ASECAP
Association Européenne des Concessionnaires d'Autoroutes et d'Ouvrages à Péage

Infrastructure safety:

Working towards Road Safety Vision Zero objective

Road safety is the first priority of the toll road operators. The social contract of motorway companies is to safeguard the safety of road users and their workers first and also to guarantee congestion-free traffic on their network.

Nevertheless, the ambition of the toll motorway sector is to reach the objective set by the European Commission and the United Nations: Vision Zero. The European Commission is currently implementing its **EU Road Safety Policy Framework 2021-2030 – next steps towards 'Vision Zero',** its long-term strategic goal to get close to zero fatalities and zero serious injuries on EU roads by 2050 (Vision Zero). As an intermediate step, its medium-term objective is to reduce deaths and serious injuries by 50 % by 2030. To reach this target, the toll road operators represented in ASECAP already put in place, on a daily basis, actions aimed at ensuring high road safety standards for the users, therefore fulfilling the EU Road Safety Policy Framework 2021-2030 and implementing directly, at the same time, the EU Directive on road safety infrastructure management along the TEN-T road network.

Ensuring the highest standards of safety thanks to sustainable financing

The motorway infrastructures are designed and built with highest quality and technological standards which make them the safest infrastructure than any other road infrastructure. It requires significant investments and efforts made possible thanks to the user/payer principle providing sustainable financing.

Key actions performed by toll road operators to safeguard road safety

Toll motorway operators play an essential role in shaping and maintaining safe and congestion-free mobility. Road safety is the result of the efficient and close interaction between the infrastructure, the vehicle and the driver. A motorway is an infrastructure specially designed and built according to the highest quality and technological standards, to guarantee to all drivers 24/7 the best safety conditions, high levels of service and driving comfort in all weather conditions, including sever winter conditions. To make the network safe, the maintenance and operation is done all year long by patrollers 24 hours a day and operators managing the traffic control centres in order to make appropriate road management decisions and actions.

Winter maintenance: staff/equipment/facilities*	
Motorway network in operation (Km)	25,649.4
Traffic management centres	201
Weather Stations	2,527
Winter maintenance vehicles (snowploughs, salt spreaders...)	9,643
Salt used (tons)	490,374.5
Staff dedicated to winter maintenance	10,502

*Data covers 14 ASECAP Members. 2024/2025 data

Toll road operators permanently act at four levels on their network to improve road safety and reduce the number of road casualties:

Appropriate accident prevention measures

Accident prevention remains the priority for toll road operators by taking appropriate measures & actions:

- Maintaining the road network with the highest possible standards of safety, 365 days in all weather conditions.
- Ensuring an effective infrastructure safety management by carrying out regular road safety audits and inspections.
- Providing real-time traffic information: queues at toll stations, accidents, roadworks, weather and road conditions, travel time information and other relevant information for the driver.
- Deploying cooperative intelligent systems (C-ITS) and other innovative technologies (AI...) to detect automatically incident and provide real-time traffic information.
- Ensuring the safe management and protection of traffic on work sites by early warning through proper road signing and the use of different communication means (internet, traffic radio, sms, variable message signs), including the protection of road workers.
- Setting up high-performance protective fences designed both to resist the impact and to absorb the energy.
- Fast removal of stopped vehicles and other possible dangers.
- Providing high quality service areas where drivers/users can rest.


Quick accident response

It is of utmost importance in order to save lives, reduce the impact of an accident and restore the traffic conditions on the infrastructure. The key operations/procedures undertaken by toll road operators are:

- Prompt road patrol's reaction: secure the accident area, clear & clean the road section affected.
- Activate the emergency response and cooperate with the fire brigades, police and emergency services.
- Early assistance and warning in case of accident.
- Prepare appropriate traffic management plan.

Collection and analysis of data accident

ASECAP and its members investigate the main causes of accidents and then implement successful strategies with proper actions on the infrastructure and / or drivers' behaviours.

