FY 2020

Situation of Road Traffic Accidents and Current State of Traffic Safety Measures

FY 2021

Plans Regarding the Traffic Safety Measures

(White Paper on Traffic Safety in Japan 2021)

(Outline)

June, 2021

Cabinet Office

This White Paper on Traffic Safety reports on the status of traffic accidents, the current situation of Traffic Safety Measures in FY2020 and FY2021 Plans for Traffic Safety Measures that should be implemented pursuant to the provisions of Article 13 of the Basic Act on Traffic Safety Measures (Act No. 110 of 1970).

About the White Paper on Traffic Safety

This White Paper on Traffic Safety is an annual report to be submitted to the National Diet pursuant to the Basic Act on Traffic Safety Measures. This year's White Paper is the 51st edition.

Basic Act on Traffic Safety Measures

Article 13: The government must submit a report on the status of traffic accidents, plans pertaining to the policies relating to traffic safety, and the outline of the measures taken in relation to traffic safety to the Diet every year.

White Paper on Traffic Safety

Special Feature

New Developments in Road Traffic Safety Measures: Implementation of Measures Under the 11th Traffic Safety Basic Plan

FY2020 Situation of Traffic Accidents and Current Situation of Measures for Traffic Safety

Title 1 Land Transport

Part 1 Road Transport

Part 2 Railway Transport

Title 2 Maritime Transport

Title 3 Air Transport

FY 2021 Plans Regarding the Traffic Safety Measures

Part 1 Measures Regarding the Safety of Land Transport

Part 2 Measures Regarding Maritime Transport Safety

Part 3 Measures Regarding Air Transport Safety

Topics

Special Feature: New Developments in Road Traffic Safety Measures: Implementation of Measures Under the 11th Traffic Safety Basic Plan

The National Council for Traffic Safety Measures, chaired by the Prime Minister, adopted the 11th Traffic Safety Basic Plan on March 29, 2021. This Plan includes initiatives to further deepen the measures of various kinds implemented up to now of course as well as to implement measures for a new era that actively incorporates advanced technologies that contribute to assuring traffic safety. By these means, this Plan aims to achieve major advances toward realization ultimately of a society with no traffic accidents. It also aims to realize a traffic safety society that leads the world.
This special feature outlines the circumstances in which road traffic accidents occur, the characteristics of accidents in recent years. In addition, it describes initiatives that national government, local governments and related private organizations will undertake in the future, acting as one, in order to achieve the new targets set in the 11th Traffic Safety Basic Plan.

Objectives Set for Road Traffic Safety

(1) Aiming to realize "the world's safest road traffic," the number of fatalities within 24 hours is to be reduced to 2,000 people* or less. (*Number of fatalities within 30 days: 2,400 people) (2) The number of serious injuries is to be reduced to 22,000 people or less

Basic Principles of the Basic Plan

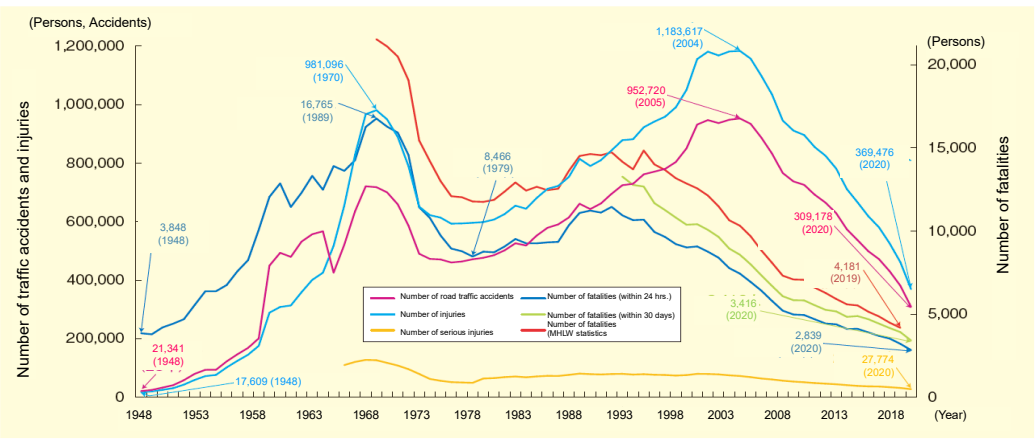
- ○ There is strong demand for appropriate measures to address the progressive aging of the population as well as to realize a society that supports child-rearing. In this context, initiatives for traffic safety that meet the needs of the times are sought.
- ○ Based on the principle of respect for human life, the Program gives thought to traffic accident victims and other such parties, and taking into consideration also the significant social and economic losses arising from traffic accidents, it aims to ultimately achieve a society with no traffic accidents. (**Achieving a Society with No Traffic Accidents**)
- ○ It is necessary to further ensure the safety of vulnerable people such as the elderly, people with disabilities, and children in all forms of transportation. A society free from traffic accidents is also a society in which vulnerable people can become socially independent. Conduct all measures based on a Traffic Safety Concept of "Prioritizing People". (**Traffic Safety Concept of Prioritizing People**)
- ○ We will build a society where people can move safely even as they grow older, enjoy moving with peace of mind, and lead rich lives, and a "Cohesive society" where people can live safely and with peace of mind regardless of age or disability. (**Building a Society that Enables Safe Movement even as the Population Ages**)

