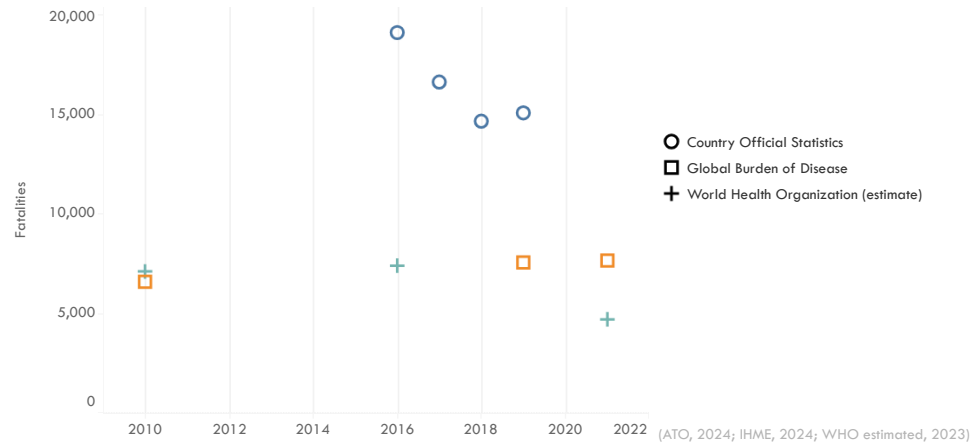
Country official statistics for Year 2022
13.4 per 100,000 population

GBD estimate for Year 2021
22.7 per 100,000 population

Every 27 minutes, someone dies in a road crash in Malaysia

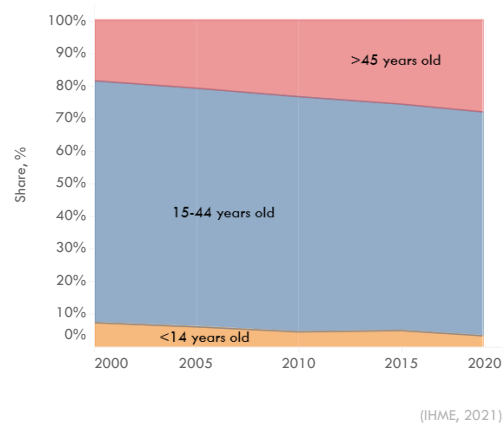
(WHO estimated, 2023)

Road crash fatalities, by source

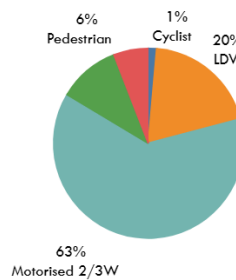


Disaggregating the available data provides valuable insights into specific areas of concern. Regarding gender, the share of female fatalities remained stable at 18% between 2010 and 2021, lower than the Asia-Pacific average of 23%. However, the combined share of minors (<14 years old) and seniors (>65 years old) in road crash fatalities increased slightly from 30% to 31% between 2015 and 2019, compared to a marginal increase in the Asia-Pacific average from 32% to 34%. Vulnerable road users remain a significant concern, although Malaysia fares relatively better than the regional average, with pedestrians and bicyclists comprising 7% of fatalities in 2021 compared to the Asia-Pacific average of 31%.

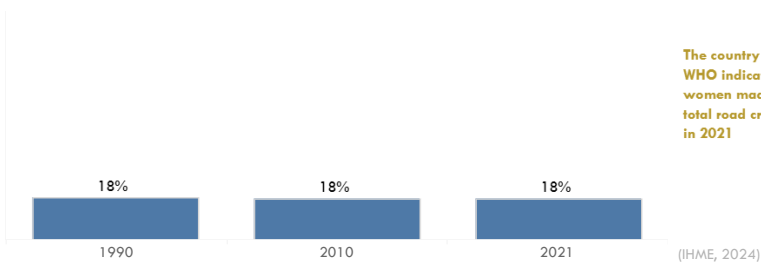
Road crash fatalities, share by age group



