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Monitoring Road Safety Progress in the EU - Cyprus

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Report on the Implementation of the EU Road Safety Policy Framework at the Mid- Point

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Cyprus

1. Summary

In 2024, Cyprus **performed slightly better than the EU average** (45) with 44 road fatalities per million inhabitants.

Compared to the EU average, the distribution of fatalities in Cyprus showed a relatively high proportion of powered two-wheelers and 18- to 24-year-olds. Also, the vast majority of road fatalities and serious injuries occur inside urban areas.

In the Road Safety Strategic Plan of Cyprus, the **targets of halving the numbers of road fatalities, serious and slight injuries in 2030** compared to 2020 have been set. Also, five additional targets have been defined in relation to specific road user types of high risk.

A total of **158 road safety measures** divided in eight fields of action are included in the road safety strategic plan of Cyprus. In practice, some of these measures are further divided into more detailed sub-measures.

Based on the latest available data, **Cyprus appears to be almost on track to meet the 2030 target of halving road fatalities**, with a 21% decrease between 2019 and 2024. In 2022, 253 people were seriously injured in road crashes, which is 26% lower than the respective figure in 2019.

Regarding the implementation of the road safety actions foreseen in the national strategy for the period 2021-2024, **progress has been made in most road safety areas**, with significant delays being reported for some road safety areas. Based on the self-reported assessment, measures in 16 areas are on track, the implementation of the measures in 4 areas has been completed, while in the remaining 6 areas, the implementation has been delayed or has not even started yet. The baseline is assessed as high for 4 out of the 26 road safety areas and as low in 12 areas.

The main gaps reported are the **understaffed technical services**, the **insufficient organisation** of the authorities and the **limited budget**. These have a negative effect on the progress of the strategy implementation in all areas of the road safety management pillar, except legislation, in the implementation of measures related to vulnerable road users, road safety campaigns, as well as for measures related to the safe speeds pillar.

Finally, progress in the implementation of the planned actions is broadly well on track, which is partly reflected in the evolution of the overall number of fatalities (albeit with small figures subject to annual fluctuations). However, significant delays are met in the implementation of the plan due to organisational, budget and staff-related issues. It is therefore necessary to resolve the obstacles preventing or delaying the implementation of the road safety strategy and to speed up the setting of the planned road safety measures, with emphasis on those related to urban infrastructure, vulnerable road users and safe speeds.

2. Road Safety Strategy and Measures

2.1. Road Safety Strategy

The **Road Safety Strategic Plan of Cyprus for the decade 2021-2030** is the result of the update of the strategic plan prepared for implementation during the period 2012-2020. The new strategic plan is based on the "Safe System" approach, which is the philosophy of the new European Union (EU) policy for the decade 2021-2030, and the approach adopted internationally.

The formulation of the proposed policies and actions included in the updated strategic plan was carried out through a series of meetings of the thematic interdepartmental committees of the Road Safety Council and through individual consultations with the relevant departments¹.

Table 6.1: National road safety strategic plan

Cyprus	
Timeframe	2021-2030
Lead Authority	National Road Safety Council
Link	https://www.gov.cy/mtcw/documents/stratigiko-schedio-odikis-asfaleias/

2.2. Road Safety Governance

The Ministry of Communications and Works and the Road Safety Council, which is the national statutory body for the coordination of all government authorities involved in road safety, are responsible for the **formulation of the national road safety strategy**.

Also, the Road Safety Unit is responsible for the **monitoring of road safety developments** in the country.

2.3. Main Safety Issues

According to the Road Safety Strategic Plan of Cyprus, based on the national road safety statistics of the period 2017-2019, some key problems emerge, which require special attention and priority. Briefly, these issues are the following:

- The vast majority of road fatalities and serious injuries occur **inside urban areas** (63.5% of fatalities and 80% of serious injuries) largely due to speeding.
- Very high percentage of **motorcyclist and moped fatalities** (31.4%) and especially on urban roads.
- Very high rate of **pedestrian fatalities** (23.5%).
- High rate of road deaths of **young people** aged up to 24 years (26.1%).

