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ROAD SAFETY MANAGEMENT IN THE DECADES OF ACTION: MEDITATING ON THE CASE OF COSTA RICA

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Abstract: The Ministry of Public Works and Transportation - MOPT - of Costa Rica, is one of the entities with the highest degree of administrative deconcentration. The MOPT and its deconcentrated departments in Councils define the policies and actions of the sector. Furthermore, the country is a signatory of both Decades of Action for Road Safety, a situation that is analyzed. As a goal at work The changes that have occurred in the institutional definition of road safety administration since the creation of Cosevi in 1979 are studied. In addition, the current statistical panorama of road safety in the country is shown. It is analyzed how these aforementioned changes and the administrative legal practice impact the concept of a leading institution in road safety and its systemic approach, considering both the integral concept of the joint action of engineering, inspection and road education, as well as the postulates of the First Decade in terms of management. Finally, in addition to positioning itself on bill 23114, which would concentrate the functions under analysis in the MOPT, recommendations are made for road administration in general and for the real consolidation of Cosevi in its operational and administrative components.

Keywords: Road safety, management, deconcentration, decades of action, Cosevi.

CONTEXTUALIZATION AND DECADES OF ACTION

The World Report on Road Traffic Injuries (Peden et al, 2004) is the main reference for the consolidation of the First Decade of Action for Road Safety, which is why it is pertinent to remember its original recommendations:

- R1. "D. "designate a coordinating department in the public administration to guide national activities regarding road safety."
- R2. "Assess the problem, policies and institutional framework related to road

traffic injuries, as well as the country's prevention capacity."

- R3. "P"repair a national road safety strategy and action plan"

- R4. "Allocate financial and human resources to address the problem."

In Costa Rica there has been a coordinating department since 1979, the Cosevi Road Safety Council, its initial intention was to administer the road safety fund, finance specific projects, and not necessarily exercise direction. In its consolidation as an institution it began to carry out more comprehensive analysis of policies considering public health policies. He became responsible for the national road safety plans, getting involved in their implementation and monitoring (Contreras, 2008), as well as managing the aforementioned road safety fund.

THE FIRST DECADE

In March 2010, UN General Assembly resolution A/64/255 proclaimed the period 2011–2020 as the Decade of Action for Road Safety. The concepts of the 2004, the World Health Organization report and later were duly integrated into the policies promoted by the Global Plan for the Decade 2011–2020, specifically in Pillar 1 - Road Safety Management, which indicates in its Activity 1: Establish a coordinating department (and coordination mechanisms) on road safety that includes the participation of interlocutors from a variety of sectors, through:

- the designation of a coordinating department and the establishment of a related secretariat;
- encouraging the establishment of coordination groups;
- the development of basic work programs.

These elements have continued to be present in the various strategies followed in the world, however since 1997 the Vision Zero strategy had been adopted in Sweden.

In May 2011, the Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011–2020 (WHO, 2010) emphasized that traffic accidents represented the 10th leading cause of death worldwide, 13 years after the report on the world situation of November 2023 (WHO, 2023) reports them as the 12th cause, but first for the age range of 5 to 29 years, the same as in 2010.

Five years after the beginning of the first decade, on September 25, 2015, at the UN Summit on Sustainable Development, the document “Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” was approved, with the 17 Goals of Sustainable Development, and where specific goal 3.6 aimed to reduce deaths from traffic accidents by 50% by 2020, and goal 11.2 to provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transportation systems for all by 2030, improving road safety, with special attention to vulnerable users, women, children, people with disabilities and older adults. That 3.6 goal was not achieved five years later at the end of the first decade.

THE SECOND DECADE

On August 31, 2020, in Resolution A/RES/74/299, Improving road safety in the world, approved by the UN General Assembly, the Stockholm Declaration is integrated, and the period 2021–2030 as the Second Decade of Action for Road Safety, which will aim to reduce deaths and injuries caused by traffic accidents by at least 50% from 2021 to 2030”, considering the same within the Sustainable Development Goals and the Safe System approach.

