



**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL
COUNCIL**

Distr.
LIMITED
E/ESCWA/EDID/2017/IG.1/8
15 December 2017
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

Committee on Transport and Logistics
Eighteenth session
20-21 December 2017



Item 9 of the provisional agenda

**Road safety in the Arab States and challenges to implementing
the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020**

Summary

The present document reviews United Nations efforts since 2011 to improve global road safety, and key activities by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) in that field since 2010.

The document considers the results of a survey conducted by ESCWA to gauge road safety and its management in member States in 2017, by tracking road accidents and their consequences over the period 2011-2015.

The document stresses the importance of holding a specialized workshop on road safety in the Arab region, in coordination with the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Road Safety, to review road safety issues, notably data accuracy and homogeneity, harmonizing vehicle specifications and traffic safety equipment, and issues related to improving the behaviour of drivers and road users.

CONTENTS

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
Introduction	6-1	3
<i>chapter</i>		
I. ESCWA ACTIVITIES IN THE FIELD OF ROAD SAFETY SINCE 2010 ..	7-12	3
II. RESULTS OF THE 2017 ROAD SAFETY SURVEY IN ESCWA MEMBER STATES	13-16	5
III. CONCLUSION.....	17	7

Introduction

1. A 2015 report by the World Health Organization (WHO) on road safety states that road accidents result in the death of around 1.25 million people worldwide per year, and gravely injure approximately 1 million others.¹ Road accidents therefore constitute a major public health issue in the modern world.
2. The United Nations declared 2011-2020 the Decade of Action for Road Safety, pursuant to General Assembly resolution [64/255](#) of 2 March 2010 adopted following a recommendation by the First Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety, held in Moscow on 19 and 20 November 2009.² The Decade on Road Safety 2011-2020 aims to stabilize the number of road traffic deaths around the world and gradually reduce the forecast level by half by 2020, from around 1.9 million to 900,000.³
3. Following a request by the United Nations, WHO prepared a comprehensive report on implementing activities to achieve the objective of the Decade of Action for Road Safety under the following five main pillars: road safety management; safer roads and mobility; safer vehicles; safer road users; and post-crash response.⁴
4. On 29 April 2015, Mr. Jean Todt, President of the International Automobile Federation, was appointed Special Envoy of the United Nations Secretary-General for Road Safety to assist in securing the political will to make road safety a priority, to stimulate efforts to improve road safety globally, and to provide the necessary funding in coordination with related United Nations organizations and international and regional bodies involved in road safety.⁵
5. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by the United Nations pursuant to General Assembly resolution [70/1](#) of 25 September 2015 entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”. Target 3.6 stipulates halving the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents by 2020, and target 11.2 stresses the need to provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, and improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons by 2030.
6. The United Nations held the Second Global High-Level Conference on Road Safety in Brasilia on 18 and 19 November 2015. The Brasilia Declaration on Road Safety stresses the need to reduce road fatalities and injuries by half by 2020.⁶

I. ESCWA ACTIVITIES IN THE FIELD OF ROAD SAFETY SINCE 2010

7. ESCWA evaluated developments in road safety in member States using official data for 2010 and 2013 submitted by countries to WHO. ESCWA presented its findings at the sixteenth session of the Committee on Transport and Logistics, held in Cairo on 23 and 24 November 2015. It found that deaths from road accidents

¹ World Health Organization, *Global Status Report on Road Safety* (Geneva, 2015). www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/road_safety_status/2015/en.

² United Nations Road Safety Collaboration, *First Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety*, 19-20 November (Moscow, 2009). www.who.int/roadsafety/events/2009/19_10_09/en/.

³ World Health Organization, *Global Status Report on Road Safety* (Geneva, 2013), figure 1, p. 1. www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/road_safety_status/2013/en/

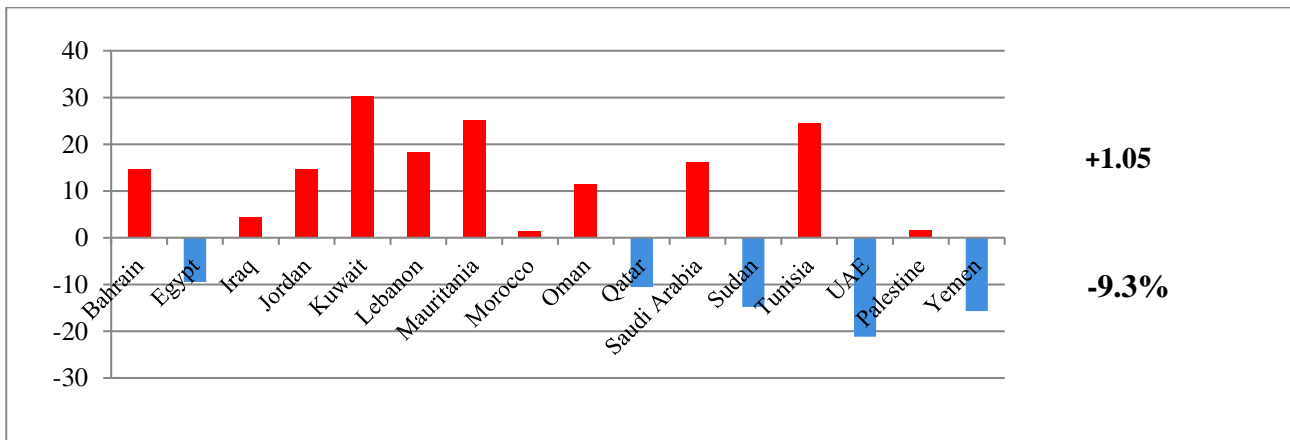
⁴ World Health Organization, *Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020* (Geneva). www.who.int/roadsafety/decade_of_action/plan/english.pdf?ua=1.

