



**Report: "Speed: a silent scourge.
Speeding and fatal accidents in Spain (2011-2020)"**

**43% OF DRIVERS SPEED AND MORE THAN 1
MILLION ADMIT TO HAVING GONE OVER 200
KM/H**

- **Speeding is still a major problem for road safety: 43% of drivers admit that they regularly go over the speed limit. Moreover, a million drivers say they have gone over 200 km/h on inter-urban roads and 2.4 million over 100 km/h on urban roads.**
- **There have been over 100,000 accidents and 150,000 casualties (injuries and fatalities) over the last decade due to speeding. Moreover, one out of every four fatal traffic accidents involved speeding.**
- **There are serious concerns about the "holiday euphoria" as holidaymakers leave the cities for the first time in two years without restrictions. Failure to observe speed limits increases the risk of a driver dying in a crash sevenfold.**
- **The UN endorses reducing speed limits by 20 km/h on inter-urban roads. This would save an estimated 659 lives a year in Spain, i.e. a 70% reduction in fatal accidents on these roads.**
- **Drivers still do not know the laws: in Spain, just 6% of drivers know the speed limits for cars and motorcycles.**
- **The typical driver involved in a speeding accident is a young male (aged 18-34), who is more apt to have accidents during leisure or holiday periods, less likely to wear a seat belt or drives an older vehicle.**
- **Public opinion is still divided over speed limits. Two out of five drivers would raise limits on highways and motorways, saying they are "unrealistic", while 1 million would have no speed limit at all.**

Madrid, 12 July 2022. Allowing a minor to drive over 160km/h while his or her father gets this on tape, going over 220km/h on a motorway or passing another vehicle on a curve at high speed are just a few of the more eye-catching cases of actual driving recklessness involving speeding. But there are more.

The reality is that speeding is still a huge problem for road safety in Spain; **43% of drivers** admit that regularly break speed limits and the number is on the rise. Moreover, a large percentage of drivers has yet to curb their reckless behaviour behind the wheel. Indeed, a **million Spanish drivers** say they have gone over **200 km/h** on inter-urban roads (highways and motorways) and **2.4 million** say they have gone over **100 km/h** on urban roads. To put this another way, some **3.5 million Spaniards** could have committed a **traffic safety offence** without even knowing it.

The consequences of such behaviour are alarming: there have been over **100,000 accidents** and **150,000 casualties (injuries and fatalities)**, with nearly **4,500**

deaths, over the last decade related to speeding. In addition, speeding was behind **one out of four fatal road accidents**. This dangerous behaviour **increases** the risk of a driver dying in a crash by **sevenfold**.

These are some of the conclusions outlined in the report "**Speed: a silent scourge. Speeding and fatal accidents in Spain (2011–2020)**", by **Línea Directa Foundation** in conjunction with the Spanish Institute of Research on Traffic and Road Safety (**INTRAS**). The report highlights speeding as one of the most common and lethal causes of traffic accidents, warning about its risks and effects to raise awareness in Spanish society about how serious certain behaviours are.

According to **Mar Garre, Managing Director of the Línea Directa Foundation**, "speeding offences are a commonplace and risky practice that claims hundreds of lives on Spain's roads each year. That's why we need to be particularly cautious ahead of the "holiday euphoria" as holidaymakers leave for their summer holidays for the first time since 2019 without restrictions".

As many as 650 lives could be saved a year in Spain.

The UN, in line with its commitment to **cut road traffic deaths and injuries by 50% by 2030**, endorses **reducing speed limits by 20 km/h** on inter-urban roads. **Línea Directa Foundation** and **Instituto de Tráfico y Seguridad Vial** and the **Spanish Institute of Research on Traffic and Road Safety** have calculated how many lives this measure would save using Nilsson's power model, a rigorous and particularly efficient approach for making calculations in inter-urban environments. They used official data on accidents caused by failure to observe speed limits and the impact of speeding in all kinds of accidents from Spain's traffic authority (DGT).

They reached an interesting conclusion: lowering speeding limits by 20 km/h from current levels **would reduce the number of fatal accidents on inter-urban roads by 70%**, which would mean **saving 659 lives a year in Spain**. That being said, public opinion is divided over imposing stricter laws, since not all motorists agree. According to the report, **two out of five drivers** would **raise limits** on highways and motorways, saying current limits are "unrealistic" and more than **1 million** would have no limits.

The **snapshot of accidents caused by speeding** shows differences between those on highways and motorways and those in cities. More accidents on highways and motorways occur on right exits, in the year's fourth quarter and at weekends. In cities, January features the most accidents, involving mostly head-on, rear-end and pedestrian accidents. The report underlines that vehicles involved in accidents are older than the Spanish average.

The **typical driver involved in an accident** is a young male (aged 18-34), who is on holiday or off work and less likely to wear a helmet or seat belt.

What do Spaniards think?

Línea Directa Foundation polled **1,700 drivers** around **Spain** to gauge their opinion of speeding regulations and their driving habits. One of the more striking conclusions is that **a mere 6% of drivers know the speed limits for passenger cars and motorcycles** and just 1% the limits for all types of vehicles.

The Línea Directa Foundation study indicates that 43% of drivers generally go over the limit and 7% of **Spaniards almost always drive too fast**. The regions with the

highest number of offences are **Castile-La Mancha, La Rioja and Aragón**. Those with the lowest levels are the **Canary Islands, Murcia and the Balearic Islands**.

7,1%

Media nacional



As for speeding tickets, **70% of drivers do not believe that they are written just to improve road safety**, while **1.7 million** are in favour of eliminating offences for speeding. Meanwhile, 36% would support placing radars only on stretches of accident concentration or particularly dangerous sites.

Methodology fact sheet

The study was conducted in conjunction with the Spanish Institute of Research on Traffic and Road Safety (INTRAS). Accident rates were analysed using data from the Spanish traffic authority (DGT) ARENA database (2011-2020) on accidents, fatalities and injuries caused by speeding. Forecasts for accident rates were made applying the Nilsson power model to highways and motorways assuming decreases in speed limits of 20 km/h and 10 km/h. Relative risk of driver involvement was calculated as the frequency of effect in the group those exposed (drivers involved in fatal accidents and drivers killed) relative to the non-exposed group (drivers involved in non-fatal accidents and drivers not killed). Up until 2015, the "suspected speeding offence" variable was used. As of 2016, all data available on speeding in the new "suspected speeding offence", "concurrent factor of speeding" and the "impact of the speeding offence on the accident" registration system are used. The poll was conducted together with consulting firm, MDK. It comprised 1,700 interviews with certain thresholds for gender, age and region, with a sampling error of $\pm 2.37\% \sim 3.1\%$ for the proportional sample with a confidence interval of 95%. The field work was carried out from 8-10 June 2022.

About Línea Directa Foundation

Línea Directa Foundation is a non-profit institution 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 created by Línea Directa Aseguradora as a further show of its commitment to reducing traffic accidents.

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