Road crash fatalities, share by road user

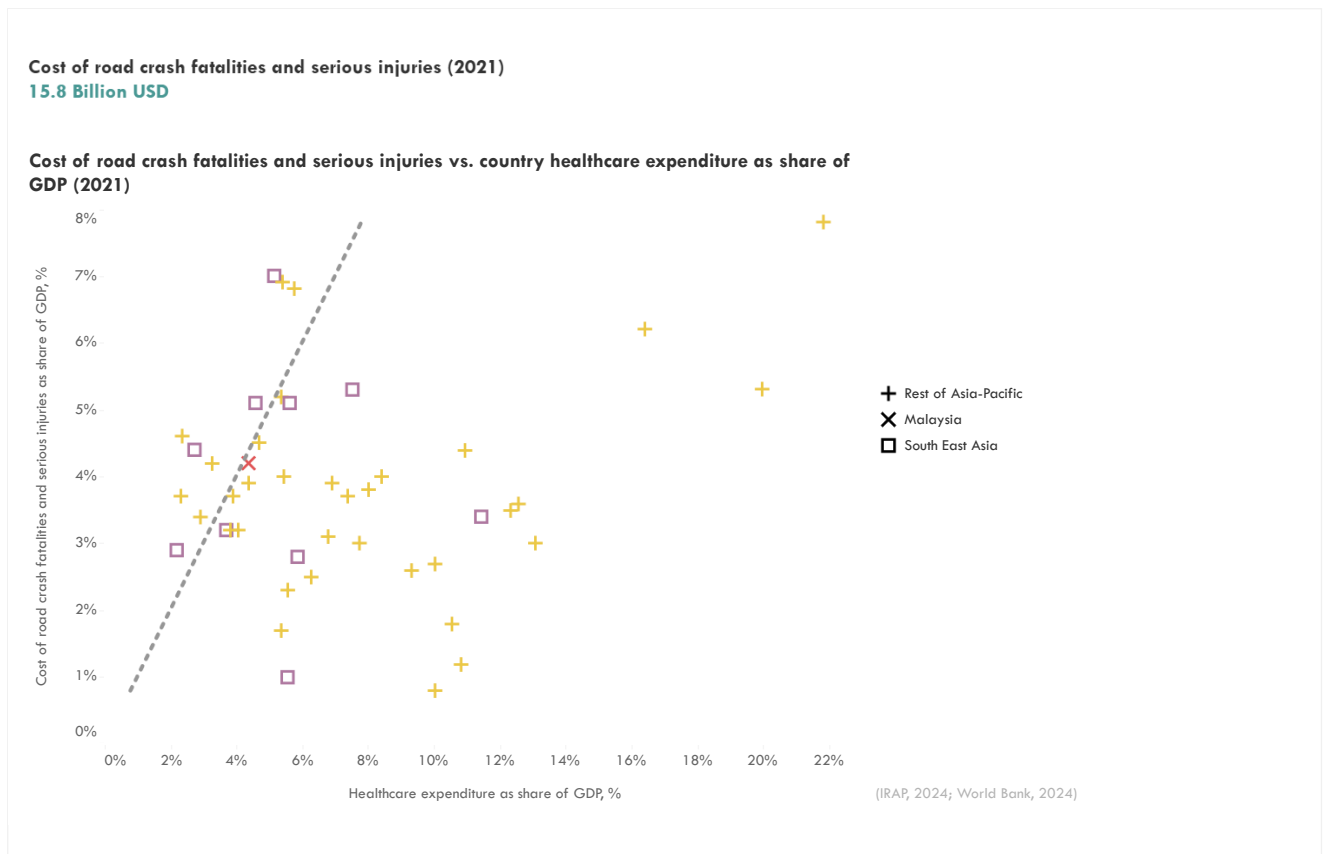


Share of female road crash fatalities