⁵ www.unece.org/united-nations-special-envoy-for-road-safety/un-sgs-special-envoy-for-road-safety.html.

⁶ World Health Organization, *Brasilia Declaration on Road Safety*, Second Global High-Level Conference on Road Safety (Brasilia, 18-19 November 2015). www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/road_traffic/Final_Brasilia_declaration_EN.pdf?ua=1.

had increased by 1.05 per cent between 2010 and 2013,⁷ when they should have decreased by 9.3 per cent under the Decade for Action on Road Safety 2011-2020 (figure 1).

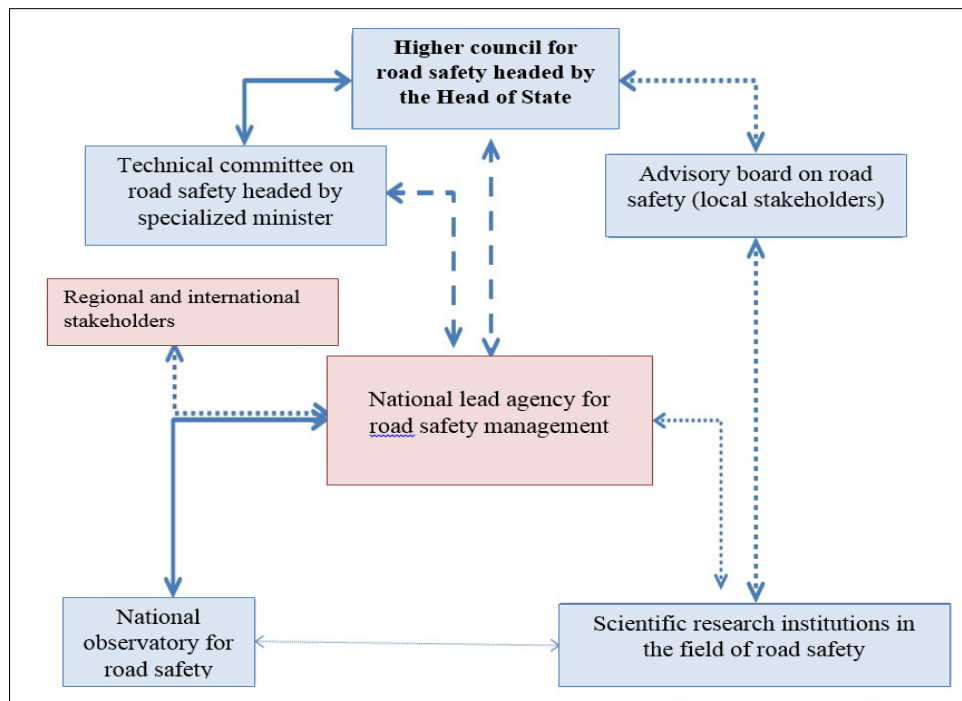
Figure 1. Road safety developments in ESCWA member States between 2010 and 2013



Source: www.unescwa.org/events/committee-transport-16th-session.

8. ESCWA also prepared a guide to establish or activate national road safety management systems, based on the formation of national road safety agencies guided by national observatories tasked with monitoring road accidents and their consequences by providing accurate data, so as to establish or activate coordination mechanisms, such as national councils and technical committees, and set out their functions and tasks (figure 2). It should be noted that national councils and committees on road safety do not supplant the specialized road safety agencies specified in the ESCWA guide, which is based on global best practices in this field.

Figure 2. Components of a proposed national system for road safety management



Source: <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/LTD/I15/004/50/pdf/I1500450.pdf?OpenElement>.

⁷ Libya and the Syrian Arab Republic were excluded because of a lack of data for comparison between 2010 and 2013.