The Swedish Vision Zero promotes the principles of the safe system also widely used in Australia, New Zealand and the Netherlands, and are focused on preserving human beings who are characterized by their fragility and the probability of making errors while driving. From the above, the importance of infrastructure design that includes forgiving roads or self-explaining roads is highlighted, concepts in the design that induce alertness and risk perception. by the user and that use design logic, materials, devices and technologies to mitigate the severity of the accidents caused, either by the conditions of the roads or by failures of the vehicles, or by the users themselves, and that, if applicable possible to avoid these eventual accidents.

In the report on the world situation for 2023 (WHO, 2023), it is found that every year 1.19 million people die on the roads, which indicates a decrease of 5% since 2010. In that period, a dozen countries achieved a reduction of at least 50% in road deaths and 85 achieved reductions of between 10 and 49%, and notes that some of the largest reductions were achieved when “the safe system approach was applied, which places people and safety at the center of mobility systems.” However, in 66 other countries road deaths increased.

It also points out that 12% of deaths from traffic accidents occurred in the Region of the Americas, more than double the 5% registered in Europe. Just as 90% of deaths are recorded in low- and middle-income countries, and 53% of traffic fatalities are vulnerable users: pedestrians (23%); drivers of two- and three-wheeled vehicles, such as motorcycles (21%) and cyclists (6%). Occupants of cars and other four-wheeled vehicles represent 30% of the total.

ROAD SAFETY MANAGEMENT IN THE DECADES

The second global plan is aimed at key policy makers and is intended to serve as a model for developing national and local plans and objectives. It proposes prioritizing an integrated approach to safety systems, and directly placing road safety as a fundamental driver of sustainable development. The recommended measures include 1. Multimodal transportation and territorial planning, 2. Safe road infrastructure, 3. Vehicle safety, 4. Safe use of transit infrastructure and 5. Response after collisions. It is in the application requirements part that financing, legal frameworks are mentioned, as well as aspects of speed control, capacity building, gender perspective and the adaptation of technologies, in addition to a specific focus on countries of low and middle income.

Although the shared responsibility part of the plan talks about the role of the government, academic institutions, civil society and young people, in addition to the private sector and financiers, note that unlike the previous approach, the strategic emphasis in Road Safety Management (Pillar 1), is diluted in that approach and in the consequent proposals, which does not seem appropriate in light of the evidence and common sense.

THE CASE OF COSTA RICA: LEGAL, INSTITUTIONAL, DATA AND CHALLENGES

LEGISLATION AND ROAD ADMINISTRATION

In Costa Rica, the legal framework linked to the issue of road safety includes various laws, decrees, rules and regulations. Some of the related laws are listed below and the main ones relating to road administration and land traffic are developed.

- Law number: 3503, Law Regulating the Paid Transportation of People in Motor Vehicles, of May 10, 1965;

- Law number: 6324, Road Administration Law, of May 24, 1979;

- Law number: 7593, Regulatory Law of Public Services, of September 5, 1996;

- Law number: 7331, Traffic Law, of April 22, 1993, modified by Law number: 8696 of December 23, 2008.

- Law number: 7969, Law Regulating the Remunerated Public Service of People in Vehicles in the Taxi Modality, of January 28, 2000, creates the Public Transportation Council.

- Law number: 9078, Law on Traffic on Public Land Roads and Road Safety, of October 26, 2012

THE ROAD ADMINISTRATION LAW NUMBER 6324 OF 1979

It established that it will regulate matters concerning the transit of people, vehicles and goods on the public road network, as well as all aspects of road safety and environmental pollution caused by motor vehicles, and its execution will correspond to the Executive Branch. through the Ministry of Public Works and Transportation. In its CHAPTER II, Article 4 established the creation of the Road Safety Council – Cosevi – attached to the MOPT with independence in its administrative operation and its own legal personality, to manage the Road Safety Fund and allocate the necessary sums to the programs and projects of road safety.

