

TIMOR-LESTE

ROAD SAFETY PROFILE

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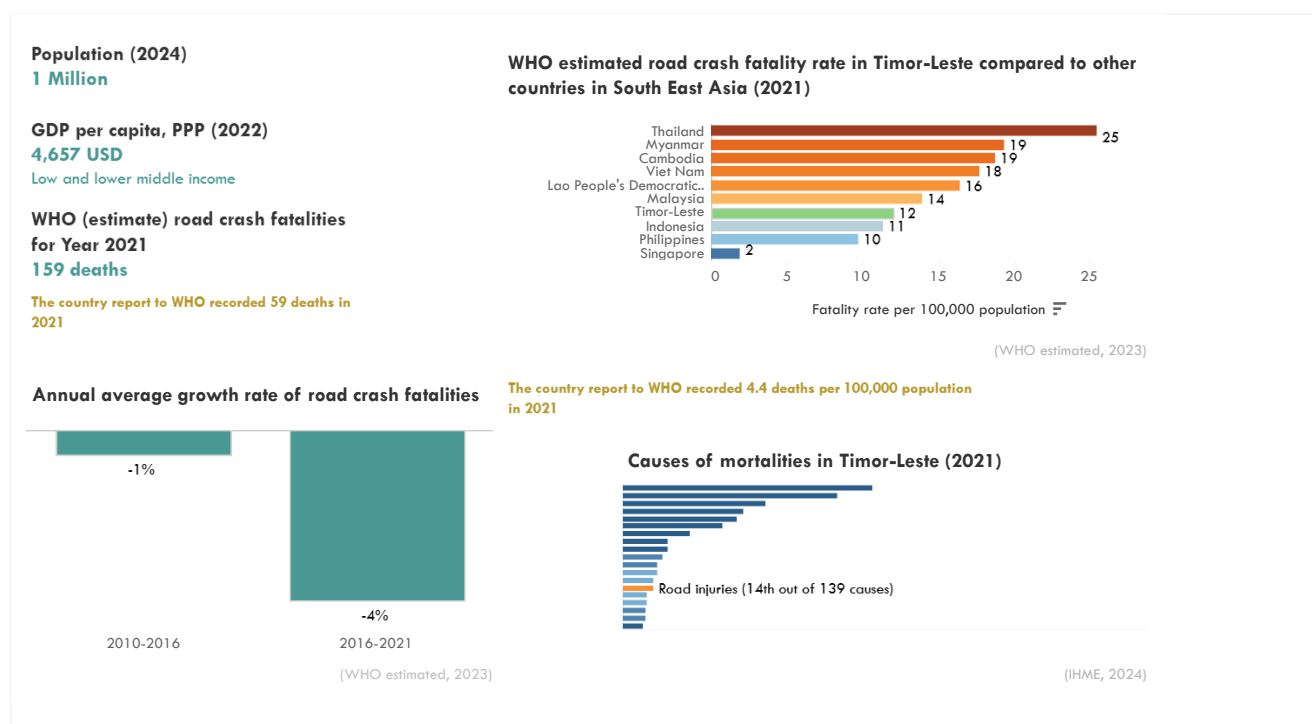


The ATO road safety profiles offer insights into the road safety in 37 Asia-Pacific countries by utilizing road safety related data from various sources and policy information extracted from a range of documents.

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 in Timor-Leste presents a significant challenge despite some progress. In 2021, it was estimated about 200 fatalities in Timor-Leste due to road crashes (WHO), representing 1.7% of all deaths in the country. While the country has seen a decrease in road traffic fatality rates over the past decade, the absolute number of deaths and the economic burden remain substantial. Understanding the nuances of the current situation, including data discrepancies, contributing factors, and the policy landscape, is crucial for developing effective interventions and achieving ambitious global safety targets.



No significant discrepancy exists between reported road crash fatalities in Timor-Leste and WHO estimates.