Chapter 1. The Occurrence Status of Road Traffic Accidents

- **The number of traffic accident fatalities in 2020 was approximately one-sixth the peak figure**

The number of fatalities within 24 hours from traffic accidents amounted to 16,765 people in 1970. That figure headed steadily downward from 1971, and in 1979 it was down to about one-half, at 8,466 people. After that it turned around and started increasing again, reaching 11,452 people in 1992. The next year it again turned around and trended downward, and the number of fatalities in 2009 fell to 4,979 people. This was the first time in 57 years that the figure dropped below 5,000 people, as it had in 1952. The figure in 2016 was 3,904 people, dropping below 4,000 people. This was less than one-quarter the figure at the peak (16,765 people in 1970).
The number of fatalities in 2020, which was the final year of the 10th Traffic Safety Basic Plan, was 2,839 people. This was the first time that the figure dropped below 3,000 people, or approximately one-sixth of the figure at the peak. Regrettably, however, the target of reducing the number of fatalities within 24 hours to 2,500 people or lower by 2020 was not achieved.

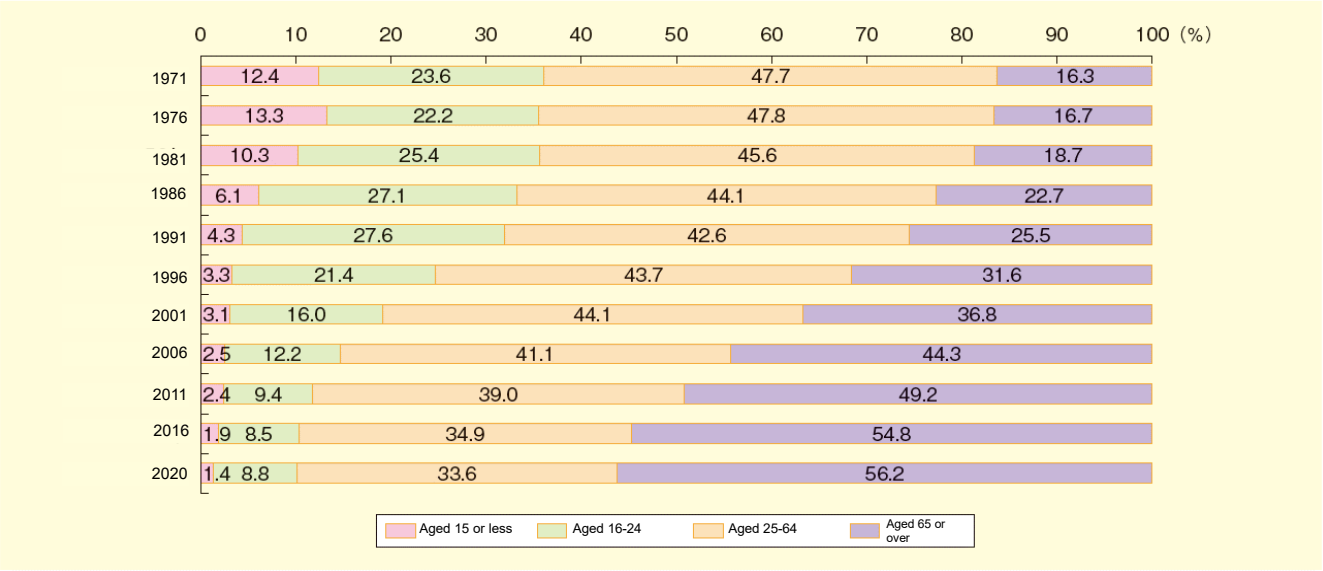
Special Feature/ Chart 1 Trends in the number of road traffic accidents, fatalities, injuries and serious injuries caused by road traffic accidents.



● **The proportion of traffic accident fatalities by age group is more than half for the elderly.**

Looking at the long-term trends in the proportion of traffic accident fatalities by age group, the proportion of people aged 65 or over in all traffic accident fatalities was 16.3% in 1971, but 56.2% in 2020, and the proportion of the elderly in traffic accident fatalities has been increasing as the population ages further.