¹ <https://www.gov.cy/mtcw/documents/stratigiko-schedio-odikis-asfaleias/>

- Very high rate of road fatalities of **foreigners** residing in Cyprus (27.3%), which is disproportionate to the percentage of foreign citizens residing in Cyprus.
- General **disobedience to road traffic rules**, with:
 - violation of speed limits (37% inside urban areas, 19% on rural roads, 64% on motorways)
 - driving under the influence of alcohol and drugs (15.2% of fatal crashes were attributed to drink driving and 8.3% to drug driving),
 - non-use of seat belts especially in the rear seats (56% of killed passenger car occupants were not wearing seat-belts),
 - non-use of helmets (44% of killed motorcyclists were not wearing helmets),
 - use of mobile phone while driving (24% of fatal crashes were attributed to careless driving/driver distraction).

2.4. Road Safety Targets

The following general targets have been set at the Road Safety Strategic Plan 2021-2030 of Cyprus:

- By 2030, a **50% reduction in fatalities** compared to 2020
- By 2030, a **50% reduction in serious injuries** compared to 2020
- By 2030, a **50% reduction in slight injuries** compared to 2020

In addition to the above general targets, Cyprus sets the following specific targets, in relation to the road user types where there is a particular problem:

Table 6.2: Specific targets for the reduction of road crash casualties

Nr of killed and seriously injured persons	2020 (Baseline)	Target 2030 (% reduction)
Inside urban areas	199	-60%
PTWs	111	-60%
Motor vehicle drivers under 25 y.o.	42	-60%
Pedestrians and cyclists	62	-60%
Foreigners	76	-60%

2.5. Road Safety Measures

A total of **158 road safety measures** divided in **eight fields of actions** are included in the road safety strategic plan of Cyprus². In practice, some of these measures are further divided into more detailed sub-measures.

² <https://www.gov.cy/mtcw/documents/stratigiko-schedio-odikis-asfaleias/>

Table 6.3: Road safety fields of actions and number of actions

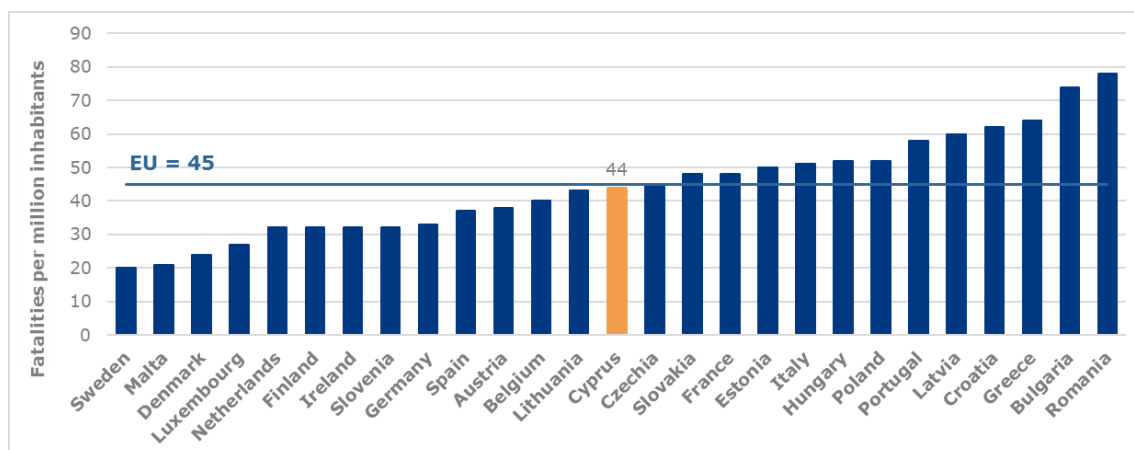
Field of Actions	Actions
1. Legislation, road traffic code and enforcement	34
2. Driver training and testing	13
3. Road safety education, publicity and awareness-raising	34
4. Safer roads and mobility	37
5. Post-crash care	16
6. Safer vehicles	11
7. Road safety research	2
8. Organisational structure and operation	11
Total	158

3. Road Safety Progress

3.1. Road Safety Outcomes

Based on data for 2024, Cyprus ranked 14th out of the 27 EU countries in terms of the lowest numbers of fatalities per million inhabitants. In fact, 44 road fatalities per million inhabitants were recorded that year, which is slightly better than the EU average (45).