Awareness-raising campaigns: #(S)heWorks#ICare Campaign

There is an increasing number of accidents involving staff and people working on the network to make it safer (police, ambulance, towing…) due to distraction of drivers mainly. Road safety both for our customers and our staff is remaining our first priority. Ensuring the safety of staff working on motorways, while every year patrol staff tragically lose their lives in the course of their duties, is a top priority for road infrastructure operators. The goal of those campaigns is to encourage drivers to have responsible behaviour on the motorway, ASECAP members run awareness & education campaigns using different communication tools.

The #(S)heWorks#ICare Campaign, initially launched by Atlandes A63 motorway company in southern France, was endorsed and launched by ASECAP in 2023. This campaign is a one-day event bringing together patrol officers and truck drivers and aiming at drawing attention to the safety of motorway workers and the well-being of lorry drivers. This campaign, taking place now every year in June, has since been replicated in all ASECAP member countries either with onsite events organized by toll road operators on services/rest areas alongside their motorway networks and also promoted throughout social media.

Wrong-way driving, a phenomenon with multiple causes

A cause of concern for motorway operators is wrong way driving. This phenomenon consists in those vehicles driving in the wrong direction on a motorway posing a serious danger to other drivers. Wrong-way drivers - also called ghost drivers - have been the cause of very serious accidents in different Member States and they represent a growing threat to road safety policies in the EU, even if the phenomenon does not reach a considerable share of the overall number of accidents. Indeed, wrong-way crashes are relatively infrequent, but they are more likely to produce serious injuries and fatalities compared to other types of crashes for at least two reasons: the high relative speed of collision and the personal conditions of ghost drivers. This issue is difficult to tackle because there are many factors which can be directly linked to the phenomenon of wrong-way drivers: in this regard, a clear differentiation needs to be made between 'unintentional' and 'intentional' ghost drivers:

Unintentional ghost drivers:

- Poor visibility under unfavourable weather conditions.
- Distracted drivers (caused, for instance, by different technologies such as TomTom, mobile phones, looking at babies on the back seats).
- Old or unpaired drivers.
- Dazed drivers (e.g. under the influence of alcohol or prohibited drugs).
- Backward driving or turning manoeuvrers on the highway after incorrectly entering the highway or after missing an exit.
- Drivers from different countries who are not familiar with local or European standards.
- Signalization and road arrangements.
- Difficulty to follow signalization at the entrance and exit ramps.
- Signing and markings of driving lanes temporarily unclear, because of road works.

Ghost drivers as consequence of a deliberate act:

- Suicide attempt.
- Fraud attempt on the toll plaza.
- Vehicles escaping the police control.

Toll road operators have already developed and deployed devices and technologies to help deter and prevent wrong-way driving and the accidents that may be directly caused, and also to alert the other drivers. But there is no one-size-fits-all solution to this problem given the very different causes to be tackled. Therefore, efforts must be pursued and strengthened. Joint actions and initiatives between toll road operators and other relevant stakeholders are needed. Moreover, exchanges of best practices and successful stories between ASECAP members, and the use of new technologies (C-ITS, AI…) are crucial.

Electric vehicles, a new challenge for rescue intervention teams on motorways

There is an increasing number of electric vehicles circulating on motorways, which has a positive impact on fuel consumption, CO2 emissions and air pollution. However, electric vehicles on fire on motorways are causing a growing and serious concern for toll road operators, but also for all emergency services, in particular firemen, because their number is on the increase and this is very difficult to exterminate the fire of an electric vehicle, with additional risks and dangers when it occurs in tunnels. It is indeed much more difficult and dangerous to deal with electric vehicles than with a traditional one for the following reasons:

- The temperature of a fire in electric car is five times higher than for a traditional car.
- Since the battery of an electric vehicle include many chemical components, no oxygen is needed for the fire, which is a huge problem for firemen.
- If you pour water on it, which firemen must do sometimes, you create asides which are very dangerous and polluting.
- The fumes are more dangerous than for a traditional fire.

This growing problem will oblige motorway operators and emergency services to review their on-site intervention procedures. An exchange of experiences and best practices between experts is crucial and must be encouraged and strengthened to find solutions on how best to tackle the issue and guarantee smooth traffic conditions.

