

THE INTERRELATION OF ROAD SAFETY AND SUSTAINABLE SOCIETAL DEVELOPMENT¹

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Road safety is a barrier to sustainable social development. In 2019-2021, more than 10,000 people died and almost 94,000 were injured in road accidents in Ukraine. Road accidents involving children deserve special attention. Every year, more than 186,000 people under the age of 18 die in road accidents around the world. A large number of them suffer various injuries that often lead to disability. According to recent national statistics, one in 10 road casualties is under the age of 18. In total, over three years (2019-2021), more than 500 children died on the roads of Ukraine, and about 12,000 were injured [1].

The cost of Ukraine's socio-economic losses (excluding material costs associated with property damage and reduced labour productivity) from road accidents and their consequences in 2019 alone is about USD 4.79 billion (3.18% of Ukraine's GDP). In 2020, the number of potential life-years lost (YPLL) due to premature death in Ukraine alone was 98,039.22, and the number of working years was 82,677. In monetary terms, the loss of life lost is almost USD 308 million [2]. Given that even an approximate overall estimate of socio-economic losses due to road accidents in Ukraine is enormous, significant benefits and lives saved can be expected from investments in road safety.

In general, the socio-economic costs of road traffic accidents consist of various components. Among them are the following:

- - medical costs (inpatient and outpatient treatment costs, social security, disability benefits, sanatorium rehabilitation);
- - human costs: the intangible value of lost quality of life and lost years of life;
- - administrative costs (ambulance and transport of injured people, police and fire services, insurance company payments, legal costs);
- - property damage: damage to vehicles, road infrastructure, cargo and personal property;

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- other costs, such as loss of time due to disruption of public traffic

Ensuring road safety is an important component of people's comfortable living, significantly reducing economic losses and social consequences of road accidents. National strategic documents contain specific measures and areas of road safety, but lack information on the effectiveness of the measures implemented, cost analysis for each item, and their critical evaluation.

An analysis of the costs and benefits of road safety measures implemented by foreign researchers shows that the benefits of investing in road safety exceed the losses caused by road accidents [3]. An overview of the road situation in a number of EU member states shows that road safety has improved significantly through the introduction of important individual measures, such as: improving infrastructure safety by adding fences, sidewalks and bicycle lanes; raising standards of vehicle operation; adopting and enforcing legislation on speeding, driving under the influence of alcohol, and the use of seat belts (helmets, etc.).

To improve road safety and reduce the severity of the consequences of road accidents, it is necessary to: improve the system of collecting information on road accidents, processing, research and analysis in order to develop and implement effective preventive measures; introduce a mechanism for assessing the effectiveness and efficiency of the measures implemented to determine the priority of funding; and conduct a reasonable economic assessment of the cost of life, health and economic damage caused by road accidents [4, P. 182].

Consistent and balanced implementation of effective measures will bring Ukraine closer to achieving the goal of the Strategy for Improving Road Safety in Ukraine until 2024, namely reducing high mortality, injuries, and material costs of road accidents by at least 30% by 2024.

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