Figure 6.1 Mortality rates by country, 2024



Sources: CARE database on road crashes; population data from Eurostat (online data code [demo_pjan](#)).

Figure 6.2 Road fatalities and target 2030
(Source CARE database)³

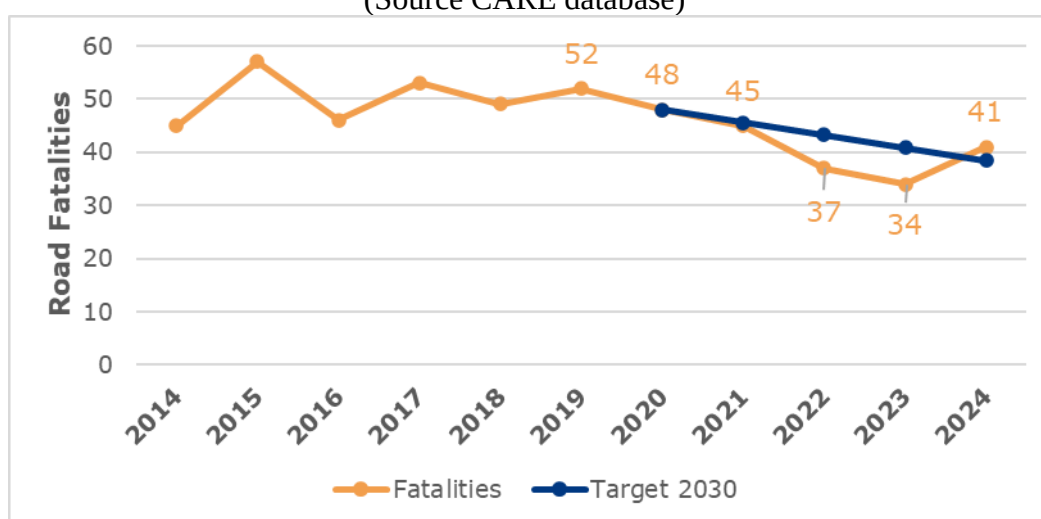
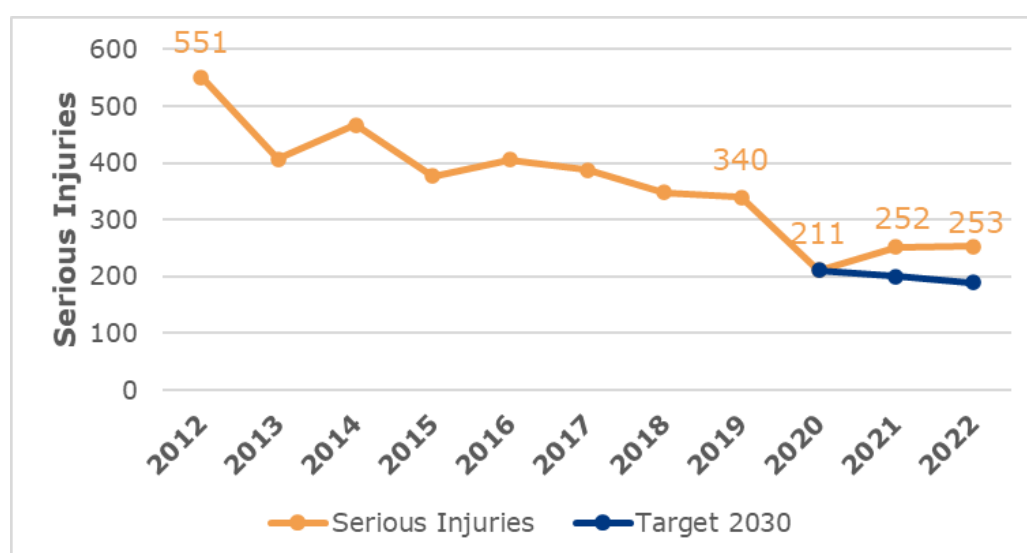