9. Road safety has been included in the geographic information system (GIS) for transport in member States, which ESCWA is developing in collaboration with UNIFEL, where road safety is observed in the general information layer at the national level, and the road safety index is observed in the road layer of the GIS.

10. Road safety was also tackled under the SDGs at a technical workshop on strategic planning for sustainable transport in the State of Palestine, held in Beirut on 24 and 25 April 2017. The workshop was attended by high-level staff members from the Ministry of Transport and Communications of Palestine.

11. ESCWA participated in the second United Nations Coordination Meeting on Road Safety, held in Geneva on 3 November 2017. Participants discussed disparities in data and lack of homogeneity; the need to establish a regional road safety observatory to resolve such difficulties by coordinating national data and ensuring their accuracy and conformity with related WHO standards; and the importance of securing funding to establish the observatory. It was agreed with the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Road Safety to organize a high-level workshop on road safety in the Arab region, attended by senior officials in that field in Arab countries, to be held at ESCWA headquarters in Beirut in May 2018. The workshop will review road safety challenges in the Arab region, notably data accuracy and homogeneity, harmonizing vehicle specifications and traffic safety equipment, and improving driver and road user safety.

12. ESCWA continues to support the Master on Road Safety Management programme, developed in 2012 at Saint Joseph University in Beirut with assistance from Renault. ESCWA conducts lectures and invites students to training sessions on road safety at its headquarters, and assists the University's administration in organizing seminars and regional training sessions on road safety.

II. RESULTS OF THE 2017 ROAD SAFETY SURVEY IN ESCWA MEMBER STATES

13. In the summer of 2017, a survey was conducted to gauge the status of road safety in member States, to better understand road safety issues, monitor progress, and assist in developing plans to improve road safety and its management in the future. The survey was conducted online via Survey Monkey, following a written communication to national technical coordinators of the Committee on Transport and Logistics.

Deaths from road accidents in Arab countries, 2010-2015

	Responding country	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
1	Yemen	2959	2152	2382	2494	2065	958
2	Iraq	2508	2703	3118	2951	2769	2514
3	Kuwait	374	493	454	445	461	429
4	Qatar	228	205	204	235	228	227
5	Lebanon	549	508	595	650	655	576
6	Bahrain	70	55	75	77	57	76
7	Sudan		2667	2482	2349	2223	2154
8	Oman	820	1056	1139	913	816	675
9	State of Palestine	132	115	121	142	101	110
10	Morocco	3778	4222	4167	3832	3489	
11	Mauritania	163	177	217	204	219	174
12	Jordan	670	694	816	768	688	608
13	Tunisia	1208	1485	1623	1505	1565	1407
	Total		16532	17393	16565	15336	

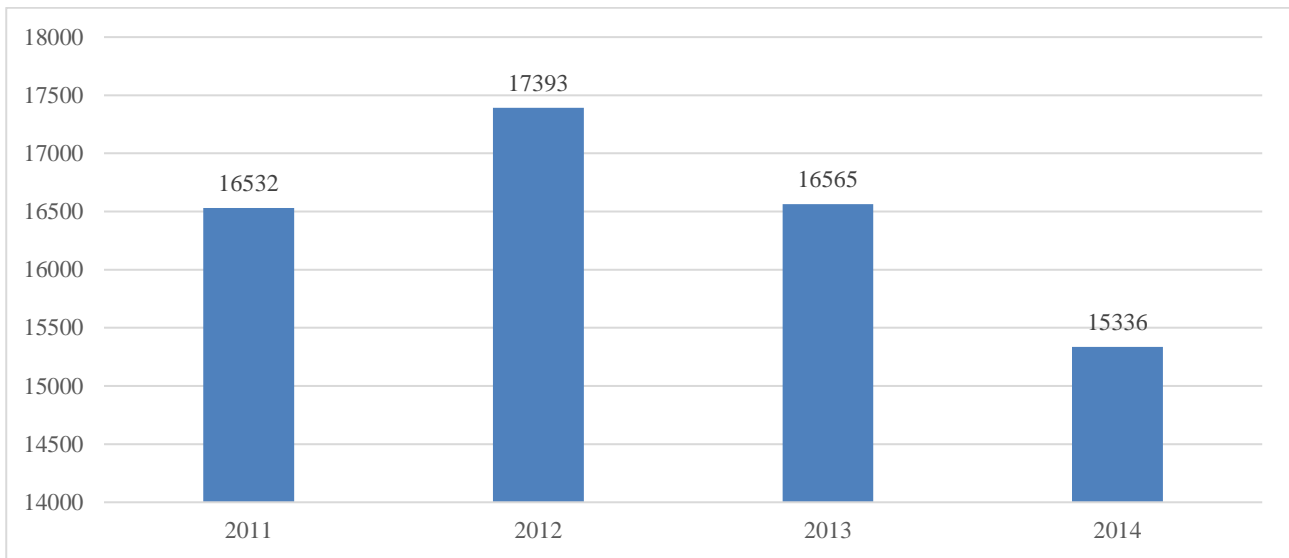
Source: ESCWA survey on the status of road safety in member States, 2017.