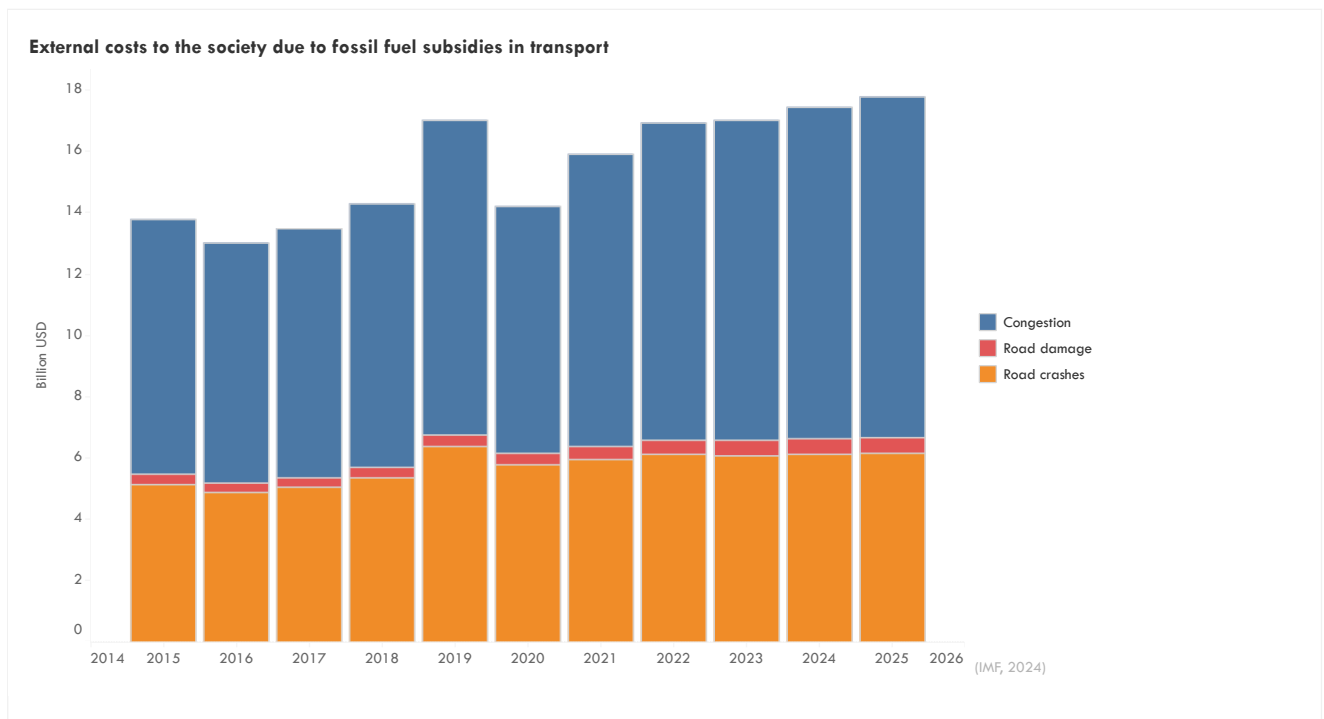


The country report to WHO indicates that women made up 15% of total road crashes deaths in 2021

