



The European Road Safety Report 2021



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About this eBook

How safe are your vehicles on the road? What's the true impact of unsafe driving on your business? And what can you do to keep your drivers secure?

To help fleet managers answer these questions, Webfleet Solutions ran the European Road Safety Survey 2021. By gathering the opinions of 1050 fleet decision makers across the region, we wanted to shine a light on how businesses like yours are dealing with this critical issue.

This eBook combines the exclusive, revealing data from that survey with official EU statistics and data from other authoritative sources.

It's a unique window into the frequency, causes and costs of accidents for commercial fleets and the technologies and processes that you can use to prevent them.



Safety on European roads



Let's start with some good news: Europe is the safest region to drive in in the world. And it's becoming safer.

Over the last ten years, the number of casualties on EU roads per year decreased 23%, with 51 road deaths per million people across the entire region in 2019.¹

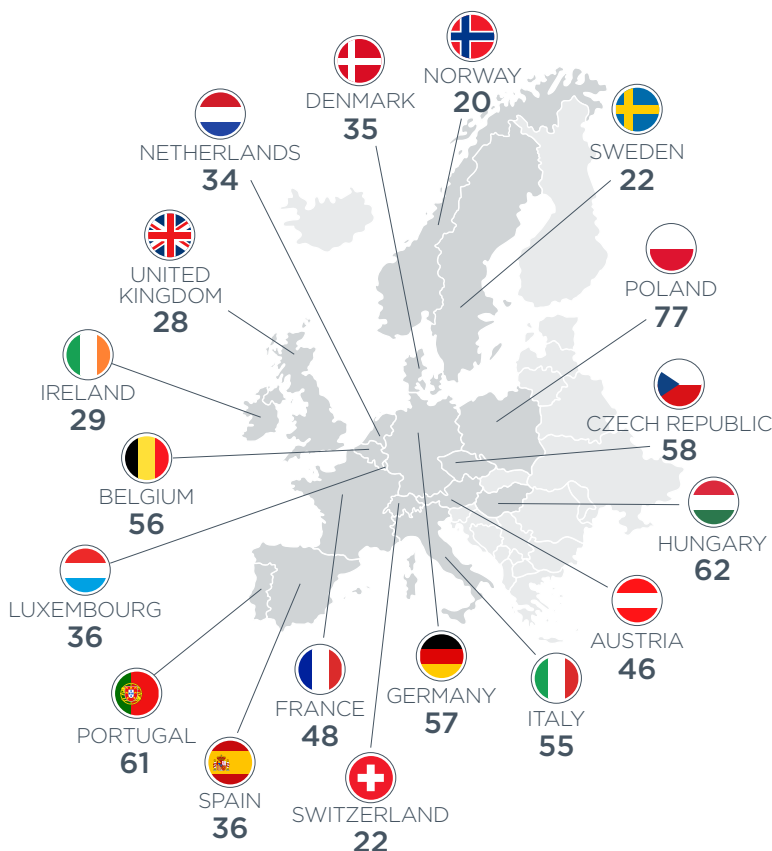
These figures did not happen by accident. The European Union's Vision Zero initiative, which aims to reach zero road deaths by 2050 and create a 50%

reduction in serious injuries caused by road accidents between 2020 and 2030, has contributed significantly to the decrease.

Yet that does not mean safety is no longer a concern.

For one thing, there are significant disparities in this data when you drill down by country. So, depending on where you drive your chances of being involved in a serious accident vary.

Road deaths per million inhabitants¹



Plus there are other factors to consider when measuring road safety. It's also estimated that around 120,000 people suffer life changing injuries on Europe's roads per year.

Clearly, there is still work to be done. According to the EU, a combination of methods will be required to improve the situation. As EU Commissioner for Transport Adina Valean says, "We will reach our goal only through a combination of legislative measures, adequate funding, standards for vehicles and infrastructure, digitalisation and best practices exchange."

