



A RADICAL CHANGE: THE MORTALITY RATE AMONG YOUNG DRIVERS DROPS BY 41% IN THE LAST DECADE

- **Despite being the group with the worst reputation among Spanish drivers (58%), young Spaniards between 18 and 29 years old are the age group with the lowest mortality rate among motorists (0.5%), an indicator that has fallen by 41% in the last decade.**
- **This big change in trend is accentuated even more if today's young people are compared with previous generations, especially when considering that over the last 30 years, traffic accidents have gone from accounting for 31% of young people's deaths (1989) to 17% (2019), a saving of around 35,000 lives.**
- **The trend in injuries also yields good data for drivers aged 18 to 29 years old, given that the serious injuries in the rest of the age groups is 10.6% higher than that of younger motorists.**
- **However, there are still important areas for improvement for younger motorists: They have a higher accident rate than the rest, they break the speed limit more often (72%), they are the ones who most use mobile devices while driving (47%) and are the ones who least use a seatbelt when travelling as passengers (16%).**
- **The typical accident among young drivers aged 18 to 29 years old: collisions due to not respecting the safety distance (30%), in cars that are fairly old and on urban roads (61%). They are usually caused by men (70%) aged 25 to 29 years old**
- **By Autonomous Communities, the Balearic Islands, Catalonia and Madrid are the regions where more accidents involving young drivers have been recorded in the last 10 years, while Castile-León, Navarre and Murcia have the least.**

Madrid, 25 October 2021. Recklessness behind the wheel on party nights, alcohol and drug use, speeding... This has been the image of younger drivers for decades and is already part of the collective imagination of Spanish society. However, despite the deeply-entrenched stereotype, the data is beginning to disprove this belief, revealing some very surprising conclusions. According to the statistics published by the DGT (General Directorate of Transport), drivers from the 18 to 29 years old segment have **a better performance in terms of road safety** than other age groups.

In fact, even though all the age groups indicates that **young people are the most reckless and inexperienced group** when it comes to getting behind the wheel (58%) and that, proportionally, they have more accidents than the rest of the age groups (+37% in the last 10 years), drivers aged 18 to 29 years old have experienced a radical change, mainly due to their greater respect for the rules and the change in

their mobility habits. Subsequently, their **mortality rate has registered a decrease of 41%** in the last decade, making them the group of motorists with fewer deceased drivers compared to their own injured (0.5%).

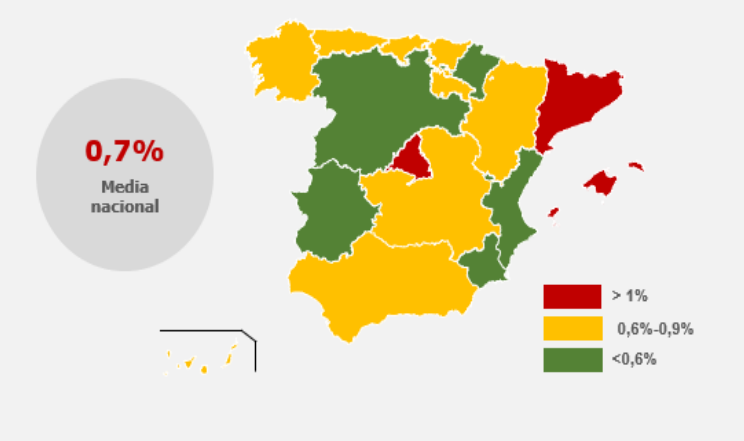
This change is even more pronounced if we compare the current data with those of previous generations, given that, in relative terms, **traffic accidents in 1989 caused 31% of total deaths** among young people, while **30 years later (2019)** this percentage barely reached **17.7%**, which would mean a **saving of around 35,000 lives**. The trend in injuries also yields good data for drivers aged 18 to 29 years old, given that the **serious injuries in the rest of the age groups is 10.6% higher** than that of younger motorists.

These are some of the main conclusions from the study "**The great change. Young drivers: Anatomy of a new generation behind the wheel**", carried out by the **Línea Directa Foundation** in partnership with **Zaragoza Centre** and which analyses the road accident rate of Spanish drivers aged 18 to 29 between 2010 and 2019.

