



Report: "Obsolete cars, a real risk. The influence the age of the car population has on accidents (2011–2020)"

IN SPAIN THERE ARE ALREADY 16.2 MILLION VEHICLES THAT ARE MORE THAN 15 YEARS OLD, ACCOUNTING FOR 44% OF THE VEHICLE POPULATION

- The Spanish car population has become obsolete: 16.2 million vehicles (44%) are more than 15 years old and 22.9 million (66%) more than a decade old.
- Registrations have plummeted by 35% in the last 3 years, making the Spanish vehicle population one of the oldest in the countries in our vicinity, reaching an average age of 13.5 years in 2021.
- The age of the Spanish vehicle population has a big impact on road safety. In the last decade, almost 2,700 people died in accidents involving cars over 15 years old. The percentage of cars over 15 years old that were involved in fatal accidents also multiplied by 3, from 15% to 44%.
- Taking into account the relation between fatalities and age of vehicles, if the average age of Spanish cars were to be reduced below 10 years, 260 lives could be saved annually.
- Spaniards also fail their MOT test. Around 50% of cars that undergo the MOT test show defects in the first inspection and 1 in 5 have serious or very serious defects.
- Lack of awareness and the impact of the economic crisis are cause for concern: In 2021, 40% of the total vehicles that should have passed their MOT did not. The average amount families spent on car maintenance has also fallen by 20% in the last decade.
- Extremadura, Castile-La Mancha and Castile-León are at the top of the oldest vehicles ranking, while at the other end are the Autonomous Community of Madrid, Catalonia and the Balearic Islands.

Madrid, 21 September 2022. Collection-worthy car models, provincial registration plates instead of European plates and millions of vehicles with safety systems that are more than a decade old. We are not talking about car museums or inspiring private collections, but about the day-to-day streets and roads of our country.

It's no secret: **The Spanish car population has become obsolete once and for all. 22.9 million vehicles, or 2 out of 3, are more than a decade old and 16.2 million are over 15 years old.**

The reasons behind this? They are complex and many. The economic situation, social changes related to mobility and environmental awareness, the supply crisis and, more recently, inflation and the rise in fuel prices have seriously hampered vehicle

sales. In fact, **registrations have plummeted by 35% in the last 3 years**, making the Spanish vehicle population one of the oldest in the countries in our vicinity, reaching an **average age of 13.5 years at the end of 2021**. In addition, the aging trends of Spanish vehicles reveal worrying figures, since its car population is **38% older** than a decade ago.

Aside from the economic indicators, there is one issue that is cause for concern: How does the aging of the car population affect road safety? This question has been answered by the study "**Obsolete cars, a real risk. The influence the age of the car population has on accidents (2011–2020)**", conducted by the **Línea Directa Foundation** in conjunction with **Centro Zaragoza**.

The study concludes that not renewing our cars poses a serious challenge to road safety. In fact, in the last decade, **almost 2,700 people died** in accidents with vehicles over 15 years old and the **percentage of cars over 15 years old that were involved in fatal accidents tripled**, from 15% to 44% of the total. The proportion of accidents **with serious injuries** involving cars over 15 years of age has also **tripled** since 2011, from 12% to 39%.

The report also tries to assess **how many lives would** be saved with the renewal of the car population. The results are shocking, because taking into account the relationship between fatalities and vehicle age, **if the average age of the Spanish car population could be reduced to below 10 years, up to 260 lives could be saved annually**.

Maintenance, the key to road safety

The conclusions from circuit testing are resounding: proper maintenance is more important for road safety than the age of a car. Not surprisingly, the **stopping distance of a car** with worn tires can be **53% higher than** that of a vehicle with wheels in good condition, regardless of its date of manufacture.

In this sense, Spaniards also fail their MOT tests, since **50% of the cars that undergo the MOT** have defects in the first inspection and **1 in 5** have **serious or very serious defects**. No-shows are also a concern: **40% of the vehicles** that should have undergone their MOT in 2021 did not.