Road crash fatality rate, by source

WHO (estimate) for Year 2021

12.0 per 100,000 population

WHO (country-report) for Year 2021

4.4 per 100,000 population

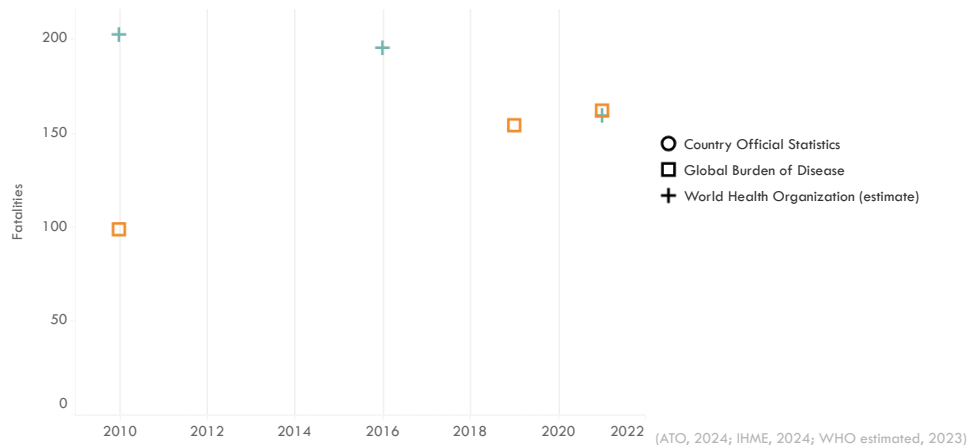
Every 16 hours, someone dies in a road crash in Timor-Leste

GBD estimate for Year 2021

12.2 per 100,000 population

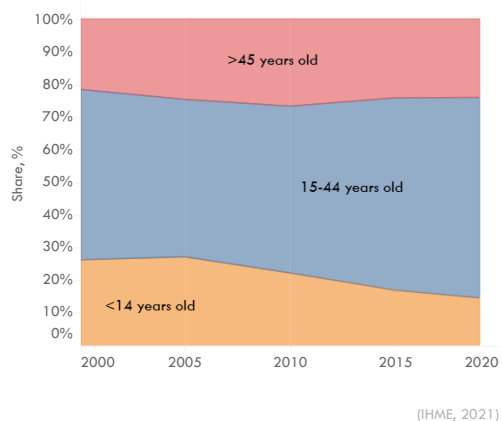
(WHO estimated, 2023)

Road crash fatalities, by source



Despite data challenges, some insights can be gathered from available disaggregated information. The share of female fatalities decreased slightly, from 32% to 29%, between 2010 and 2021, still higher than the Asia-Pacific average of 23%. The combined share of minors (<14) and seniors (>65) in fatalities remained relatively stable at around 34% between 2015 and 2019, mirroring a slight increase in the Asia-Pacific region. Notably, the share of fatalities by road user in 2021 was not reported, warranting further investigation.

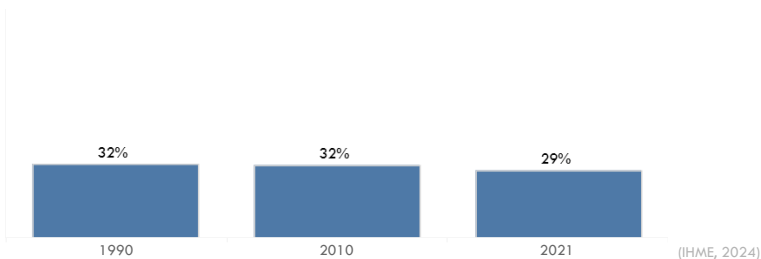
Road crash fatalities, share by age group