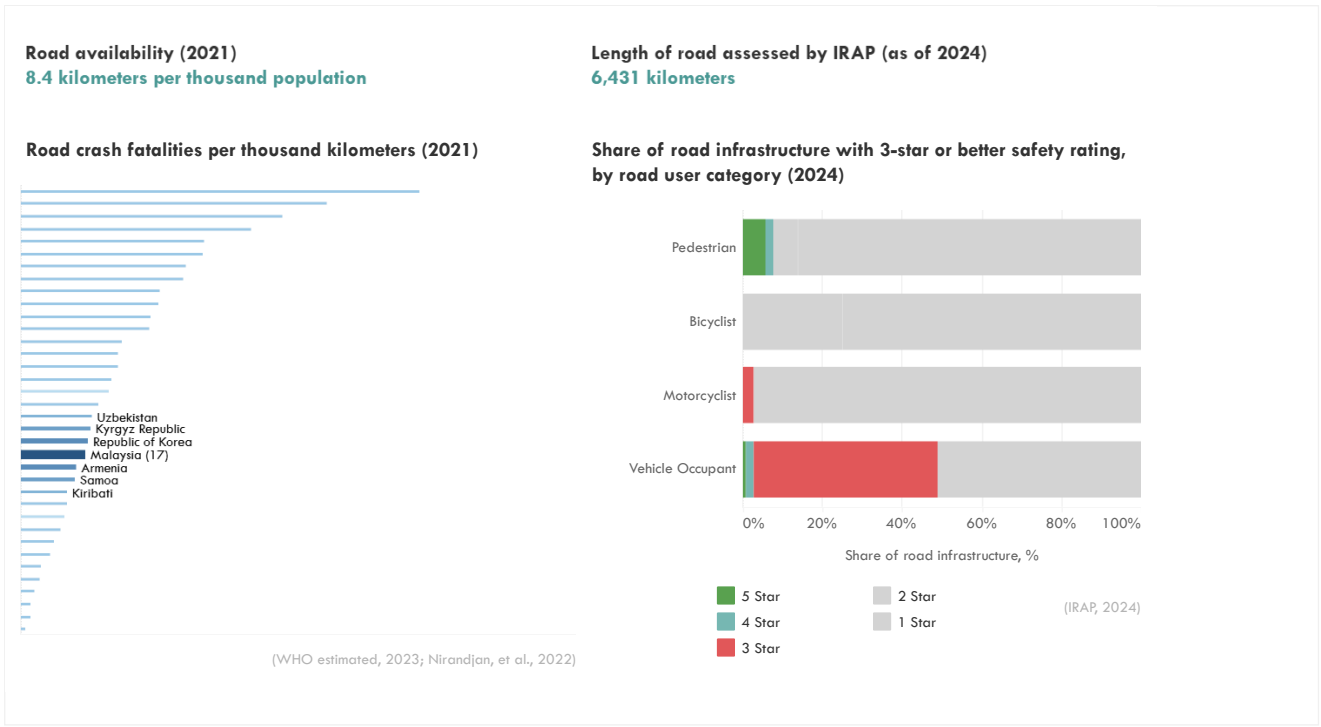
The economic burden of road crashes in Malaysia is substantial. Fatalities and serious injuries cost the country approximately 16 billion USD in 2021, equivalent to roughly 4% of Malaysia's GDP. This impact is significant when compared to Malaysia's healthcare expenditure of 4.4% of GDP in the same year.



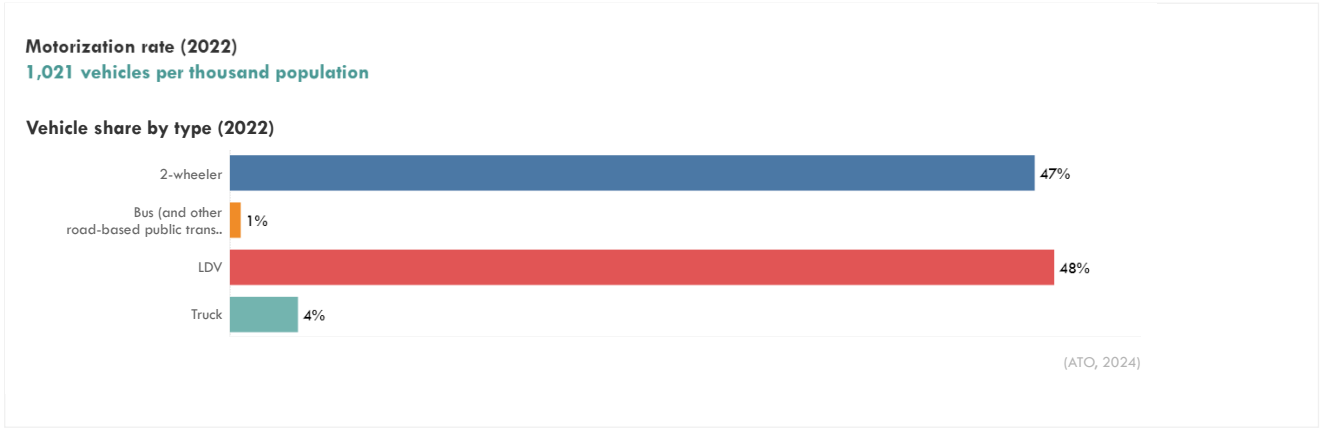
Road crashes constitute about 37% of the total implicit costs due to fossil fuel subsidies in transport. Investment in road safety measures offers a significant return; according to iRAP estimates, an annual investment of 507 million USD (about 0.1% of Malaysia's GDP) could save around 2 thousand fatalities annually.