The European automotive industry is playing its role in this mission, investing EU54 billion R&D budget into making vehicles safer per year.²



Road safety for commercial fleets

Across Europe, USA and Australia, road accidents involving people who drive for work account for between 25% and 33% of all work related deaths.

And, as our European Road Safety Survey 2021 shows, it's a top of mind problem for fleet managers and decision makers.

According to our research:



42%

of commercial fleets are involved in 1-5 road collisions per year



84%

of fleet managers agree that poor driving behaviour has a negative impact on their business



50%

of fleet managers agree that they are not certain their drivers behave safely on the roads



51%

of fleet managers agree that they have too much vehicle downtime



The causes of accidents



The factors that contribute to accidents can be divided into things you can control and things you cannot. Let's start with something you can affect: driving behaviour.

Unsafe driving habits



90%

of all road accidents involve human error³



10-25%

of all road accidents involve driver fatigue



10%

of people who drive for work admit they have fallen asleep behind the wheel⁴

Clearly, driving behaviour is a key component of road safety. To gauge how it affects decision making at commercial fleets, we asked our respondents to rate how concerned they were about the driving habits that most commonly cause collisions.

Risky driving behaviour that most concerns fleet managers

A driver using mobile phone or other device while driving

77%

A driver driving while fatigued

75%

A driver speeding

74%

A driver failing to stop at a red light or stop sign

74%

A driver not using a seatbelt/using a seatbelt incorrectly while driving

73%

A driver smoking while driving

71%

Drivers not informing you about potential risks such as tyre under inflation

71%

A driver eating or drinking while driving

69%

One of your vehicles failing on the road due to lack of maintenance

66%



But how do the concerns of fleet managers compare with the realities of road safety? Lytx, a global leader in video telematics, analysed data from the over one million drivers and over one billion hours of footage in its database and identified the following five behaviours as being the most common causes of unsafe driving:



Driver responding late



Driver not wearing seatbelt



Driver smoking



Mobile phone or device observed



Food or drink observed



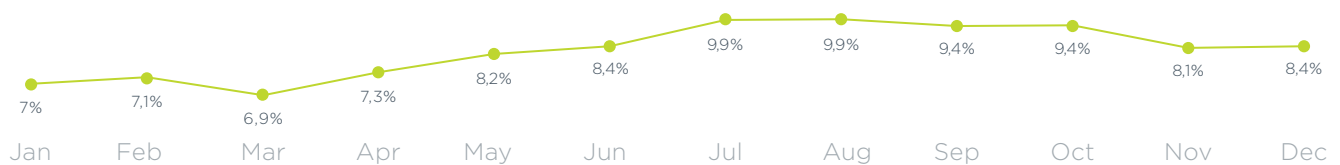


Day and time of year

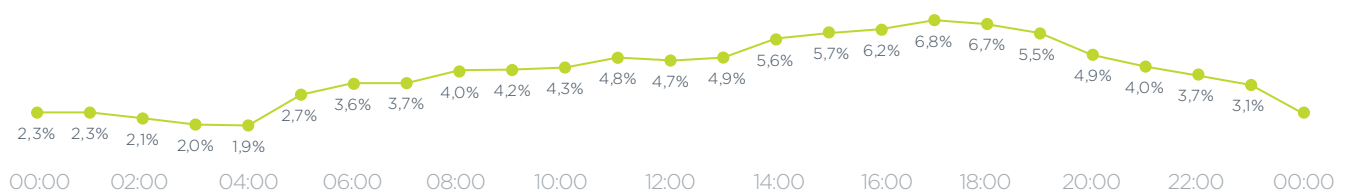
The time of day and time of year also play a significant role in how safe your fleet will be on the road.

While you can't change these factors, it's still valuable to be aware of how much they can impact safety when you are making plans for your fleet.