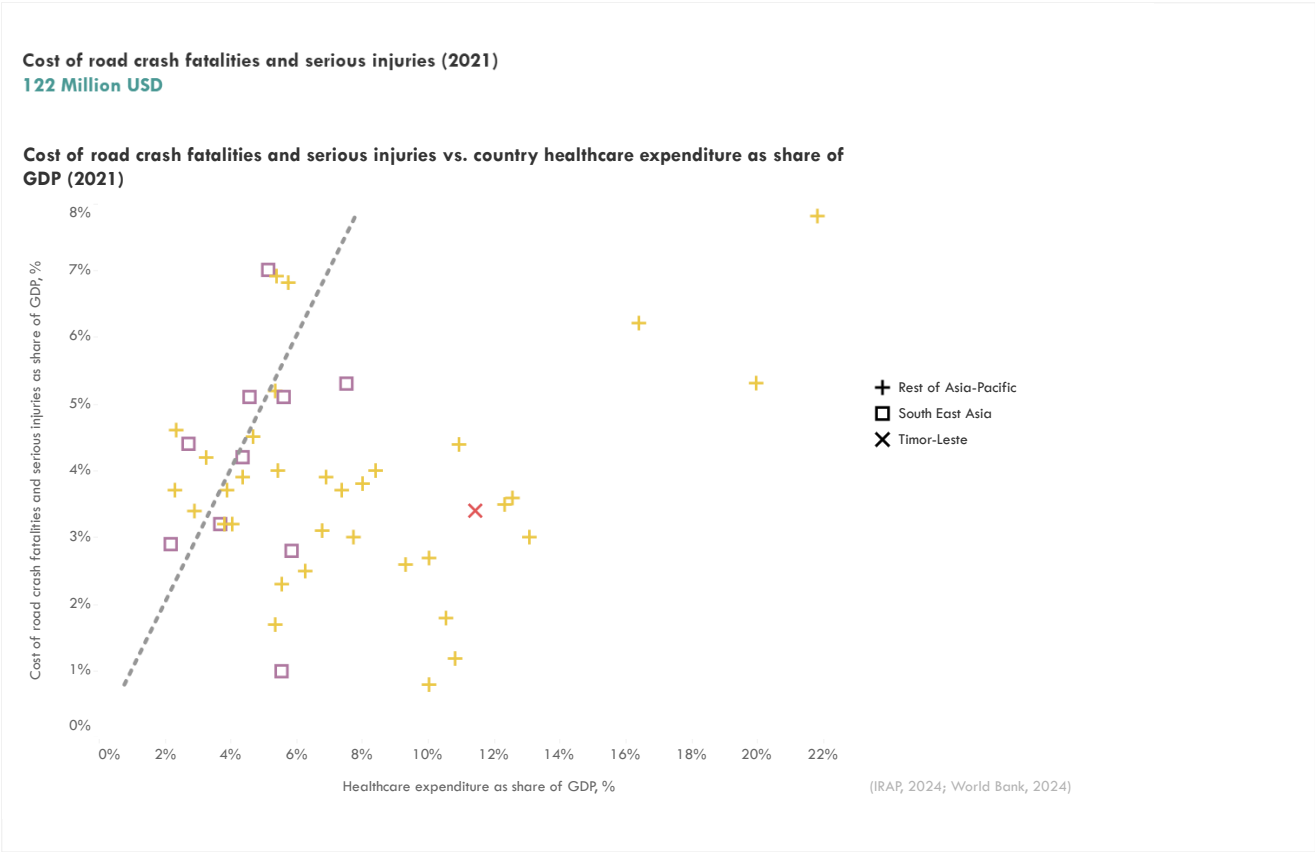
Road crash fatalities, share by road user

(Country report to WHO, 2023)

Share of female road crash fatalities



The economic impact of road crashes in Timor-Leste is substantial. Fatalities and serious injuries cost an estimated 122 million USD in 2021, roughly 3% of the country's GDP. This is a significant drain on resources, especially when added to the 11.4% of GDP spent on healthcare in the same year.



IRAP estimates that an annual investment of 13 million USD (0.3% of GDP) could save around 100 lives annually. This highlights the potential for cost-effective interventions to improve road safety.



Data on infrastructure safety ratings is currently unavailable. Timor-Leste had about 23 fatalities per thousand kilometers of road.