In the words of **Mar Garre, Director General of the Línea Directa Foundation**: "For many years we have seen how society prejudged younger drivers by labelling them as the most reckless and inexperienced motorists. However, the figures tell us that nowadays this is not the case. In the last 10 years, drivers between the ages of 18 and 29 have experienced a really remarkable improvement due to a set of circumstances, such as greater responsibility and awareness, new mobility habits and later access to the driving licence",

Type of accident and regional distribution

Conductores jóvenes accidentados frente al total del censo de automovilistas de 18 a 29 años



The **most common accident involving** young people from the 18 to 29 years old group is the **rear-end collision (30%)**, caused by distractions and not maintaining the safety distance. These accidents usually happen on **urban roads (61%) on weekends** and in **cars that are over 10 years old (44%)**, and **men between 25 and 29 years old** tend to have them more frequently (70%). As for the person responsible for the collision, young people usually lose out, as they **cause 62%**

of the accidents, a fact that contrasts against their own perception, given that they think that they are the injured party in 2 out of 3 claims.

Turning to the **regional distribution** of accidents involving young people, road accidents among young people are a fairly homogeneous phenomenon throughout the country. Despite this, the Autonomous Communities such as **the Balearic Islands, Catalonia and Madrid** stand out for having an occurrence of this type of accident that is slightly higher than the average, while **Castile-León, Navarre and Murcia** are recognised for having an accident rate involving young people that is lower than the other regions.

What needs to improve?

Although young people are the **worst rated** age group when it comes to getting behind the wheel and **1 in 4 Spanish drivers** advocate **delaying the age of obtaining a driving license until the age of 21** years old, the fact is, drivers between the age of 18 and 29 years old are far from being the most problematic group. In fact, according to the study by the **Línea Directa Foundation**, motorists **between the age of 35 and 44 are the most reckless drivers**, as they are the ones who most consume alcohol (45%) and drugs (12%) before driving, who least use a seatbelt as a driver (8%) and who least wear a helmet when riding a motorcycle (12%). In addition, they are the ones who have received the most fines recently (22%) and also those who say they have lost more points off their licence as a result of those offences (45%).

However, it is not all positive data for younger drivers. Despite the great improvement experienced in the last decade, they still have **important areas for improvement**. For example, they are the drivers who most admit to **speeding** (72%), who least wear a **seatbelt** as passengers (16%) and, above all, who **most use the mobile** without hands-free when driving (47%), a very dangerous practice that causes almost 400 deaths on the road every year.

Methodology

This report has been carried out in collaboration with the Centro Zaragoza. The data on accident rates have been calculated using the DGT ARENA database based on the total number of accidents that occurred between 2010 and 2019 classified according to age groups and relativised to the official census of drivers by age. To establish the accidental typology, the ARENA database has been used and also the history of accidents of Línea Directa Aseguradora between 2010 and 2019, the data of which have been transferred in an aggregate and anonymous manner. In order to prepare the opinion poll, a survey was conducted among 1,700 drivers over 18 years of age with a driving licence, selected proportionally by sex, age and autonomous community. The field work took place between 27 September and 1 October 2021 and the survey has a sampling error of +/- 2.38%.

Línea Directa Foundation

It is a non-profit institution that was created in 2014 with the aim of helping to build a better and safer society, promoting various initiatives with Road Safety as its main area of action. The Foundation was created by Línea Directa Aseguradora to take another step in its commitment to the fight against traffic accidents.

Línea Directa Foundation - <https://www.fundacionlineadirecta.org/>

Línea Directa Foundation

Santiago Velázquez
Head of External Communication
santiago.velazquez@fundacionlineadirecta.org
682 196 953

Ricardo Carrasco
ricardocarrasco.perez@fundacionlineadirecta.org
682 38 75 33

Trescom

Florita Vallcaneras
florita.vallcaneras@trescom.es
627 811 799

Isabel Gómez
isabel.gomez@trescom.es
650 36 36 57

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