Improving road infrastructure is crucial for enhancing safety. Currently, at least 49% of the road infrastructure in Malaysia has a 3-star or better rating for vehicle occupants. However, the safety of motorcyclists, a dominant mode of transport in Malaysia (47% of vehicles), requires urgent attention, as only about 3% of road infrastructure has a 3-star or better rating for this group. Malaysia experiences about 17 fatalities per thousand kilometers of road.

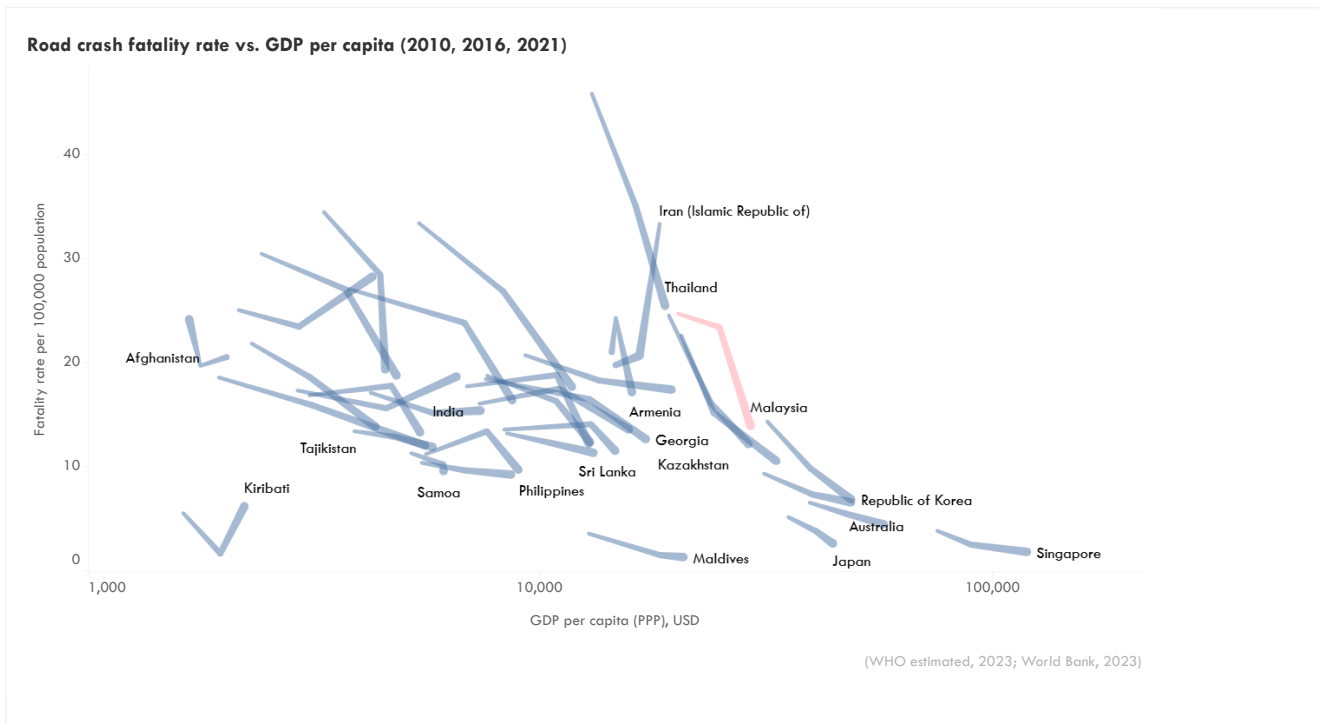


Malaysia has a high motorization rate, with 1,020 vehicles per thousand population by 2022. This comprises 47% two-wheelers, 48% light-duty vehicles (LDVs), 1% buses, 4% trucks, and <1% other vehicle types.