Figure 6.3 Serious road injuries
(Source: CARE database)⁴



In 2024, the number of fatalities decreased by 21% compared to 2019⁴. Thus, Cyprus is **almost on track to meet the 2030 target of halving the number of road fatalities although as a small country the number of fatalities is subject to annual fluctuations**. In addition, the number of serious injuries decreased by 26% in 2022 compared to 2019. Thus, Cyprus appears on track to meet the 2030 target of halving the number of serious injuries.

Also, Cyprus is well on track to meet the remaining targets set in the plan (if one uses 2019 as the baseline year), with the observed number of casualties being lower than the target values

³ It is noted that the global COVID-19 pandemic had an impact on the CARE data for 2020 and 2021 for many European countries. Traffic volumes dropped sharply during the pandemic due to traffic restrictions, which was associated with a significant drop in road traffic crashes and fatalities.

⁴ For all Member States, 2019 has been used as the baseline year for the monitoring of 2030 targets in this report, which is used at EU level. Cyprus has set 2020 as the baseline year.

in 2022 for all categories.

Table 6.4: Monitoring of road safety targets, 2022

Nr of killed and seriously injured persons	2019 (Baseline)	Target 2022	Observed 2022	Difference
Slight Injuries	333	288	215	-73
Inside urban areas	301	252	223	-29
PTWs	138	115	108	-7
Motor vehicle drivers under 25 y.o.	49	41	46	+5
Pedestrians and cyclists	94	79	67	-12
Foreigners	127	106	103	-3

Compared to the EU average, the distribution of fatalities in Cyprus shows a relatively high proportion of powered two-wheelers and of 18- to 24-year-olds⁵. In fact, PTWs accounted for 19% of road fatalities and 18% of serious injuries in 2022.

An overview of the evolution of road crash fatalities and serious injuries during the period 2019-2022 is provided below for specific types of roads, crashes and road users. Overall, in Cyprus, road crash fatalities and serious injuries were declined for all groups examined below.

It is also noted that the number of **seriously injured cyclists was decreased to a lesser extent** compared to the other road user types (5% compared to 19% decrease in total serious injuries).

Table 6.5: Evolution of road fatalities, 2019-2022

Fatalities	2019	2022	% in 2022	% change 2019-2022
Total road fatalities	52	37	-	-29%
Inside urban areas	32	25	68%	-22%
Outside urban areas	17	9	24%	-47%
Motorways	3	3	8%	-
Single vehicle crashes	-	-	-	-
Multi vehicle crashes	31	20	54%	-35%
Car occupants	14	11	30%	-21%
PTW riders	16	10	27%	-38%
Cyclists	1	4	11%	-
Pedestrians	13	6	16%	-54%

⁵ European Commission (2023), Country Profile Cyprus. Road Safety Observatory. Brussels, European Commission, Directorate General for Transport.

Table 6.6: Evolution of serious injuries, 2019-2022

Serious Injuries	2019	2022	% in 2022	% change 2019-2022
Total serious injuries	340	253	-	-26%
Inside urban areas	269	198	78%	-26%
Outside urban areas	51	45	18%	-12%
Motorways	20	10	4%	-50%
Single vehicle crashes	-	-	-	-
Multi vehicle crashes	226	174	69%	-23%
Car occupants	110	78	31%	-29%
PTW riders	122	98	39%	-20%
Cyclists	4	8	3%	-
Pedestrians	76	49	19%	-36%

3.2. Road Safety Performance Indicators

The use rates of helmet among powered two wheelers in Cyprus are lower than in the EU on average.