Accidents per year by month⁵



Accidents per day by time





Other road users

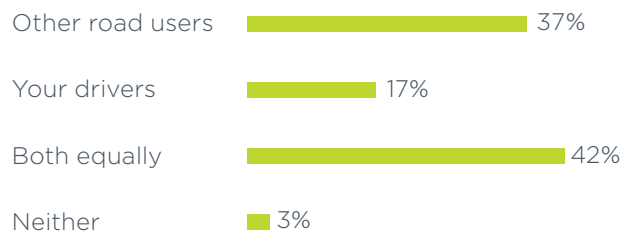
Given professional drivers are often the most safety conscious on the road, it is unsurprising to find the majority of our respondents see a greater threat from other drivers than those in their own workforce.

Alongside the issue of safety, other road users also pose another risk to commercial fleets in the form of false insurance claims. In the UK, for example, insurance experts estimate that 60% of all whiplash claims are fraudulent⁶ which results in higher premiums for everybody.

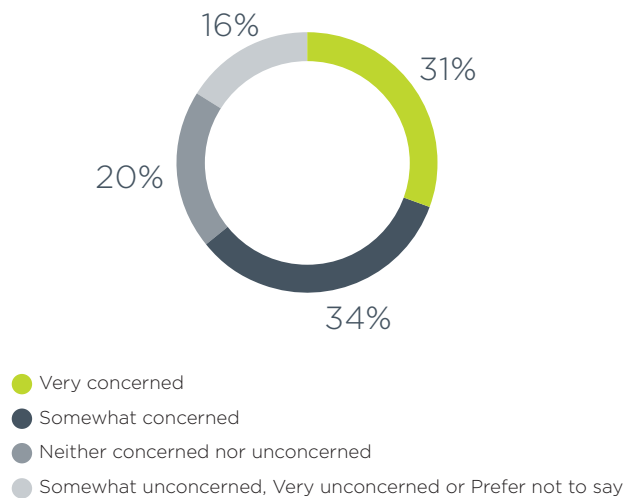
This issue is reflected in our survey results, with 65% of fleet managers expressing concern regarding false claims being made against their drivers – 31% saying they are very concerned and 34% somewhat concerned.



Which of the following do you think poses the greatest risk to your vehicles?



How concerned are you about other road users making false claims against your company?





The cost of accidents



The most serious cost of any accident is, of course, the risk it poses to the people involved. It is, however, not the only cost that should concern a fleet manager. From legal fees to insurance claims to repair and maintenance budget, there are numerous other ways

that a commercial fleet is negatively impacted when something goes wrong on the road.

Plus there's the potential damage to business reputation and the impact of vehicle downtime on fleet efficiency.

Insurance premiums and claims

According to Insurance Europe, the average cost of a Motor Third Party Liability insurance claim in Europe is EU3,468, while the average cost of a damage claim is EU1,340⁷. And, as our survey shows, these costs are a source of concern for commercial fleets.

The majority of fleets have accepted liability for 21-30% of the collisions involving their vehicles in the last year. However, the majority also believe they were only truly responsible for 0-10%.

What percentage of collisions involving one of your vehicles did your company accept liability for in the past twelve months?

% of collisions	% of respondents	% of collisions	% of respondents
0-10%	18%	41-50%	13%
11-20%	15%	51-60%	8%
21-30%	19%	61-70%	4%
31-40%	16%	71%+	7%

What percentage of these collisions do you believe your company was responsible for?

% of collisions	% of respondents	% of collisions	% of respondents
0-10%	22%	41-50%	11%
11-20%	16%	51-60%	8%
21-30%	17%	61-70%	6%
31-40%	15%	71%+	6%

Elsewhere in our research:



65%

of fleet managers are concerned about other road users making false claims against their vehicles



3

The average commercial fleet has three insurance claims made against it every month



58%

of fleet managers agree that their liability insurance premium is too high



56%

of fleet managers' insurance providers offer a lower premium if they adopt a telematics system



Maintenance, repairs and downtime

According to KPMG, only 32% of fleet managers believe they can accurately provide figures for their maintenance costs. Given the increased technological sophistication of vehicles is making them more expensive to maintain, this should be a serious concern.