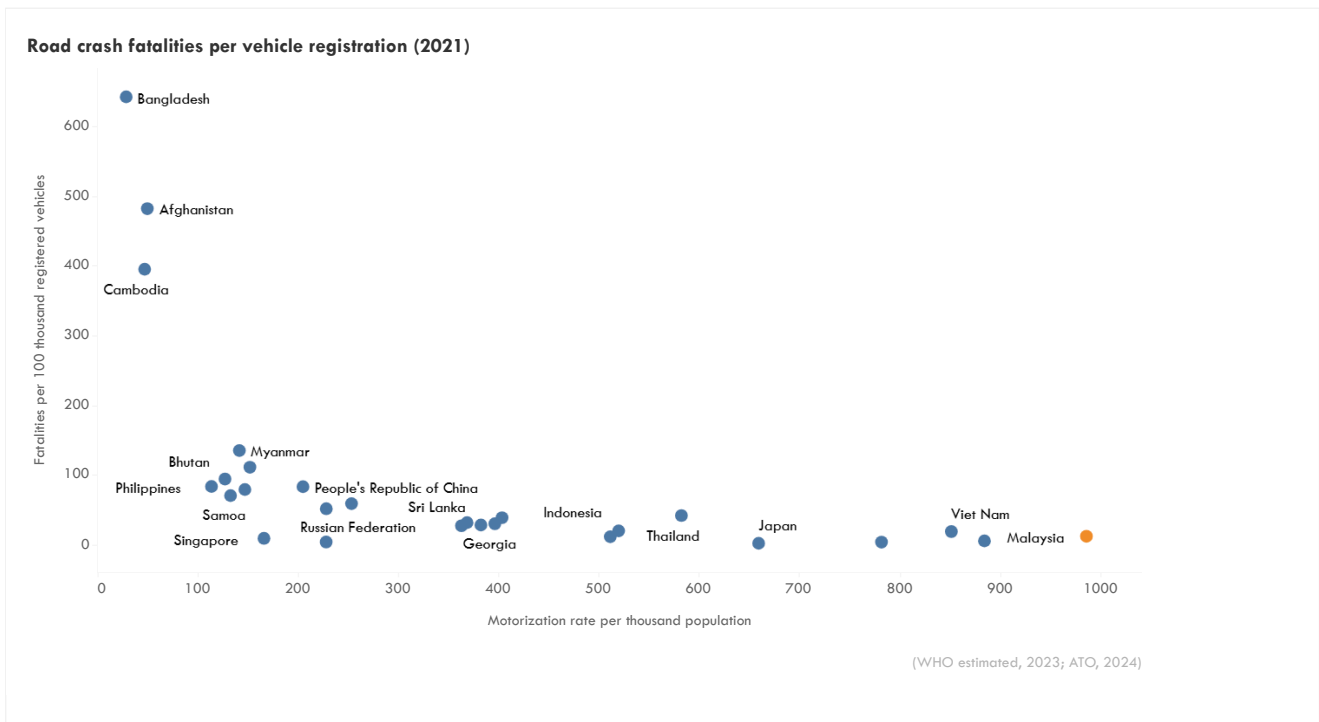


Benchmarking

Between 2010 and 2021, Malaysia witnessed a positive trend, with road crash fatalities decreasing by approximately -8.7% per year and an impressive -43% decrease in fatalities per 100,000 population (from 24.7 in 2010 to 13.9 in 2021). This is a more substantial improvement than the Asia-Pacific region (-19%) and South East Asia (-35%) averages during the same period.