Cosevi is the oldest deconcentrated department in land transportation in Costa Rica, created 42 years ago, but it was originally designed to administer the aforementioned Fund and not to exercise direct or indirect leadership in the field of its competence.

Despite this, with the passage of time and in a manner governed more by custom or ministerial style, it has been in charge of the policies on the matter and the design and implementation of the Strategic Plans for Road Safety in the country.

In its Article 3, it established that the Road Administration will be made up of the following departments of the Transportation Division of the Ministry of Public Works and Transportation:

- a) The Road Safety Council;
- b) The Technical Transport Commission;
- c) The Traffic Engineering Directorate;
- ch) The Directorate of the Traffic Police; and
- d) The General Directorate of Public Transportation.

Thus reformed in accordance with article 249 of Law number: 7331 of April 13, 1993. Note the hierarchical subordination to the Transportation Division that gave administrative and budgetary coherence to the whole.

TRAFFIC LAW ON PUBLIC LAND ROADS 7331, REFORMULATIONS

Traffic Law 7331, of 1993, repealed the previous Traffic Law 5930, of September 13, 1976, and also modified Law 6324. In its Article 2, it established that “The execution of this Law is the responsibility of the MOPT, for through the General Transportation Division and the Road Safety Council, except in cases in which functions are established whose competence corresponds to other departments or entities.”

The Traffic Law 7331 was reformed by Law 8696 in 2008, and replaced by the Law of Transit on Public Land Roads and Road Safety number: 9078, in 2012. As far as interest is concerned, Law 8696 eliminated participation

in the Board Directorate of the COSEVI of the Transportation Division and its subordinate General Directorates: Traffic Engineering, Traffic Police and Road Education, this by redefining articles 3 and 5 of the Road Administration Law.

Subsequently, Law 9078, of 2012 and currently in force, once again redefined the Road Administration as follows:

“Article 3.- The Road Administration will be constituted by:

- 1) The Cosevi,
- 2) The General Directorate of Road Education,
- 3) The General Directorate of Traffic Engineering,
- 4) The General Directorate of the Traffic Police.”

Note that Cosevi continues to be the administrator of the road safety fund, this to finance projects of operating entities over which it has no hierarchy. Despite this, with the passage of time and in a manner governed more by custom or ministerial style, it has been in charge of public policies and the conceptualization, design and implementation of the Strategic Plans for Road Safety in the country. (Contreras-Montoya, 2013).

It must be noted that this modification to the Road Administration equated - without any obvious analysis - four entities, three of them belonging to the Central Executive Branch and the other, the Council, is a department of maximum deconcentration, with resources given by law and which, as already indicated, finances projects for the other three operational agencies or entities over which it has no hierarchical relationship.

PRONOUNCEMENTS AND CONCEPTS OF THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE REPUBLIC

It is pertinent to highlight here the analyzes of the Comptroller General of the Republic - CGR (2003), which in its Report on the Study of the Management Carried out by the Road Safety Council, DFOE-OP-36-2003, tells the Minister of MOPT that:

...considering the multiple problems of coordination, duplication of functions and hierarchical relationships that exist between the Road Safety Council and the General Directorates of Traffic Engineering, Traffic Police and Road Education of that Ministry, issues the following provisions: a) Carry out the actions that are necessary so that, as soon as possible, reforms are promoted in the corresponding laws that allow that Ministry to achieve the transfer of the General Directorates of Traffic Engineering, Traffic Police and Road Education to the Security Council Road, by virtue of its relationship of executing units of the programs and projects that are financed with the resources of the Road Safety Fund. The above will strengthen the position of that Ministry as the Governing Department of the Transportation Sector and will allow COSEVI to position itself as the leading institution in terms of security that the country requires. (CGR, 2003:22)

This provision is maintained in section 2.2.7 of the report DFOE-OP-27-2006 Report on the Evaluative Study of the Organic Structure, Planning and Organization of the Resources of the MOPT (CGR, 2006). To date, no operational departments have been incorporated.