According to our survey:



6.1

Commercial fleets require roadside breakdown support 6.1 times each year on average.



51%

of fleet managers say they have too much vehicle downtime



58%

of fleet managers agree they spend too much on maintenance and repair costs while 50% say they spend too much on collision costs

Reputation

Not all the costs suffered due to unsafe driving can be calculated on a spreadsheet. The damage done to a company's reputation when one of its drivers behaves unsafely on the road is also a key issue for commercial fleets.

In our research:



75%

of fleet managers say they are concerned poor driving behaviour will harm their company's reputation



Road Safety in the UK

Though great strides have been made in road safety in Europe, progress has somewhat stagnated over the past decade in the UK, with minimal year-on-year gains made in fatality reductions.

Road risk is still a prominent and pressing issue in the UK and the problem is only amplified for those who drive for work. According to a recent study from Highways England and Roadsafe, nearly one third (29 per cent) of all UK road fatalities and 21 per cent of all casualties occur in driving-for-work collisions.

Managing road risk is vital for all businesses who operate a mobile workforce and these stats, alongside our own research, serve to underline the importance of improving standards.

From our research, it is clear that driving behaviour is an issue that UK fleet managers are keen to tackle.

Indeed, bad driving habits and poor behaviour were the main cause for concern, with mobile phone and other device use

the number one worry (71%), followed by speeding (69%), and eating or drinking behind the wheel (68%).

When it comes to technology to improve road safety, companies were most likely to have adopted reversing and side camera technology (40%). Whilst this is driven largely by the positive impact connected cameras can have on insurance claims, the stringent new vision regulations coming into force in parts of the UK will also play a role.

The Direct Vision Standard, which measures how much an HGV driver can see directly through their cab windows, is part of the Mayor of London's Vision Zero plan to eliminate all deaths and serious injuries on London's transport network by 2041.

With the levelling off of road casualty reductions, it is likely that the UK government will reinvigorate their road safety drive and roll-out DVS-style regulations nationwide in the future – which may cause fleet managers to rethink their own safety initiatives and invest in the necessary technology.



34%

of UK commercial fleets are involved in 1-5 road collisions per year



73%

of UK fleet managers claim poor driving behaviour negatively impacts their business



71%

of UK fleet managers said drivers using mobiles or other devices was a top concern



51%

of businesses offered a lower premium if they adopt a telematics system

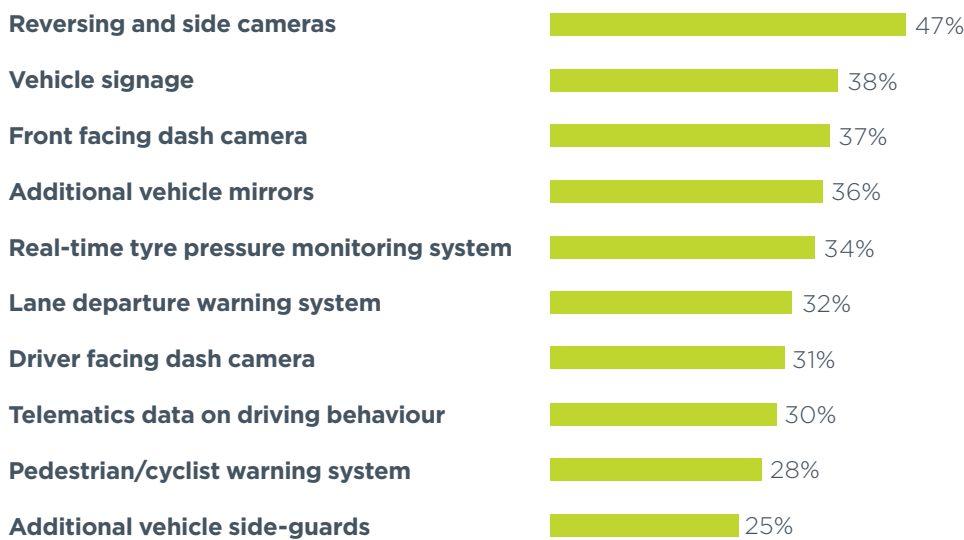


Technology and road safety



Significant investment is being made into developing more powerful hardware and software to make vehicles safer. While, increasingly, many of these technologies are coming as standard features, other solutions – particularly those best suited to commercial driving – require further investment.