Family spending on car maintenance is also suffering. In the last 10 years, the **average cost of maintenance went from €625 to only €497, 20% down**. It is therefore not surprising that the defects found in MOT tests are getting worse, especially those that have the biggest impact on road safety. In the last 5 years, serious or very serious defects have increased significantly in the **lighting** system (44%), **steering** system (34%), **wheels, axles, tyres and suspension** (26%), **engine and transmission** (10%) and **brakes** (10%). This trend increases with age, because **cars over 10 years old** account for **88% of tyre defects** and **93% of lighting** system defects in MOT tests.

In the words of **Mar Garre, General Director of the Línea Directa Foundation**, "obviously, the performance and passive safety of new cars have taken a qualitative leap in recent years. However, we know that buying a new car would be difficult for Spanish families in these times, with high inflation and the increase in the cost of financing. That is why, now more than ever, it is vital that we keep our vehicles in perfect condition, that we take the MOT test before the official deadlines and that we

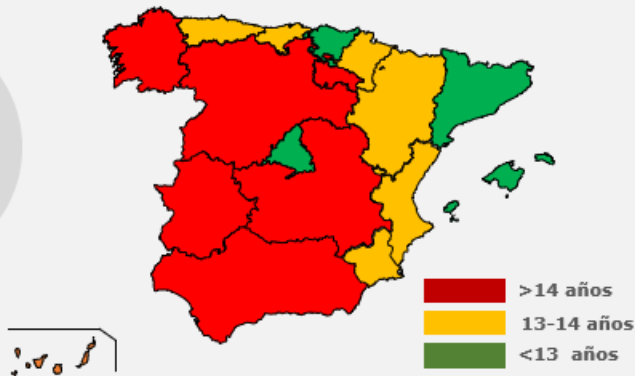
perform the necessary checks. We must not forget that, when we get behind the wheel, we are talking about our lives and those of our families."

Diverse aging by autonomous region

Antigüedad media del parque por CCAA (2020)

13,1 años

Media nacional 2020



In 2020, the average age of Spanish vehicles was **13.1 years** (13.5 in 2021), but with important differences between autonomous regions. The oldest vehicle population is in **Extremadura** (15.1 years), **Castile-La Mancha** (14.6) and **Castile-León** (14.6). At the other end, with a newer population, is the **Autonomous Region of Madrid**, with a significantly lower age (10.4 years per vehicle), followed by **Catalonia**

(12.5 years) and **the Balearic Islands** (12.7 years).

Methodology

The study was based on data from the DGT database. Information and national statistics from ANFAC (Spanish Association of Automobile and Truck Manufacturers), FACONAUTO (Association of Car Dealers) and AECA-ITV (Spanish Association of Collaborating Entities of the Administration in the Technical Inspection of Vehicles) were also taken into account, AECA's *international study "Vehicles in use Report. Europe. January 2021"* and the report "Contribution of MOTs to Road Safety and the Environment" by AECA and the Carlos III University. To analyse the accident rate over the last decade, microdata taken from the ARENA app, from the DGT, has been taken into account. For the calculation of lives saved, the fatality of vehicles depending on their age (more and less than 10 years old) has been considered, cross checking the data on people involved in fatal accidents with the number of deceased. Subsequently, the fatality of cars under 10 years of age was applied to the entire vehicle population. The data on breakdowns of cars over 10 years old has been taken anonymously and totalled from the statistics of Línea Directa Aseguradora and Línea Directa Asistencia.

About Línea Directa Foundation

Línea Directa Foundation is a non-profit institution that was created in 2014 with the aim of helping to build a better and safer society by promoting various initiatives with road safety as its main area of action. The Foundation was set up by Línea Directa Aseguradora as a further show of its commitment to reduce traffic accidents.

Línea Directa Foundation

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