Special Feature/ Chart 4 Trends in the proportion of traffic accident fatalities by age



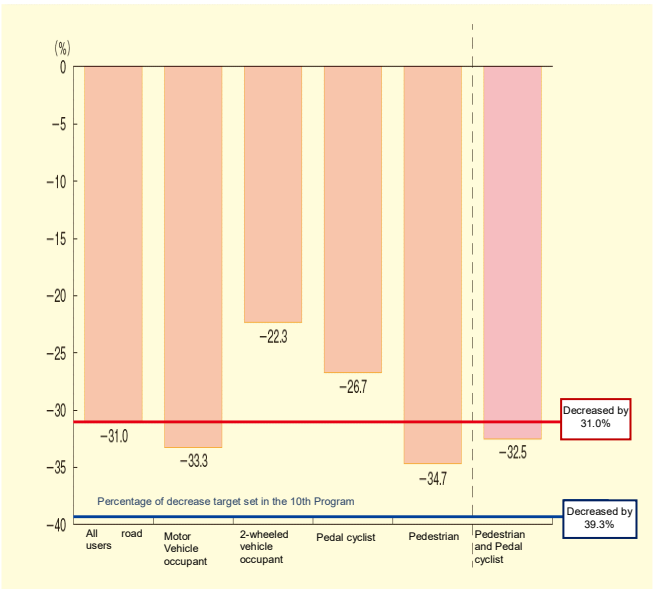
Chapter 2 Road Traffic Accidents in Recent Years

Comparison by road user group

● **Compared to the extent of decrease in the number of traffic accident fatalities in all road users (compared to 2015), the extent of decrease in the number of fatalities 2-wheeled vehicle occupant and pedal cyclist was smaller.**

The number of traffic accident fatalities in 2020 decreased by 31% in all states compared to that in 2015, but the extent of decrease in the number of fatalities “2-wheeled vehicle occupant” (-22.3%) and “Pedal cyclist” (-26.7%) was smaller.

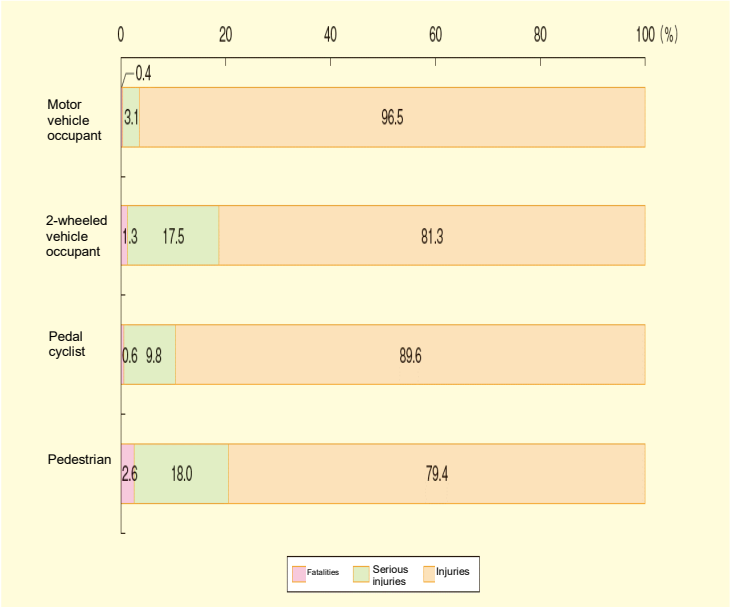
Special Feature/ Chart 9 Percentage of decrease in the number of traffic accident fatalities by road user group (2015 vs 2020)



● **The percentage of traffic accident fatalities and serious injuries is higher in the order of “Pedestrian” and “2-wheeled vehicle occupant.”**

The percentage of traffic accident fatalities and serious injuries by road user group is higher in the order of “Pedestrian” (20.6%), “ 2-wheeled vehicle occupant” (18.8%), and “Pedal cyclist” (10.4%).