HISTORICAL PERFORMANCE AND SOME STATISTICS

The mortality rate for Costa Rica in the context of the Region of the Americas is shown below in Figure 1, from the 2023 World Health Organization report.

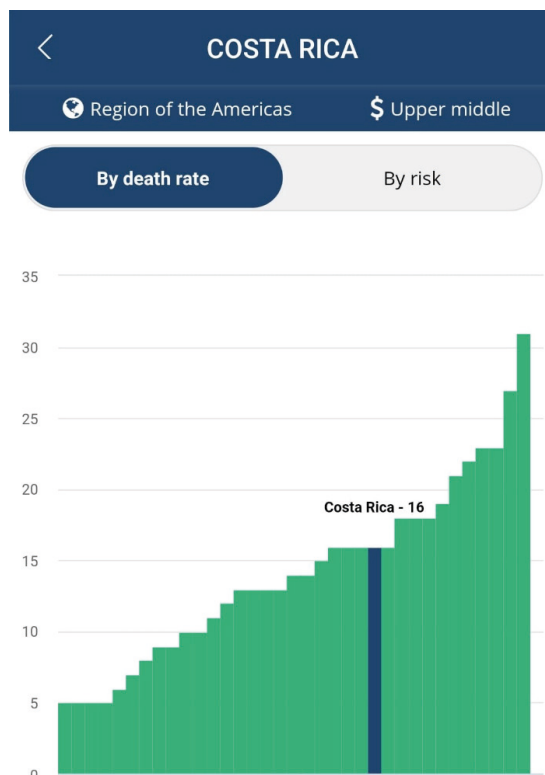


Figure 1: Mortality rate in the countries of the Region of the Americas. Source: World Health Organization (2023)

Here it is observed that the mortality rate of 16 reported by the World Health Organization is consistent with the data that will be shown later.

To contextualize, some general data about the country for the year 2022 is shown, stabilized after the Covid-19 pandemic. Both those and the following are extracted from the Statistical yearbook of traffic accidents with victims (Cosevi, 2022) and the statistics published on its website by Cosevi in (<https://datosabiertos.csv.go.cr/>). The numbering used in the Yearbook is maintained when that is the source.

Year	Deaths site	Injured	Population Projection	On-site mortality rate per 100,000 inhabitants	Injury rate per 100 thousand inhabitants
2012	332	12 630	4 652 459	7,14	271,5
2013	298	16 439	4 713 168	6,32	348,8
2014	365	16 967	4 773 130	7,65	355,5
2015	425	18 143	4 832 234	8,80	375,5
2016	485	21 003	4 890 379	9,92	429,5
2017	488	19 302	4 947 490	9,86	390,1
2018	471	19 429	5 003 402	9,41	388,3
2019	451	19 154	5 058 007	8,92	378,7
2020	311	14 673	5 111 238	6,08	287,1
2021	373	17 802	5 163 038	7,22	344,8
2022	491	20 056	5 213 374	9,42	384,7

Table 1: Costa Rica; on-site mortality and injury rates per 100,000 inhabitants in traffic accidents by year. Period: 2012-2022

Source: Cosevi. Research and Statistics Department. Deaths and injuries from the official traffic report. Population from the National Institute of Statistics and Census (INEC). National projections. Demographic Statistics Unit.

Year	Total number of accident victims	Class of accident	
		Only minor injuries	With deaths or serious injuries
2012	9 663	7 723	1 940
2013	12 576	10 406	2 170
2014	13 025	10 910	2 115
2015	14 050	11 787	2 263
2016	16 037	13 524	2 513
2017	14 861	12 474	2 387
2018	14 742	12 402	2 340
2019	14 861	12 685	2 176
2020	11 791	10 187	1 604
2021	14 150	12 209	1 941
2022	15 629	13 275	2 354

Table 1-2 Costa Rica: number of traffic accidents with victims by type of accident by year. Period 2012-2022

Source: Cosevi. Research and Statistics Area. Data from the official traffic report