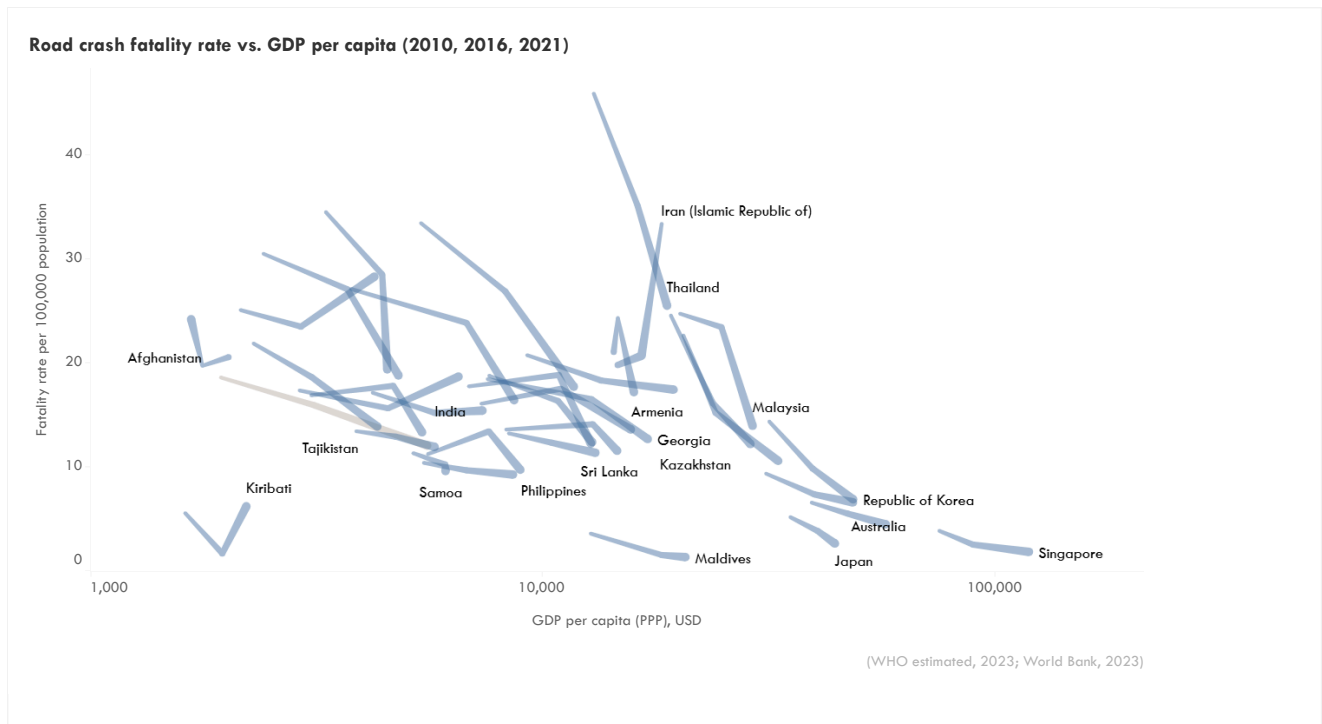


Data on vehicle fleet in Timor-Leste is not available to understand the dynamics of motorization and its impact on road safety.