Special Feature/ Chart 8 The percentage of traffic accident fatalities and serious injuries by road user group (2020)



Note
1. Source: National Police Agency
2. The number of fatalities in 2015 is reduced by 0% (Standard)

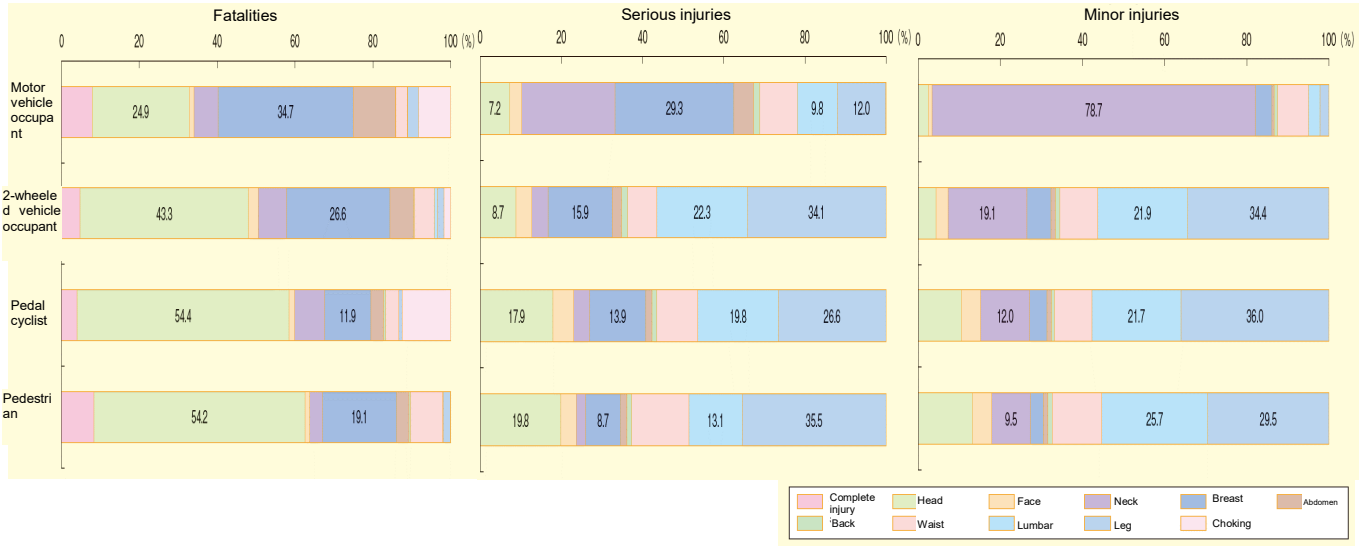
Comparison by main site of injury

- **The number of traffic accident fatalities by main site of injury and by state was high for head injuries and chest injuries in all road user groups.**

In terms of the main site of injury, head injuries and chest injuries accounted for the majority of traffic accident fatalities in all road user group, with head injuries accounting for 24.9% of those killed "Motor vehicle occupant", 43.3% of those killed "2-wheeled vehicle occupant," 54.4% of those killed "Pedal cyclist," and 54.2% of those killed "Pedestrian". Although head injuries and chest injuries also accounted for a certain percentage of serious injuries in traffic accidents, leg injuries and arm injuries accounted for a higher percentage of serious injuries, especially "2-wheeled vehicle occupant" "Pedal cyclist" and "Pedestrian".

Among those who were slightly injured in traffic accidents, neck injuries accounted for about 80% (78.7%) of injuries in the traffic accident "Motor vehicle occupant".

Special Feature/ Chart 13 The percentage of traffic accident fatalities, serious injuries and minor injuries by main site of injury (2020)

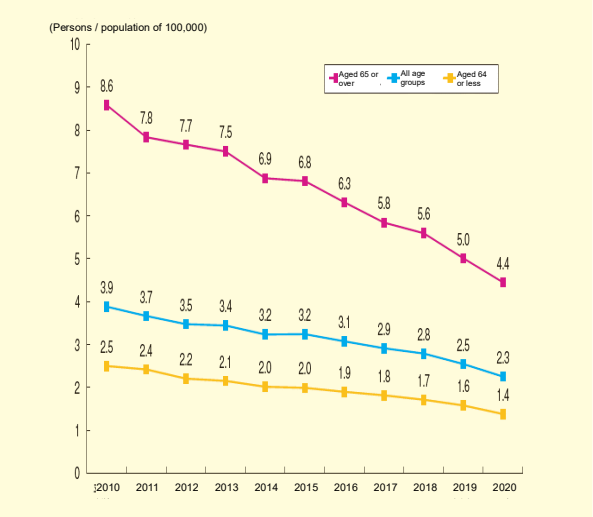


Elderly people

- **Although the number of traffic accident fatalities per a population of 100,000 people has continued to decrease, the number of elderly people killed in traffic accidents is still higher than those aged less than 65.**

While the number of traffic accident fatalities of the elderly aged 65 and over per a population of 100,000 people has continued to decrease, the number in 2020 was about three times as large as that of traffic accident fatalities of those aged less than 65 per a population of 100,000 people.