Five-Year Age	Deaths on site			Population			Mortality rate per 100,000 inhabitants		
	2020	2021	2022	2020	2021	2022	2020	2021	2022
	Total	311	373	491	5 111 238	5 163 038	5 213 374	6,08	7,22
De 0 a 4	2	6	1	365 797	363 197	360 248	0,55	1,65	0,28
De 5 a 9	0	1	2	371 673	375 553	375 885	0,00	0,27	0,53
De 10 a 14	7	4	3	374 598	373 326	375 032	1,87	1,07	0,80
De 15 a 19	13	22	15	381 333	374 718	371 649	3,41	5,87	4,04
De 20 a 24	35	45	63	419 690	415 467	410 043	8,34	10,83	15,36
De 25 a 29	42	51	47	442 156	441 301	438 784	9,50	11,56	10,71
De 30 a 34	38	34	57	454 188	449 042	448 591	8,37	7,57	12,71
De 35 a 39	30	44	48	411 543	427 653	436 543	7,29	10,29	11,00
De 40 a 44	19	39	39	352 809	364 925	376 900	5,39	10,69	10,35
De 45 a 49	23	17	39	300 292	305 458	312 074	7,66	5,57	12,50
De 50 a 54	19	16	23	286 517	285 771	285 263	6,63	5,60	8,06
De 55 a 59	20	16	25	271 597	275 000	278 315	7,36	5,82	8,98
De 60 a 64	11	13	31	225 969	234 855	242 894	4,87	5,54	12,76
De 65 a 69	11	14	19	170 166	180 239	188 908	6,46	7,77	10,06
De 70 a 74	3	4	6	112 996	119 582	127 918	2,65	3,34	4,69
75 y más	11	7	14	169 915	176 951	184 327	6,47	3,96	7,60
Unknown	27	40	59	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 1-4 Costa Rica: number and percentage of people involved in traffic accidents with victims by type of injury, according to grouped role in 2022

Source: Cosevi. Research and Statistics Department. Deaths and injuries from the official traffic report. Population from the National Institute of Statistics and Census (INEC). National projections. Demographic Statistics Unit.

Grouped role	Type of injury											
	Total		Death		Serious Injury		Slight Injury		Uninjured		Injury Unknown	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Total	33 408	100,0	491	100,0	2 393	100,0	17 663	100,0	12 818	100,0	43	100,0
Motorcycle occupant	11 104	33,2	208	42,4	1 305	54,5	8 436	47,8	1 149	9,0	6	14,0
Bicycle occupant	1 343	4,0	37	7,5	131	5,5	1 128	6,4	47	0,4	0	0,0
Vehicle occupant	18 303	54,8	158	32,2	642	26,8	6 287	35,6	11 184	87,3	32	74,4
Pedestrian	2 037	6,1	84	17,1	297	12,4	1 622	9,2	31	0,2	3	7,0
Other or Unknown	621	1,9	4	0,8	18	0,8	190	1,1	407	3,2	2	4,7

Table 1-4: Costa Rica: number of deaths on site, population and mortality rate per 100,000 inhabitants per year by five-year age group. Period 2020-2022

Note: In addition to those involved in a car, vehicle occupants include bus or minibus occupants. The other or unknown category includes property owners. Source: Cosevi. Research and statistics area. Data from the official traffic report.