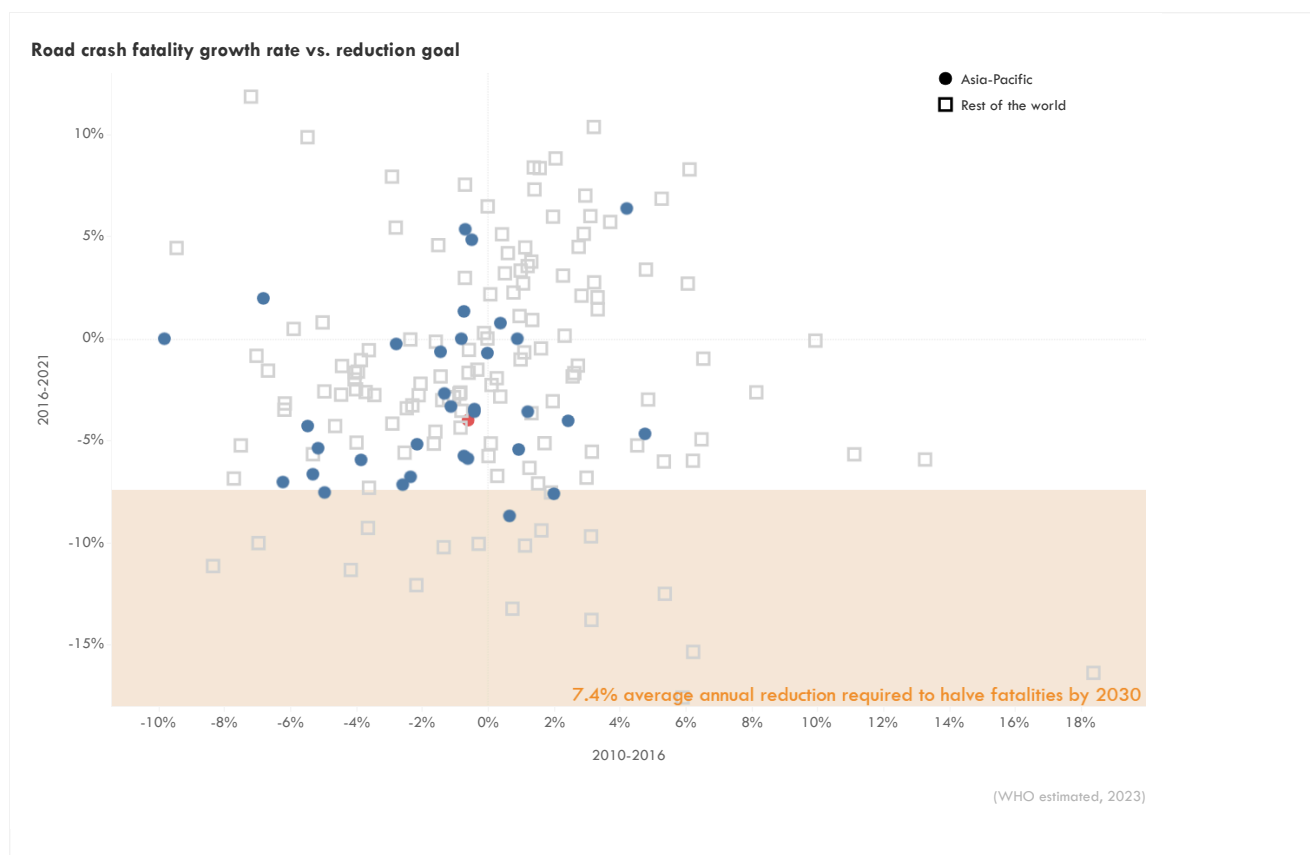
Benchmarking

While Timor-Leste has made some progress in reducing fatality rates, benchmarking against regional averages reveals areas for improvement. The country's fatality rate, while lower than the regional average, still indicates a significant burden. Further benchmarking against best practices and high-performing countries can provide valuable insights for policy development. The road traffic crash fatality rate in Timor-Leste in 2021 was 12.0 per 100,000 population. While this is lower than the Asia-Pacific average of 15.2 and the Southeast Asia average of 14.4, it still represents a considerable burden. WHO estimates show a decrease in fatalities per 100,000 population from 18.6 in 2010 to 12.0 in 2021, a 35% reduction. This compares to a 19% decrease in the Asia-Pacific region and a 35% decrease in South East Asia.



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 Timor-Leste, road crash fatalities decreased by approximately -4.0% per year between 2016 and 2021. However, this is not enough to reach the 2030 target to halve the fatalities by 2030



Policy Landscape

Timor-Leste has taken some steps to address road safety. While no specific road safety targets are explicitly defined, Timor-Leste has targets related to general transport asset management and technical standards for road infrastructure, which indirectly contribute to road safety. The country's road safety strategy is the National Road Safety Plan. Other relevant policy documents include the Transport Sector Master Plan, The Highway Code, the Timor-Leste Strategic Development Plan 2011-2030, the Second National Communication - TLS, and the Timor-Leste Updated NDC 2022-2030. Strengthening policy implementation and ensuring adequate resource allocation are key priorities.

Targets to reduce road crash fatalities or injuries		Target year	Document	Year published
No data				
Measure type	Other targets with indirect benefits to road safety	Target year	Document	Year published
General transport asset management	Upgrade to climate-resilient roads: Core Rural Roads in Coffee producing areas (D) Non-Core Rural Roads Low traffic (E1 Roads)	2025	Transport Sector Master Plan	2018
General transport asset management	Upgrade to climate-resilient roads: Other non coffee linked rural roads (D)	2030	Transport Sector Master Plan	2018
General transport asset management	Non-Core Rural Roads low Traffic (E2 Roads)	2022	Transport Sector Master Plan	2018
Technical standards for road infrastructure	Establish national ring road standards and establish a ring road to these standards by 2030. The Dili to Baucau road link will be fully upgraded to international standards, including widening where technically feasible. The Manatuto-Natarbora road link will be fully upgraded to international standards, including widening where technically feasible.	2030	Timor-Leste Strategic Development Plan 2011-2030	2011

Policy measures with indirect benefit to road safety



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