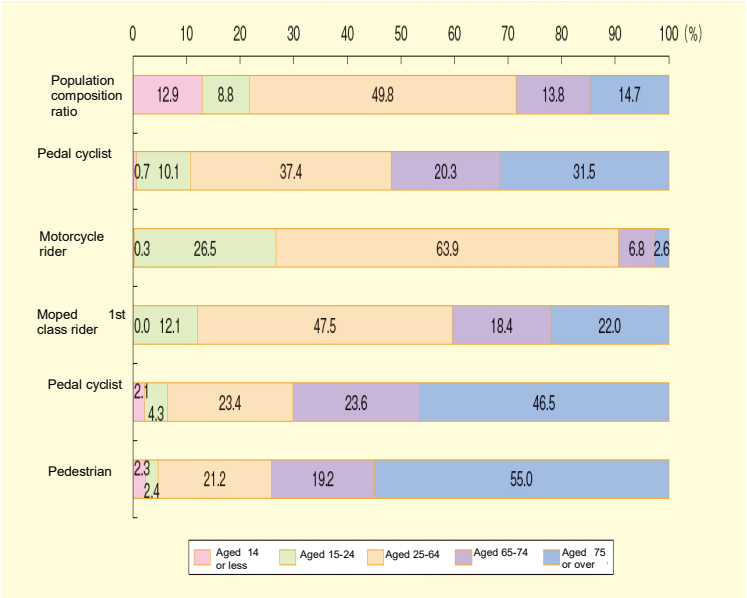
Special Feature/ Chart 14 Trends in the number of traffic accident fatalities by age group per a population of 100,000



- **The proportion of traffic accident fatalities among the elderly "Pedestrian" or "Pedal cyclist" was high in light of population composition ratio.**

The elderly aged 65 years and over accounted for about 70% of traffic accident fatalities "Pedestrian" or "Pedal cyclist". The elderly aged 75 and over accounted for 55.0% of those killed pedestrian and 46.5% of those killed pedal cyclist.

Special Feature/ Chart 15 Percentage of traffic accident fatalities by state / age group (2020)



Children

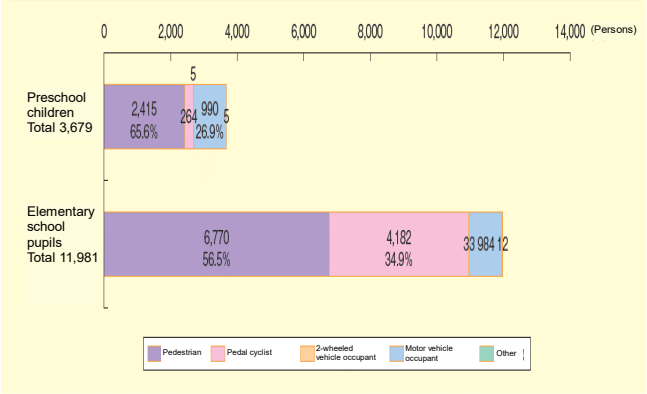
By road user group, traffic accident fatalities among preschool children and elementary school students "Pedestrian" predominant.

Looking at the number of traffic accident fatalities and serious injuries by road user group between 2011 and 2020, the largest number of both preschool children and elementary school students were killed or seriously injured "Pedestrian", accounting for 65.6% of preschool children and 56.5% of elementary school pupils.

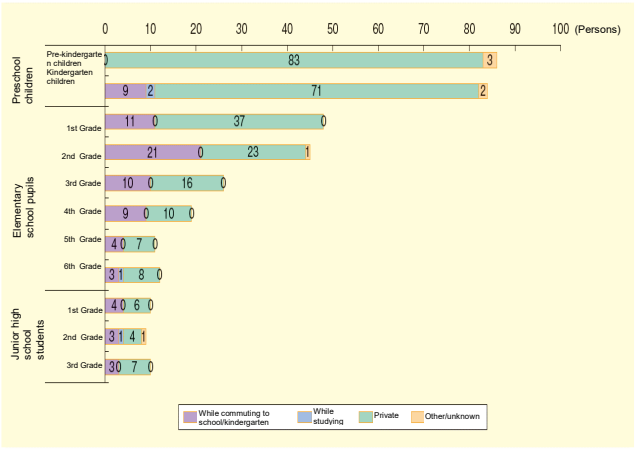
By purpose of passage, preschool children and lower-grade hose elementary school students mostly killed by traffic accident pedestrian for "private" reasons and "while commuting to school," respectively.

Looking at the number of traffic accident fatalities "Pedestrian", by purpose of passage, the largest number of fatalities (154 people, 90.6%) were due to "private" reasons such as shopping with their guardians or playing, while lower-grade elementary school students noticeably were killed "while commuting to school."