Road injuries and fatalities

	2021	2022	2023	2024
Injured persons	17,446	18,904	19,550	20,968
Fatal accidents	466	526	471	462
Fatalities	514	623	543	522
Personal injury rate *	68.4	68.2	68.3	69.8
Fatal accident rate **	1.8	1.9	1.6	1.5
Fatality rate ***	2.0	2.2	1.9	1.6
Km travelled (in mio km)	255,025	276,962	286,043	300,224

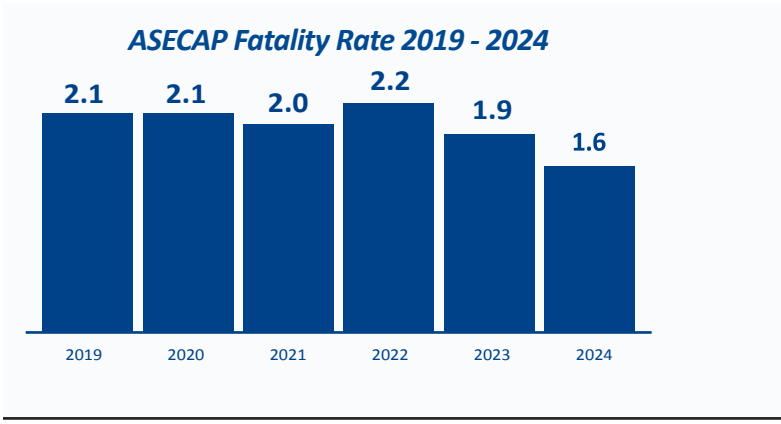
Source: ASECAP KPIs database (data as of January 2026); Figures have been updated since the release of the latest ASECAP publications

Data cover ASECAP EU members without Germany, Hungary and Ireland
*Personal injury rate: number of injuries per billion kms travelled on motorways
** Fatal accident rate: number of fatal accidents per billion kms travelled on motorways
*** Fatality rate: number of fatalities per billion kms travelled on motorways

The data show positive trends with a steady decrease in the number of fatal accidents and fatalities since 2022. With 1.6 fatalities per billion driven kilometres in 2024, the positive trend marked again a historic best value.

522 people lost their lives on ASECAP EU Roads in 2024, accounting for a 3.8% reduction compared 2023 and a 16.2% decrease compared to 2022. In 2024, 19,940 people (1) lost their lives in road crashes across the EU: it means that the 522 fatalities on ASECAP EU roads in 2024 represent 2.6% of all fatalities on roads within the EU. ASECAP toll roads belong to the safest roads in EU but need still more improvements to reach EU target 2030 halving the number by 2030.

(1) Source: European Commission, October 2025



Source: ASECAP KPIs database (data as of January 2026)
Data cover ASECAP EU members without Germany, Hungary and Ireland

ASECAP is the European Association of Operators of Toll Road Infrastructures, including motorways, bridges, tunnels and other toll roads. They operate, maintain, and manage a network of more than 82,700 km across 17 countries with a long-term vision that ensures highest quality standards to make the road infrastructure safest targeting vision zero fatality and moving toward net zero carbon thanks to the user/payer principle providing sustainable financing. ASECAP has also 4 Advisory Industry Partners.

ASECAP
Association Européenne des Concessionnaires d'Autoroutes et d'Ouvrages à Péage

Registered Office / Siège de l'Association | 152 avenue de Malakoff - 75116 Paris
Headquarters / Bureaux | 15, rue Guimard - 1040 Bruxelles

Tel. +32 2 289 26 20
e-mail secretariat@asecap.com
www.asecap.com

@ASECAP_EU
ASECAP – EU ASSOCIATION

Photo credit:
Front page: © Shutterstock
Second page (top, left to right): © RAV SpA/AISCAT; © Attica Tollway, Greece-HELLASTRON; © ASFINAG
Second page (bottom, left to right): © A4 Autostrada Brescia Verona Vicenza Padova/AISCAT; © Atlandes
Third page (left to right): © ALIAE-Xavier Chabert-DR; © HAC
Last page: © DARS

Design: Rafael Medeiros | designerorafa@gmail.com

February 2026