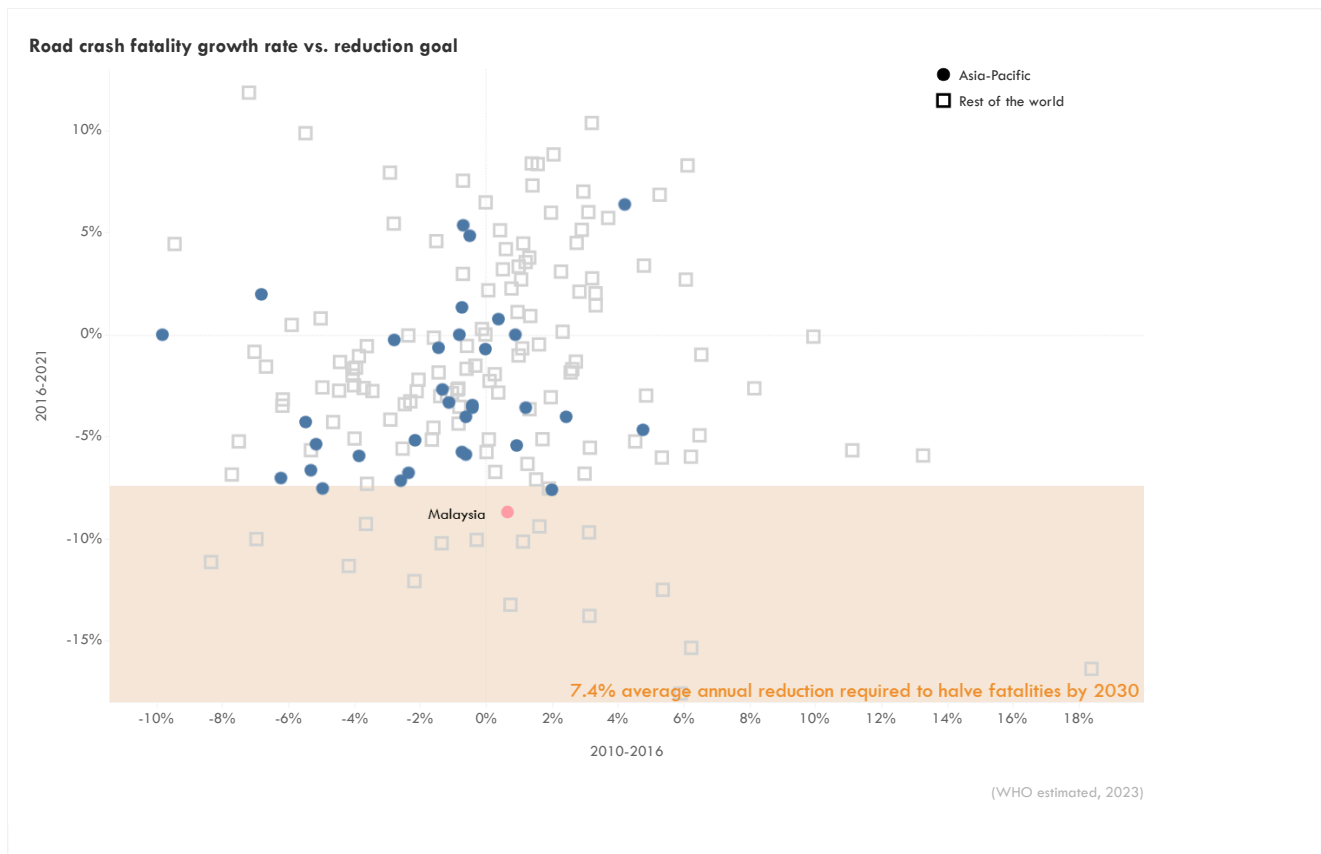


The fatality rate per 100,000 registered vehicles is approximately 14.



Can Asia meet the 2030 target of halving fatalities?