Vehicle fleet growth, by type: 1980 and 2017

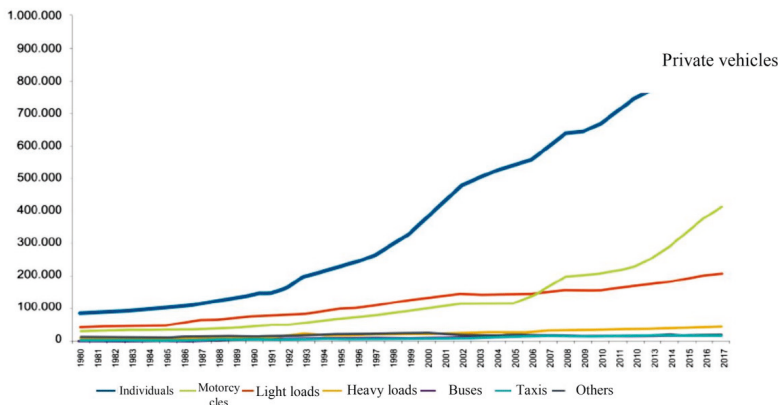


Figure 2: Growth of the vehicle fleet in Costa Rica

In the last decade, the number of injuries is 40 times the number of deaths on site, and in 2022 the order of magnitude of mortality before the pandemic practically returns.

In accidents with victims in the last decade, around 18% of them involve deaths and serious injuries; in 2022, the order of magnitude before the pandemic will return.

Note the concentration of mortality between the ages of 20 and 50, approaching the behavior recorded before the pandemic.

It is interesting to highlight here that motorcycle mortality exceeds that of car occupants by 10 percentage points and that of pedestrians by 25 points, with respect to the total, and in seriously injured people this participation is double that of vehicles and more than 4 times that of pedestrians, proportions consistent with the vulnerability of motorcyclists mixed with their exposure to risk in collisions with vehicles of greater inertia and considerable speeds.

To visualize the exponential growth of the vehicle fleet in the last two decades, with emphasis on private vehicles and motorcycles, Figure 2 is shown, where motorcycles have accelerated growth since 2005, taking second place in amount.

To illustrate performance, Table 3 is shown with on-site mortality and total mortality.

In addition to the previous table, there is the respective Figure 3, with the indicator of on-site and total deaths per 100,000 inhabitants, for the period 2003-2022.

For the beginning of the first decade, 2011, the total mortality rate (m/100,000h) was 12.94, and a decrease was not achieved, causing the highest rate of 18.34 in 2016, that is, an increase of 41.73% in a period of 5 years. From there, a sustained decline begins until 2019 with a rate of 16.03, a decrease of 12.60% in a period of 3 years. After the pandemic, it will return to that order of magnitude in 2022 with 16.52.

There have been some oscillations throughout the first decade, and the truth is that the trend has been towards an increase in mortality, as an example if the data from 2011 and 2019 are taken, the extremes without considering the first year of the pandemic 2020, that increase was 23.88%.

It must be noted that, across this entire series, there has been legislation in force on alcohol consumption, vehicle technical inspection, use of helmets and Road Safety Plans were formally promoted. Traffic Law 7331, which had been in force since 1993, was also reformed through Law 8413 of 2004 on fines related to the mandatory use of seat belts for drivers and passengers, and later Law 8696 of 2008.

Already during the First Decade, a new Law on Traffic on Public Land Roads and Road Safety was published, Law 9078, which came into effect on October 26, 2012.

It is important to emphasize the validity of a new Traffic Law starting in 2012, which, although it imposed more severe fines and redefined the Road Administration, the truth, among other reasons, is that by not resolving the hierarchical relationship between the Council and operational entities of the Power Central Executive, and by not adequately reinforcing oversight, it did not achieve the desired impact.

Other measures were established in advance, such as the mandatory use of seat belts and the use of helmets for motorcyclists, as well as those related to driving under the influence of alcohol and vehicle technical inspection, but there are deficiencies in other important elements such as speed control, consumption of other psychotropic substances, electronic monitoring, measures aimed at vulnerable users and institutional coordination.

Year	Total of deaths	Deaths on site	Population	Total death rate	Death rate site	% deaths on site
2011	592	289	4,592,149	12.89	6.29	48.82
2012	668	332	4,652,459	14.36	7.14	49.7
2013	645	298	4,713,168	13.69	6.32	46.2
2014	669	365	4,773,130	14.02	7.65	54.56
2015	779	425	4,832,234	16.12	8.8	54.56
2016	894	485	4,890,379	18.28	9.92	54.25
2017	885	488	4,947,490	17.89	9.86	55.14
2018	833	471	5,003,402	16.65	9.41	56.54
2019	807	451	5,058,007	15.95	8.92	55.89
2020	586	311	5,111,238	11.46	6.08	53.07
2021	727	373	5,163,038	14.08	7.22	51.31
2022	861	491	5,213,374	16.52	9.42	57.03

Table 3. In situ and total mortality in the First Decade and until 2022. Source: Cosevi (<https://datosabiertos.csv.go.cr/>).