Table 6.7: Road Safety Performance Indicators, 2022 - 2025
(Source: ERSO, Country Profiles)

	Cyprus		EU	
	2022	2025	2022	2025
Speeding⁶				
% of passenger cars travelling within speed limits ^a				
Motorways	46.5	48.0	-	-
Rural Roads	45.7	71.0	-	-
Urban Roads	26.1	51.0	-	-
Seat belt & CRS use rates (%) ^{a*,b}				
Front	91.1	95.8	93.1	92.4
Rear	61.4	86.9	75.3	69.9
Child restraint systems (roadside observations)	87.4	-	67.0	83.3
Child restraint systems (in-vehicle inspections)	/	/	-	-
Helmet use rates (%) ^a				
PTW driver	87.4	87.7	97.0	97.6
PTW passenger	87.8	93.7	94.4	97.0
Cyclist	-	-	37.8	34.5
DUI of Alcohol^c (self-reported)				
% of car drivers who have driven at least once in the last 30 days over the legal limit	-	-	11.8	11.8
Driver Distraction ^a				

⁶ An EU average is not available for speeding, due to different legal speed limits among countries, which does not allow for a straightforward comparison.

	Cyprus		EU	
	2022	2025	2022	2025
% of drivers not using hand-held mobile device/phone while driving	90.6	93.8	94.8	94.5
Vehicle Safety				
% of new passenger cars rated with 4 EuroNCAP stars and above ^a	87.9	90.0	83.6	82.7
Average age of passenger car fleet (years) ^d	-	-	12.3	12.5

Sources: ^a Baseline and Trendline projects, ^b ETSC (2022), ^c ESRA3 project (2024), ^d ACEA (2024, 2025), Notes: *2025 data only for weekdays

4. Monitoring Road Safety Strategy Implementation

4.1. Implementation Progress

Road Safety Management

Cyprus starts from a medium level in two road safety areas related to **Road Safety Management** and from a low level in the remaining two areas. In 2024, the measures related to the areas of the national road safety budget and legislation are on track, while the implementation of the measures in the remaining areas has not started yet.

Table 6.8: Self-reported assessment of implementation progress of measures related to road safety management

B1	Road Safety Management	Baseline Assessment (2021)	Progress (2021-2024)
1	National road safety authority	medium	not started
2	National road safety budget	low	on track
3	Road safety legislation	medium	on track
4	National road safety observatory	low	not started

More specifically, the existing interministerial Road Safety Council is chaired by the Minister of Transport, Communications and Works, since its formation in 1996. During all Council meetings, the Minister of Justice and Public Order should participate together with the Police Chief, along with all governmental stakeholders involved. The long-term goal for this Council is to evolve into a **National Road Safety Authority**. However, procedures for this transformation have yet to commence.

Additionally, efforts are being made by the Road Safety Council and the Ministry of Transport to **increase the allocated State Budget** for improving road safety levels. Also, the **update of the road traffic code** is in progress.

Finally, currently all **statistics related to road crashes** are collected by the Police, who prepare regular reports that are sent to the European Commission and are published on their official website. It is envisaged to incorporate this task within the scope of the National Road Safety Authority activities, however, this task has not started yet.

Safe Road User Behaviour

In relation to the pillar of **safe road user behaviour**, Cyprus starts from a low level in 2021 in almost all road safety areas, except communication campaigns and professional drivers. In 2024, most of the relevant measures to this pillar are on track. Only the implementation of the measures related to education and vulnerable road users has delayed.

Table 6.9: Self-reported assessment of implementation progress of measures related to road user behaviour

B2	Safe Road User Behaviour	Baseline Assessment (2021)	Progress (2021-2024)
1	Enforcement	low	on track
2	Education	low	delayed
3	New drivers training	low	on track
4	Communication campaigns	medium	on track
5	Measures for vulnerable road users	low	delayed
6	Measures for professional drivers	high	on track

More specifically, as an example of good practice, **traffic enforcement cameras** (fixed and mobile) were installed in 2022-2024 at key locations of the urban and rural road network. The effectiveness of this newly introduced measure (enforcement cameras) is still under evaluation, therefore, the preliminary effectiveness results are not representative.