Note: Countries are ranked by the date in which they participated in the online survey.

14. By 1 December 2017, 13 countries had sent full or partial responses to the survey, namely Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Mauritanian Morocco, Oman, the State of Palestine, Qatar, the Sudan, Tunisia and Yemen. The table shows changes in the number of deaths from road accidents over the period 2010-2015 in those countries.

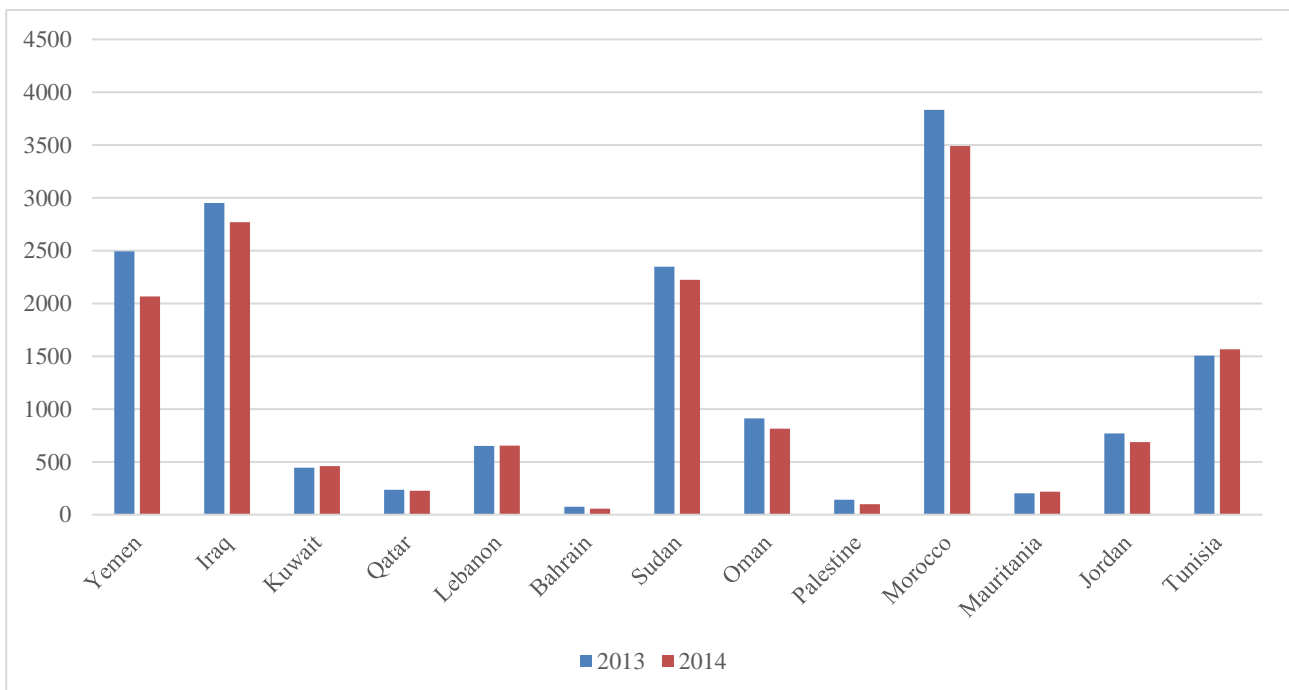
15. The table indicates a 5.2 per cent increase in road deaths between 2011 and 2012, followed by a 4.8 per cent drop in 2013 and a 7.4 per cent decrease in 2014. Figure 3 reveals changes in total road deaths over the period 2011-2017 in participating countries. Figure 4 compares the number of road deaths in member States in 2013 and 2014.

Figure 3. Annual changes in road deaths over the period 2011-2014



Source: ESCWA, based on the results of the survey on the status of road safety in member States, 2017.

Figure 4. Road deaths in member States in 2013 and 2014



Source: ESCWA, based on the results of the survey on the status of road safety in member States, 2017.

16. The workshop to be held in May 2018 is expected to include a presentation on the survey results, in view of responses from member States up until that date; on country explanations of significant increases or decreases in the number of road deaths over the period of the survey; and on the relationship between those developments and policies and measures under implementation over that period.

III. CONCLUSION

17. Given the importance of road safety globally and in the Arab region, the secretariat is coordinating with the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Road Safety to hold a two-day high-level workshop on road safety in the Arab region in May 2018. The workshop will consider road safety issues in Arab countries. Representatives of member States are invited to participate in the workshop, and to prepare by completing the survey on road safety and by reviewing key challenges and possible solutions.