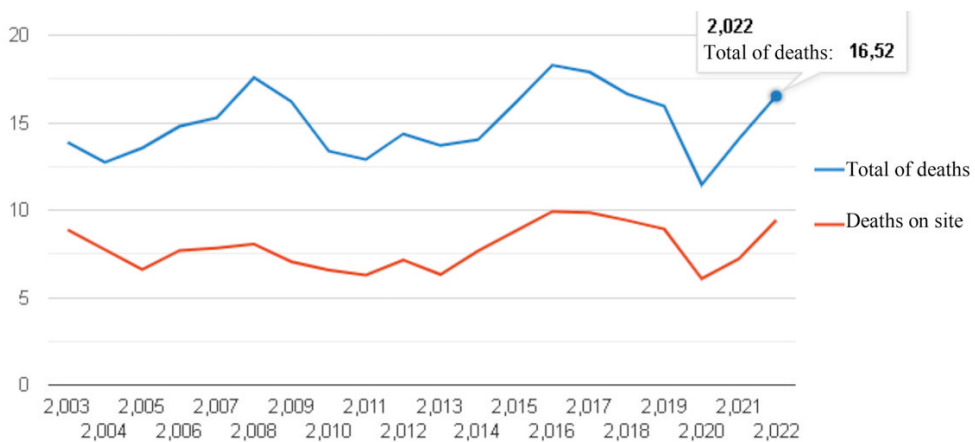


Figure 3. Mortality rate per 100,000 inhabitants in Costa Rica from 2003 to 2022.

Source: Cosevi (<https://datosabiertos.csv.go.cr/>).

The National Road Safety Plan for Motorcyclists was also designed and implemented for the period from 2015 to 2020 (called PNSVMoto-CR: 2015-2020), whose announced baseline was the year 2013.

Regarding deaths on site and totals, Table 3 shows, among others, the annual data between 2015 and 2019, that is, during the validity of the PNSVMoto-CR, and it can be seen that the reduction objectives of that plan do not were verified and it is even verified that deceased motorcyclists continued to be the majority group in deaths. It must be noted that this phenomenon was widespread in the Region of the Americas.

MORTALITY DUE TO TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Here is shown the data on provisional deaths on site in traffic accidents 2019-2020, reported to the Communications Center of the General Directorate of Traffic Police, understanding deaths on site as deaths that occurred at the scene of the events or during the transfer.

Note in Table 4 that there was a 32% decrease in the total number of deaths on site, where the greatest impact was on the mortality of motorcyclists (considering driver and passenger) of 45%.

Type of user	Year	
	2019	2020
Total	440	300
Motorcyclist	192	109
Motorcycle passenger	26	11
Driver	81	56
Passenger car	33	3.4
Cyclist	3.4	35
Bicycle passenger	0	1
Bus passenger	7	0
Pedestrian	66	54
Other	1	0

Table 4: Number of deaths on site per year according to type of user, period 2019-2020
Source: Cosevi. Research and Statistics Area.
Own elaboration based on DGPT records

The following shows the behavior of the number of deaths in situ per month for the year 2020. The pandemic was recognized for the country in March of that year, with the immediate application of night and day vehicle restrictions.

In 2020, the abrupt decrease can be observed between the months of March and April, which reflects the effect of the vehicle restriction, less mobilization in public transport and in general the decrease in people's mobility. Starting in November, where there was a resumption of economic activities and less severe restrictions, the increase in deaths can be seen in December (37), almost equal to the month of March 2020 (39).

In the end, the sum in that year was 300 deaths on site, that is, a decrease of 32% compared to the 440 deaths in 2019.