Road safety is part of the curricula in primary and secondary schools in Cyprus. However, **road safety education** is lagging for adult road users, which depends mostly on volunteer bases from NGO's, road users groups/ companies that have signed the Road Safety Charter and the Government's Road Safety Ambassadors. The latter are composed of an ex-professional driver and a young road trauma victim. They go to speak to Ministry of defence camps, students, public groups. This helps as the audiences hear from people who have been through road trauma.

Moreover, the competent authority for driver licences is undertaking changes to the existing procedure that reinforce the need for **training of new drivers**. This requires changes to the existing legislation which have been approved by the Parliament. The relevant law will be put in place in 2026.

Also, targeted **campaigns** take place throughout the year by the Road Safety Council, the Police and the organisations that have signed the Road Safety Charter, with the assistance of the Road Safety Ambassadors.

The existing national legislation defining the **requirements for professional motorbike riders** (food deliveries, couriers etc.) was reviewed and amended and it will be in place in 2026. The requirements for professional drivers of HGVs and buses of the national legislation are in line with EU Directive 2003/59. The Ministry of Transport has given incentives to buy safe motorcycle clothes (€500 per padded jacket).

Safe Speeds

Regarding the **Safe Speeds** pillar, Cyprus starts from a low level in all related road safety areas, except campaigns on speeding, for which the baseline is assessed as medium. In 2024, most of the relevant measures to this pillar are on track. The implementation of the measures related to monitoring speeding has not started yet.

Table 6.10: Self-reported assessment of implementation progress of measures related to safe speeds

B3	Safe Speeds	Baseline Assessment (2021)	Progress (2021-2024)
1	Update of speed limits	low	on track
2	Enforcing speed limits	low	on track
3	Campaigns on speeding	medium	on track
4	Monitoring speeding	low	not started

More specifically, the roll-out of **30km/h zones in urban areas** takes place from 2022.

Also, **enforcement speed cameras** (mobile) have been installed during the period 2022-2024.

As referred above, **targeted campaigns** are carried out on an annual basis by the Road Safety Council, the Police and the organisations that have signed the Road Safety Charter, with the assistance of the Road Safety Ambassadors.

Concerning **monitoring of speeding**, Police undertake such studies periodically. A more recent study was also carried out as part of the EU Baseline project in 2022, which highlighted the need for increased speed monitoring inside urban areas.

The Ministry has made available €500,000 to be given to municipalities to implement 30km/h zones because budget was identified as an obstacle. Incentives are to pay for the implementation such as road signs and markings.

Safe Roads

Regarding the **Safe Roads** pillar, based on the self-reported assessment, the baseline is low in two areas (City Mobility & Safety Plans and Urban infrastructure for VRUs), medium in other two areas (Rural Roads Safety Interventions and Motorways safety management) and high in the remaining two areas (Road design standards and Road safety audit and inspections). In 2024, all measures are on track, while the implementation of the measures related to road design standards and road safety audit and inspections has been completed.

Table 6.11: Self-reported assessment of implementation progress of measures related to safe roads

B4	Safe Roads	Baseline Assessment (2021)	Progress (2021-2024)
1	City mobility & safety plans	low	on track
2	Urban infrastructure for VRUs	low	on track
3	Rural roads safety interventions	medium	on track
4	Motorways safety management	medium	on track
5	Road design standards	high	completed
6	Road safety audit and inspection	high	completed

More specifically, targeted measures are being implemented as part of the **periodical assessment of the national road network** and road safety inspections of existing roads. On the other hand, more targeted measures, both in infrastructure and road user education, need to be taken for urban areas.

For the **assessment of dangerous locations** reported on the road network, ad-hoc assessments are carried out by governmental experts forming the interdepartmental Technical Committee for resolving Traffic and Road safety issues.

Also, ongoing efforts for the **installation of ITS on motorways** are in progress.

Finally, geometric **road design standards** are in place and are being applied. Also, procedures and **guidelines** on road safety audits and inspections are in place and are being applied on the roads, as specified in the EU Directives 2008/96/EC and (EU) 2019/1936.

