Road Accidents and Road Fatalities in Denmark from 1968 to 2004

The purpose of this article is to describe the road accidents and road fatalities in Denmark in the period 1968-2004. Only accidents registered by the police were used. Crude and gender & age specific fatality rates (counts per 1,000,000 inhabitants) were estimated for all road users and for bicyclists. The accident and fatality rates have decreased by around 70% from 1968 to 2004, while the motorisation rate has increased by approximately 90%. The sharpest decrease in the fatality rate was observed among the youngest (below 18 years old) and the older (above 64) road users. Gender related differences in the fatality rate were observed, especially among the young (18 to 24 years old) road users. The relatively high overall fatality rate among young men was not observed among male bicyclists in the same age group. In conclusion, it seems plausible to assume that the various initiatives and actions targeted to improve road safety have indeed led to a significant reduction in injury accidents and fatalities. Further research and more detailed data, especially on traffic volume and individual exposure are necessary in order to investigate properly a causal relation between the number of accidents and fatalities and given road safety initiatives.

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