We asked our respondents about the technology they use to improve safety. These were some of the most popular solutions and how many of our respondents utilise them.





The barriers to adopting new safety technology

Given all of these products can significantly contribute to a safer fleet, it's worth considering why many commercial fleets are yet to utilise them. For those respondent who did not use one of the above-mentioned technologies, we asked what their main reason for not doing so was.

Though these are all legitimate concerns, in some cases they may not be as high a barrier as they first appear. For any technology you may wish to add to your fleet, a good technology provider should be able to help you overcome it.

To illustrate, let's consider some of these issues in greater detail.

MOST COMMON REASONS FOR NOT ADOPTING SAFETY TECHNOLOGY

- 1** | **Cost**
- 2** | **Inability to integrate with existing technology**
- 3** | **I don't believe it will work well for my business**
- 4** | **I wasn't previously aware of this technology**
- 5** | **My drivers won't use it out of lack of interest**
- 6** | **My drivers won't use it on privacy grounds**
- 7** | **I don't have time or resource for training**





Key issue: Cost

These days, fleets of all sizes must be more wary of their running costs than ever. The cost of adding additional hardware or software, then, whether it be the initial purchasing price or subscription fee or the cost of training, is naturally something many fleet managers may hesitate over.

However, many of these solutions can offer return on investment and not only in terms of cutting your repair costs and insurance fees. They can also help your drivers to drive more economically on the road, reducing fuel consumption.

HOW YOUR TECHNOLOGY PROVIDER SHOULD SUPPORT YOU

Your technology provider should clearly outline how your solution is going to deliver return on investment and when.

For example, Webfleet Solutions customers, on average, get a return on investment within 6 to 9 months of adopting our WEBFLEET solution.





Key issue: Inability to integrate with existing systems

Regardless of how powerful a new digital solution or piece of hardware might be, if it disrupts the functionality of the technology you already use then it might be more trouble than it's worth.

HOW YOUR TECHNOLOGY PROVIDER SHOULD SUPPORT YOU

A new solution will need to be adaptable enough to make the integration process as simple and undisruptive as possible.

WEBFLEET comes with multiple APIs, so you can easily integrate it with your back-end systems, as well as hundreds of third-party solutions.





Key issue: My drivers won't use it out of lack of interest or on privacy grounds

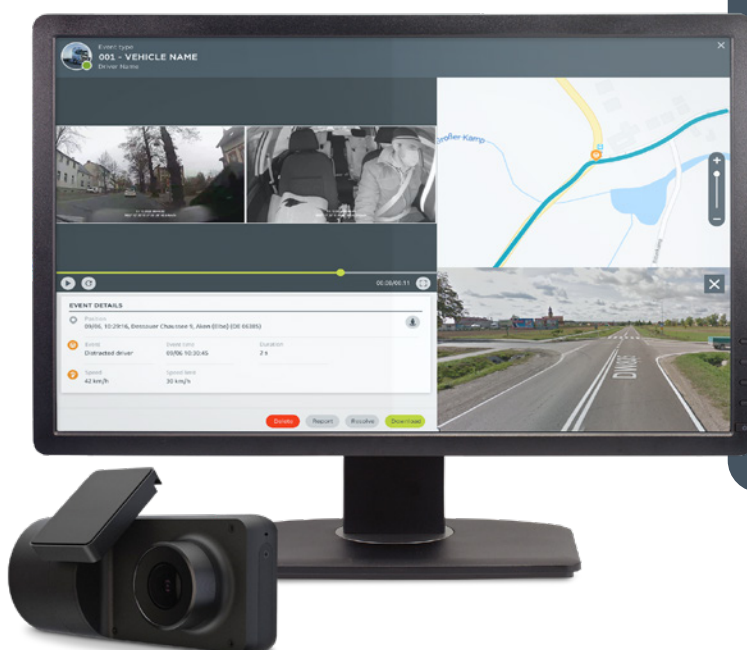
It is not unusual for fleet managers to receive pushback from drivers when introducing new technology to their vehicle, particularly when it makes the performance of the driver more visible. Drivers might feel that this is an invasion of their privacy or a sign they are not fully trusted by the company.

