# Study Ranks The Safest OECD Countries For Drivers (And The Most Dangerous)

*New international ranking reveals where drivers face the lowest risk of road fatalities and injuries*

**Key Findings:**

- **New study ranks 35 OECD countries by motorist safety using official road fatality and injury data per capita**
- **Mexico tops the safety rankings, while the United States scores lowest among developed nations**
- **Expert warns that injury rates don't always match fatality rates, revealing different types of road safety challenges**

Where you live makes a huge difference to how safe you are behind the wheel. Some countries have modern roads, strict enforcement, and drivers who actually follow the rules. Others? Not so much.

Used car parts marketplace Ovoko wanted to find out which countries keep their drivers safest. The company analysed official OECD data on road deaths and injuries across 35 developed nations to create a definitive safety ranking.

“When you look at OECD road safety data, the differences between countries are staggering,” says Kazimieras Urbonas, Supplier Excellence Manager at Ovoko. “Even among developed nations, some roads are far more dangerous than others.”

The study looked at road deaths per 100,000 people and injuries per 1,000,000 people using OECD data from 2020-2024. Both measures were combined into a **Safety Index** score from 0 to 100. Higher scores mean safer roads.

**Table 1: OECD Motorist Safety Index**

| Rank | Country | Road Fatality Rate Per 100,000 | Road Injury Rate Per 1,000,000 | Safety Index |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Mexico | 1.45 | 739.00 | 97.91 |
| 2 | Norway | 1.99 | 771.00 | 95.17 |
| 3 | Denmark | 2.80 | 440.30 | 93.75 |
| 4 | Finland | 3.28 | 650.00 | 90.07 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | Sweden | 2.17 | 1415.20 | 89.82 |
| 6 | Ireland | 3.50 | 1313.00 | 84.40 |
| 7 | Netherlands | 3.83 | 1136.00 | 84.12 |
| 8 | United Kingdom | 2.48 | 2069.00 | 83.82 |
| 9 | Israel | 3.70 | 1568.00 | 81.67 |
| 10 | France | 4.65 | 981.00 | 81.40 |
| 11 | Poland | 5.16 | 641.00 | 81.40 |
| 12 | Switzerland | 2.67 | 2419.00 | 80.50 |
| 13 | Estonia | 4.32 | 1416.00 | 79.87 |
| 14 | Slovakia | 4.92 | 1092.00 | 79.35 |
| 15 | Luxembourg | 3.80 | 1849.00 | 79.24 |
| 16 | Australia | 4.78 | 1424.20 | 77.70 |
| 17 | Japan | 2.62 | 2940.00 | 77.06 |
| 18 | Lithuania | 5.54 | 1118.00 | 76.32 |
| 19 | Iceland | 2.20 | 3637.90 | 74.12 |
| 20 | Spain | 3.73 | 2763.40 | 73.14 |
| 21 | Hungary | 4.92 | 2004.00 | 72.95 |
| 22 | Greece | 6.15 | 1246.00 | 72.58 |
| 23 | Slovenia | 3.87 | 3406.00 | 68.02 |
| 24 | Canada | 4.83 | 2939.30 | 66.83 |
| 25 | Germany | 3.36 | 4149.00 | 65.16 |
| 26 | Belgium | 4.24 | 3845.90 | 63.21 |
| 27 | Latvia | 7.55 | 2259.00 | 59.00 |
| 28 | Italy | 5.17 | 3860.00 | 58.79 |
| 29 | Austria | 4.40 | 4883.00 | 55.18 |
| 30 | Portugal | 6.10 | 4289.00 | 51.48 |
| 31 | Korea | 4.93 | 5505.00 | 48.36 |
| 32 | Chile | 10.17 | 2370.30 | 46.05 |
| 33 | Türkiye | 7.67 | 4110.00 | 45.44 |
| 34 | New Zealand | 6.53 | 7247.20 | 28.76 |
| 35 | United States | 12.24 | 7574.00 | 0.00 |

## The Safest Countries for Motorists

**Mexico** leads the rankings with a safety score of **97.91**, posting the lowest road fatality rate in the OECD at just **1.45 deaths per 100,000 people**. The country also recorded a relatively low injury rate of **739 per million**.

“Mexico's performance might surprise people who associate the country with other safety concerns,” says Urbonas. “But when it comes to road deaths, the data tells a clear story.”

**Norway** takes second place with a score of **95.17**. The Scandinavian nation recorded **1.99 road deaths per 100,000** and **771 injuries per million**. Norway's combination of strict traffic laws, excellent road maintenance, and comprehensive driver education helps keep fatalities low.