Special Feature/ Chart 18 Number of traffic accident fatalities and serious injuries by school age/ road user group (as a total of 10years from 2011 to 2020)



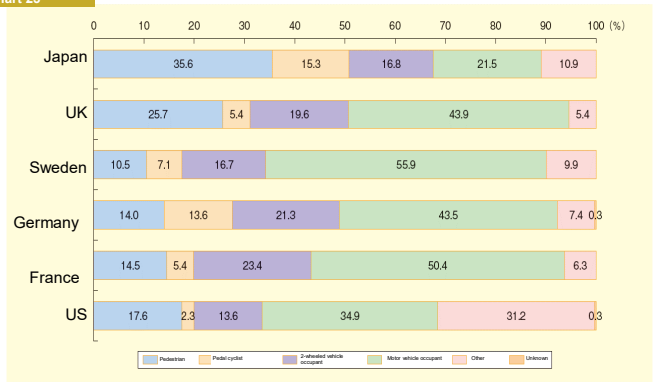
Special Feature/ Chart 19 Number of traffic accident fatalities pedestrian by purpose of passage/school age (as a total of 10 years from 2011 to 2020)



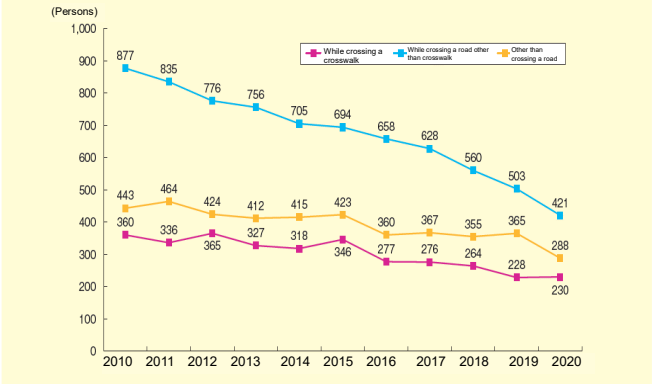
Pedestrians

In terms of the composition ratio of the number of traffic accident fatalities by road user group, the percentages of traffic accident fatalities "Pedestrian" and "Pedal cyclist" are higher than those in Western countries.

Special Feature/ Chart 23 Number of traffic accident fatalities in major Western countries by state



Special Feature/ Chart 26 Trends in the number of traffic accident fatalities in pedestrian (primary and secondary parties) by accident type

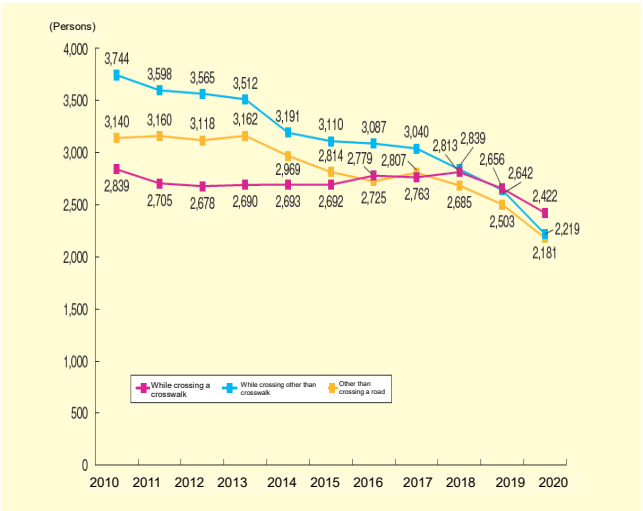


- **The number of traffic accident fatalities while crossing a crosswalk decreased by about two-thirds compared to that in 2010, but the extent of decrease in the number of people seriously injured was smaller.**

The number of pedestrians killed in traffic accidents while crossing a crosswalk decreased to about two-thirds the level of ten years ago. On the other hand, the extent of decrease in the number of people seriously injured was smaller.

The rate of decrease in both the number of traffic accident fatalities and the number of serious injuries "Pedestrian" is smaller than that of "while cross a road other than crosswalk".

Special Feature/ Chart 27 Trends in the number of serious injuries in the traffic accident pedestrian (primary and secondary parties) by accident type

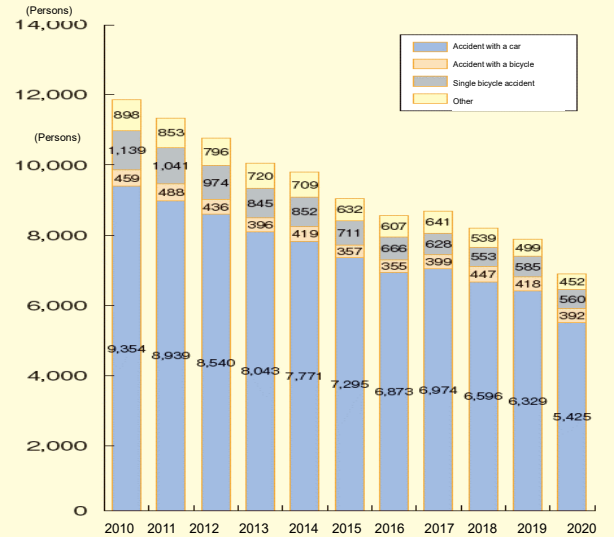


Bicycle

- **Of those killed or seriously injured in pedal cyclist, about 80% were accidents with cars.**