- **Urgent action needed to reduce road fatalities** The Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030 aims to cut road fatalities in half by 2030. An annual reduction of at least 7.4% is necessary to achieve this.
- **Asia-Pacific region falling behind** Despite reaching a peak in road crash fatalities, the Asia-Pacific region is not on track to meet the 2030 goal. The average annual reduction in deaths between 2016 and 2021 was only 0.6%, far below the required rate.
- **Varying progress across Asia** Using the 2016-2021 road crash fatality growth rate as a basis for estimates until 2030:
 - Only 3 Asian countries are projected to achieve the 50% reduction target by 2030.
 - 18 Asian countries are expected to reduce fatalities by at least 25%.
 - Worryingly, 7 Asian countries will continue to increase road fatalities, moving further away from the target.
- In Malaysia, road crash fatalities decreased by approximately -8.7% per year between 2016 and 2021. Malaysia will be able to halve its road crash fatalities by 2030

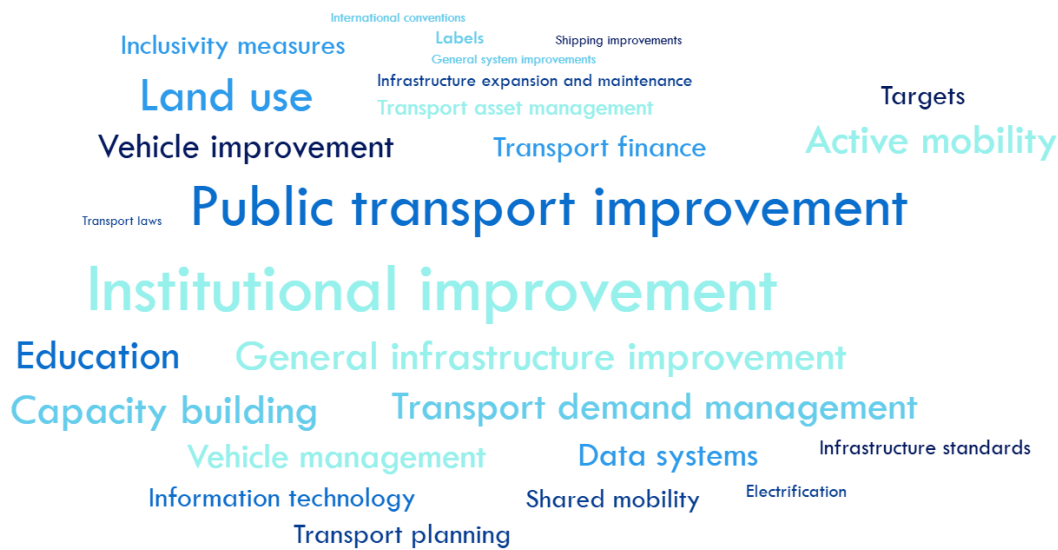


Policy Landscape

Malaysia has a comprehensive policy landscape addressing road safety. The Malaysia Road Safety Plan 2022-2030, published in 2022, provides a strategic framework for improving road safety. Other policy documents with indirect road safety benefits include the Green Technology Master Plan 2017-2030, the National Transport Policy 2019-2030, the Twelfth Malaysia Plan 2021-2025, and the Low Carbon Mobility Blueprint 2021-2030. These plans indicate that Malaysia recognizes the multifaceted nature of road safety and the need for a multi-sectoral approach. Malaysia also has targets that indirectly benefit road safety, specifically modal shift.

Targets to reduce road crash fatalities or injuries		Target year	Document	Year published
TO ACHIEVE AT LEAST 50% REDUCTION IN THE NUMBER OF DEATHS CAUSED BY ROAD CRASHES IN 2030		2030	Malaysia Road Safety Plan 2022-2030	2022
Measure type	Other targets with indirect benefits to road safety	Target year	Document	Year published
General public transport	By 2023, at least 60% of the population in the Greater Male' Region utilise public transport services on a regular basis	2023	Strategic Action Plan 19-23	2019
General transport demand management	By 2023, vehicle congestion in Greater Male' Region is reduced by 30% compared to 2018 levels	2023	Strategic Action Plan 19-23	2019

Policy measures with indirect benefit to road safety



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