HOW YOUR TECHNOLOGY PROVIDER SHOULD SUPPORT YOU

It is key that when any new solution is introduced, it is made clear how it will benefit the driver themselves, whether it be by keeping them safer, protecting them from fraudulent claims or making their time behind the wheel less stressful.

However, the technology itself should also be designed with the driver's privacy expectations in mind. For example, WEBFLEET Video, Webfleet Solutions integrated video telematics service, is built with privacy by design. This means the customer has control over how and when both the driver facing and road facing cameras retrieve and store footage.

This allows fleet managers to keep their drivers secure when they are working and respect their privacy when they are not. This kind of flexibility is key to ensuring all the stakeholders are comfortable utilising new safety solutions.





How telematics helps make your fleet safer



WEBFLEET, Europe's number one fleet management solution, utilises telematics and integrated video technology to improve the safety of your fleet in numerous ways.

Insights into driving behaviour

WEBFLEET lets you see a range of valuable data points from each of your drivers' trips. With an overview of incidents of speeding, harsh steering, cruise control engagement and sudden braking you can focus on where your drivers are taking unnecessary risks and take steps to improve performance.

With integrated video, this data can be paired with dashcam footage, offering context as to why they took certain decisions at certain times.

Footage can also be used to more effectively coach drivers to improve their behaviour on the road, helping them to visualise what constitutes good and bad driving habits and understand the consequences of both.

In-vehicle coaching to prevent accidents

The PRO Driver Terminal in-cab device from Webfleet Solutions gives in-vehicle coaching to your driver while they are behind the wheel, with advice on things like coasting and driving events.

Meanwhile, a driver-facing AI (Artificial Intelligence) dashcam can detect various types of unsafe driving behaviour and alert the driver to change their behaviour before an accident occurs.





Staying on the right routes

The PRO Driver Terminal takes into account the type of vehicle you are driving to keep you on the most suitable and safest routes.

For example, if you have trucks on the road, the device will consider the height and weight of your vehicle to help you avoid things like narrow streets, sharp turns, U-turns and low tunnels. It also takes any hazardous material the vehicle is carrying into account.

If the driver is feeling fatigued, they can use the device to find truck points of interest, such as suitable parking and rest areas for HGVs.

WEBFLEET also gives you access to accurate live traffic data, helping your drivers stay away from trouble spots.

Fight fraudulent claims

Utilising cameras as part of your telematics solution gives you instant evidence of where fault lies when an accident occurs on the road, protecting your company and drivers.

As well as helping you to comply with First Notification of Loss (FNOL), which can help you improve your fleet policy and reduce costs, quick access to video footage also resolves issues and complaints more effectively and accurately.

Avoid driver fatigue

WEBFLEET provides up-to-date information on your drivers' remaining driving times and rest periods. You can see how long each driver has left before dispatching them, ensuring your team are well rested and making it easier to manage compliance.



Sources

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- 2 Road Safety, Safe Vehicles, Safe Drivers – ACEA (2019)
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- 4 Falling Asleep At The Wheel – Jim Horne (2018)
- 5 CARE: EU Road Accidents Database (2018)
- 6 Moment Motorist Swerves in Front of Lorry Driver on Busy Motorway to Claim UK75,000 for Whiplash 'Crash for Cash' Scam – Daily Mail (2014)
- 7 European Motor Insurance Market – Insurance Europe (2019)
- 8 Re-evaluating the Total Cost of Truck Fleet Ownership – KPMG (2016)