Of the number of people killed or seriously injured in "Pedal cyclist" (primary and secondary parties), the accident with a car accounted for about 80% (79.4% in 2020).

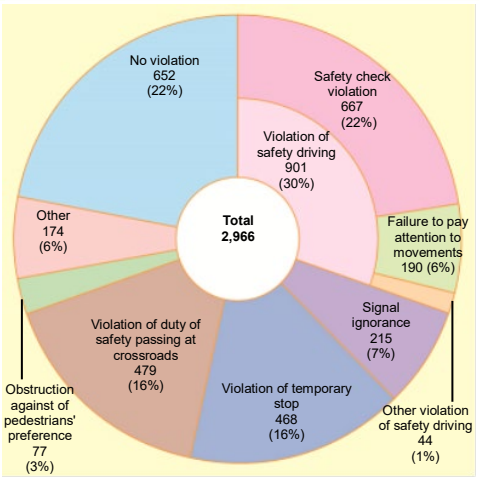
Special Feature/ Chart 30 Trends in the number of traffic accident fatalities and serious injuries in pedal cyclist (primary and secondary parties) by other party



- **In the case of crossing collision accidents involving bicyclists and car drivers (in which pedal cyclists were killed or seriously injured), about 80% of the pedal cyclists violated the traffic-related acts and regulations.**

With regard to a crossing collision accident involving bicyclists and car drivers (number of pedal cyclists killed or seriously injured: 2,966), 78% of pedal cyclists violated laws and regulations such as failing to check safety.

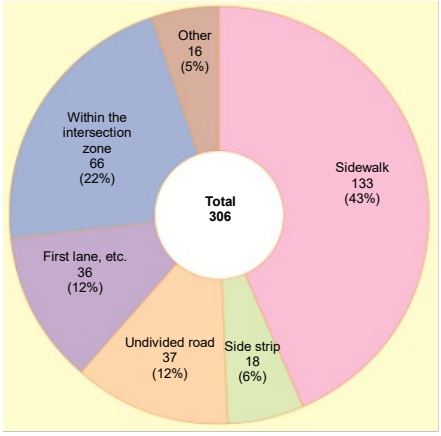
Special Feature/ Chart 30 Number of bicyclists killed or seriously injured in a crossing collision accident involving pedal cyclists and car drivers by violation of acts and regulations (2020)



- **Looking at the number of traffic accidents involving pedal cyclists and pedestrians (in which pedestrians were killed or seriously injured) by collision point, sidewalks accounted for approximately 40%.**

Looking at the number of traffic accidents involving pedal cyclists and pedestrians (in which pedestrians were killed or seriously injured) by collision point, sidewalks accounted for 43% of the collisions.

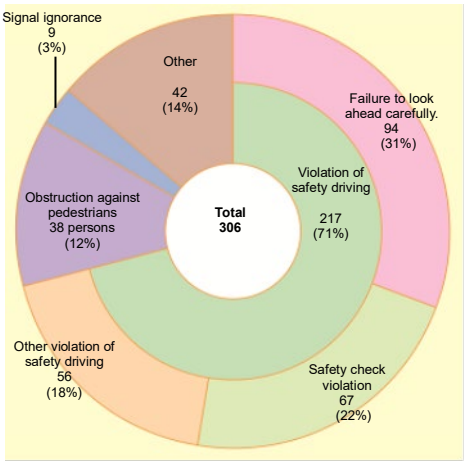
Special Feature/ Chart 33 Number of pedestrians killed or seriously injured in the traffic accident involving pedal cyclists and pedestrians by collision point (2020)



- **Of the traffic accidents involving bicycles and pedestrians (in which pedestrians were killed or seriously injured), the most common violation of law on the part in pedal cyclist was the violation of the duty to ride safely.**

By law violation, many cases of "inattention to the road ahead" and "failure to check the safety" were found, and the results questioned the awareness of pedal cyclists to comply with laws and regulations on the road.