Safe Vehicles

In relation to the pillar of **Safe Vehicles**, Cyprus starts from a medium level in the areas of fleet renewal and vehicle technical inspections and from a low level in the remaining two areas. In 2024, all measures are on track, except those related to the automation preparation.

Table 6.12: Self-reported assessment of implementation progress of measures related to safe vehicles

B5	Safe Vehicles	Baseline Assessment (2021)	Progress (2021-2024)
1	Fleet renewal	medium	on track
2	Promotion of ADAS	low	on track
3	Technical vehicle inspection	medium	on track
4	Automation preparation	low	not started

In Cyprus, the government provides incentives/subsidies to **remove old vehicles** by subsidizing the purchase of new electric or plug in hybrid vehicles. Within this context, the promotion of ADAS is also carried out.

Also, **technical inspections** are compulsory for all vehicles, and from 2024 they are also

mandatory for motorcycles.

Post Crash Care

Regarding the **Post-Crash Care** pillar, Cyprus starts from a medium level in 2021 in the area of the reduction of EMS reaction time and from a high level in the area of supporting injured people. The implementation of all measures of this pillar has been completed.

According to a recent study that was undertaken as part of the EU Baseline project in 2022, the 95th percentile of the **EMS response time** of EMS was calculated at 20 minutes and up to 8 minutes for the 50% of road crashes. This was found to be in line with EU targeted response times. The National Road Safety Strategic Plan sets specific response times.

An **Accident & Emergency specialised department** has been set up at the General Hospital of Nicosia, for the proper treatment of people injured at road crashes.

Table 6.13: Self-reported assessment of implementation progress of measures related to post crash care

B6	Post Crash Care	Baseline Assessment (2021)	Progress (2021-2024)
1	Reduce EMS reaction time	medium	completed
2	Support people injured	high	completed

4.2. Gaps

Based on the self-reported assessment, the main gaps reported are the **understaffed technical services** and the **insufficient organisation of the Authorities**. This has a negative effect on the progress of the strategy implementation in all areas of the road safety management pillar, except legislation.

In addition to the above gaps, **limited budget** and **insufficient coordination between involved road stakeholders** are reported as obstacles for the implementation of measures related to vulnerable road users, road safety campaigns, as well as for measures related to the safe speeds pillar.

Also, the **insufficient state budget for road safety**, but also household budget constraints based on the economy, are affecting progress in the areas of fleet renewal and ADAS promotion.

Finally, regarding the speed enforcement, there is reduced operational capacity due to **understaffing of the Traffic Police**.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

In the road safety strategic plan for the decade 2021-2030 of Cyprus, the targets of **halving the number of road fatalities, serious and slight injuries** in 2030 compared to 2020 have been set. Also, five additional targets have been defined in relation to specific road user types of high risk. A total of 158 road safety measures grouped into eight fields of actions are included in the plan.

In 2024, Cyprus, performed **slightly better than the EU average with 44 road fatalities per million inhabitants**. Compared to the EU average, the distribution of fatalities in Cyprus shows a relatively high proportion of powered two-wheelers and of 18- to 24-year-olds.

Based on preliminary data, between 2019 and 2024, a decrease of 21% in road fatalities was recorded, indicating that Cyprus is almost on track to **meet the 2030 target of halving the number of road fatalities**. In addition, serious injuries decreased by 26% in 2022 compared to 2019.

Regarding the implementation of the road safety actions foreseen in the national road safety action plan for the period 2021-2024, based on the self-reported assessment, **progress has been made in most road safety areas**, while delays are met in 10 areas mainly due to understaffed services, limited budget and insufficient organisation of the authorities.

Finally, progress in the implementation of the planned actions is broadly well on track, which is reflected in part in the evolution of the total number of fatalities (albeit Cyprus has small numbers which are subject to annual fluctuations). However, significant delays are met in the implementation of the plan due to organisational, budget and staff-related issues. It is therefore necessary to resolve the obstacles preventing or delaying the implementation of the road safety strategy and to speed up the setting of the planned road safety measures, with emphasis on those related to urban infrastructure, vulnerable road users and safe speeds.