**Denmark** rounds out the top three with **93.75 points**. The country has the lowest injury rate among the top performers at **440.30 per million**, though its fatality rate of **2.80 per 100,000** sits slightly higher than Mexico and Norway.

**Finland** and **Sweden** complete the top five. Finland scored **90.07** with a fatality rate of **3.28 per 100,000**, while Sweden managed **89.82** despite having the highest injury rate in the top five at **1,415.20 per million**. This shows that injury rates don't always correlate directly with deaths.

The Nordic countries dominate the upper rankings, and there's a reason for that pattern.

“The top-performing countries share several characteristics,” says Urbonas. “Strong infrastructure investment means well-maintained roads with proper lighting and clear signage. Enforcement is consistent: speed cameras are everywhere and drink-driving penalties are severe. But there's also a cultural element. In these countries, driving safely isn't seen as optional or inconvenient, it’s just what you do.”

## The Most Dangerous OECD Countries for Drivers

At the opposite end, the **United States** ranks dead last with a safety score of **0.00**. America recorded the worst figures across both metrics: **12.24 road deaths per 100,000 people** and a staggering **7,574 injuries per million**. That fatality rate is more than eight times higher than Mexico's.

**New Zealand** sits second-worst with **28.76 points**. Despite its relatively small population, the country logged **6.53 deaths per 100,000** and **7,247.20 injuries per million**, the second-highest injury rate in the OECD.

**Türkiye** placed **33rd** with **45.44 points**, recording **7.67 fatalities per 100,000** and **4,110 injuries per million**. **Chile** followed closely with **46.05 points**, posting the third-highest fatality rate at **10.17 per 100,000**.

**Korea** also struggled, ranking **31st** with **48.36 points**. The country's injury rate of **5,505 per million** places it among the worst performers for non-fatal accidents, despite a moderate death rate of **4.93 per 100,000**.

“What stands out in the lower-ranked countries is how injury and fatality rates don't always match up,” Urbonas explains. “Some places have high injury rates but manage

to keep deaths relatively low through better emergency response and hospital care. Others see fewer accidents overall but those crashes prove more deadly."

Several Western European nations performed worse than expected. **Austria** ranked **29th** with the highest injury rate in Western Europe at **4,883 per million**. **Germany** placed **25th** with **4,149 injuries per million**, while **Belgium** came **26th** with **3,845.90 injuries per million**.

### Kazimieras Urbonas, Supplier Excellence Manager at Ovoko, commented:

*"These rankings reveal something important for the automotive industry and road safety policy. The gap between the best and worst performers is massive, with the US having over eight times the fatality rate of Mexico. That's not inevitable.*

*"What separates safe countries from dangerous ones often comes down to political will. The Nordic nations didn't accidentally create safer roads. They invested heavily in infrastructure, enforced strict penalties for violations, and built a culture where reckless driving carries real social stigma.*

*"The data also shows that wealth alone doesn't guarantee safety. Several wealthy nations rank poorly while some with lower GDP per capita perform well. It's about priorities and how governments allocate resources to protect drivers."*

## ENDS

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### About Ovoko

Ovoko is one of Europe's largest online marketplaces for used car parts, connecting over 4,000 auto dismantlers, recyclers, and sellers with car dealers, mechanics, and enthusiasts. With more than 23 million parts available, Ovoko offers fast delivery across Europe, a 14-day money-back guarantee, and tools that help scrapyards go digital.

Founded in 2016, the platform supports a circular economy by giving auto parts a second life, reducing waste, and modernising a traditionally offline industry. Headquartered in Lithuania with teams across Europe, Ovoko combines e-commerce,

inventory management, and logistics into one powerful solution for sustainable automotive trade.

## Methodology

This analysis identifies the safest and most dangerous OECD countries for drivers by combining road fatality and injury rates into a single standardized index. The study used data from the OECD's transport and health databases covering 2020-2024.

Two key metrics were analysed: road fatality rate per 100,000 population and road injury rate per 1,000,000 population. Both indicators were normalized using min-max normalization and inverted so that lower rates produced higher scores. The two normalized scores were then equally weighted and combined to create a composite Safety Index ranging from 0 to 100, where higher scores represent safer driving conditions.

Countries were selected based on data availability across both indicators. Where the latest year of data was unavailable, historical averages from prior years were used as a proxy to maintain full OECD coverage. This approach helps minimize data loss while maintaining comparability, given the relatively stable nature of road safety indicators over time.

Data sources: OECD Road Safety Data and OECD Health Statistics

***Full dataset available on request***