Special Feature/ Chart 33 Number of pedestrians killed or seriously injured in the traffic accident involving pedal cyclists and pedestrians by violation of acts and regulations (2020)

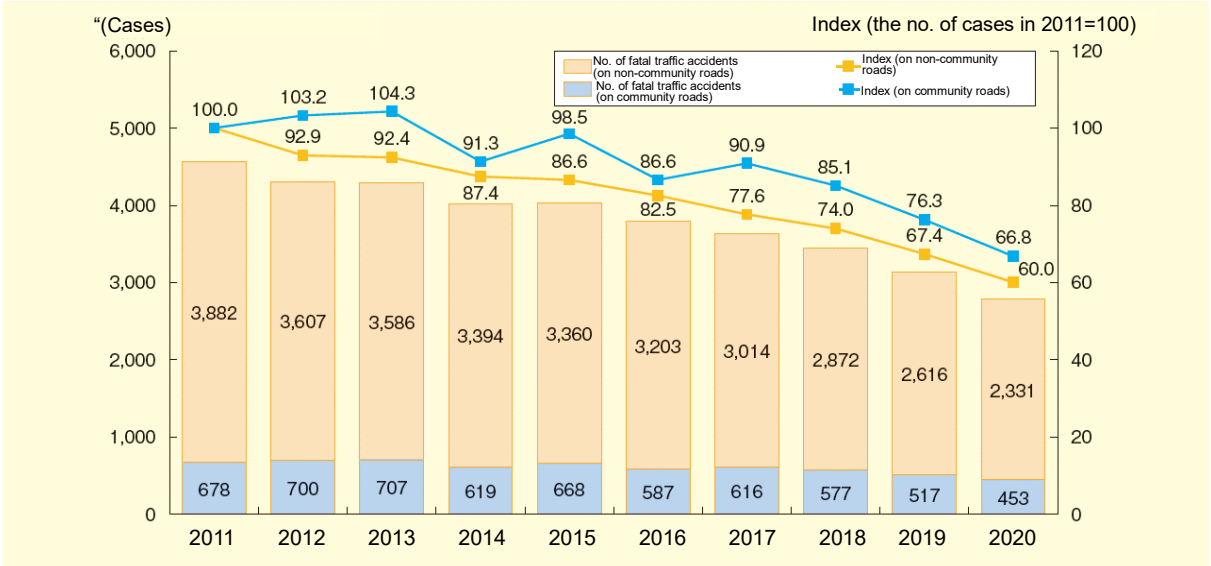


Community Roads

- **The extent of degrease in the number of fatal traffic accidents on community roads was smaller than that on non-community roads.**

Although the number of fatal traffic accidents on community roads has been decreasing in recent years, the extent of the decrease is smaller than that of fatal traffic accidents on non-community roads.

Special Feature/ Chart 36 Trends in the number of fatal traffic accidents by community/non-community roads



Note: Roads with a roadway width of less than 5.5m are counted as community roads.

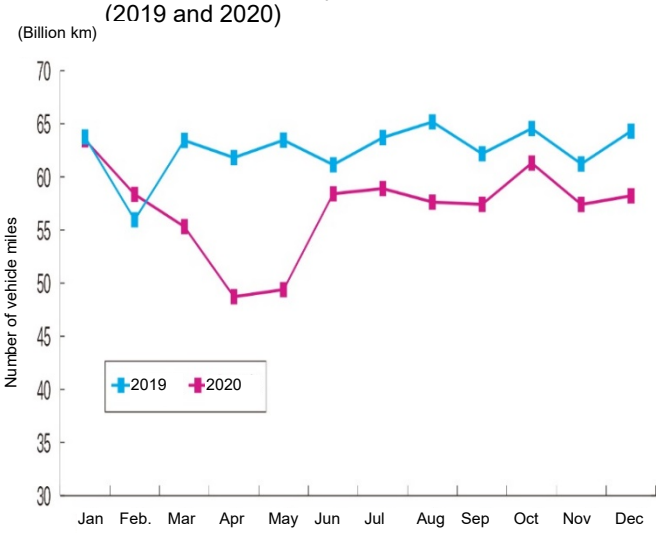
The impact of COVID-19

- Compared to 2019, the number of vehicle miles traveled decreased significantly in April and May 2020, and the number of traffic accident fatalities was kept low after April, especially in July and August.

In terms of the impact of COVID-19, the monthly number of vehicle miles traveled in 2019 and 2020 were examined. As a result, in April and May 2020, when the state of emergency was declared, the number of vehicle miles traveled decreased significantly compared to the previous year.

The monthly number of traffic accident fatalities in 2020 has been kept low since April, especially in July and August when the COVID-19 pandemic occurred. This coincides with the period of the spread of infection from July to August.

Trends in the monthly number of vehicle miles traveled (2019 and 2020)



Monthly number of fatalities in the traffic accidents