Regarding mortality in 2020 by time zone, Figure 4. reflects the abrupt decrease already noted between the months of March and April, but here, although it is true that the start time of the night restriction varied, it is referenced between the 10 pm and 5 am, remembering the fact that it was absolute in the national territory and accompanied by restrictions on trade and other activities, with the exception of those mandatory for health reasons. Hence,

its effect is evidenced by the fact that, of the 300 deaths throughout the year, 74 occurred during the night restriction, that is, 25%, and that this effect was very strong in the first months of application of the restriction.

ABOUT THE PROJECT OF LAW 23114 ON COMPETENCES OF THE MOPT

In May 2022, the Government sends to the Legislative Assembly a bill called "Strengthening the powers and accountability of the MOPT", file 23114, which ultimately seeks to deconcentrate the powers in the Concessions Councils, of Roads, Road Safety and Public Transportation are transferred and concentrated in the Central Executive Branch in the figure of the MOPT.

In the text, no analysis or distinction is made between the natures of the deconcentrated functions, nor between the reasons for their creation, nor between their administrative-financial-legal structures, nor their international commitments and participations, much less the factual fulfillment of their objectives. and goals, nor is representativeness studied in the Boards of Directors of the departments. As a proposal, it indicates the creation of ad honorem advisory councils.

Said text is presented a few days after the change of Government, in a clearly improvised manner and with the Minister of the MOPT, contrary to the necessary and serious foundation of a bill, already announcing that the idea was that the discussion would be generated within the Legislative Assembly.

The most compelling proof of this improvisation is that in October of the same year a substitute text was presented, which no longer includes the Concessions Council, for obvious reasons of its importance in the process of design, construction and financing of infrastructure through Alliances. Public

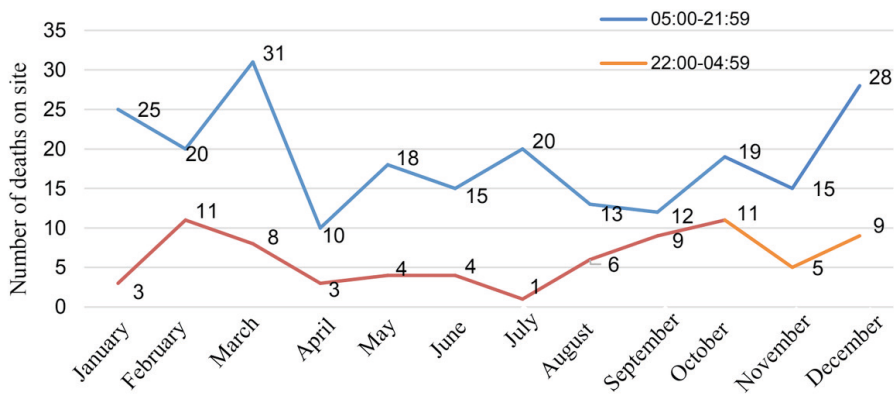


Figure 4: Number of deaths on site per month according to time zone (2020)

Source: Cosevi Research and Statistics Area, prepared by the authors based on DGPT records

Private, but the other three Councils are maintained, now transforming them into Divisions of the Ministry, without delving into the analysis and correcting the deficiencies already mentioned. Gross errors are evident in the proposal, such as with regard to the financing that the founding laws granted to these deconcentrated departments, exactly due to that nature, and the lack of a minimum of care in the transitional articles where the Concessions Council continues to be mentioned, non-existent in this new text.

The fact that this bill proposes to eliminate Cosevi, as a specialized coordinating department in accordance with what has already been stated in the World Report and Plan of the First Decade, in addition to lacking a minimum of analysis and conceptual and practical approach, represents a setback of 45 years in the systemic and systematic fight against mortality and injuries caused by traffic that has been documented in Costa Rica.

Yes, the need for reorganization and reengineering must be pointed out, in the MOPT itself and in the Councils, and thus reorient the deconcentrated units, and the decentralized ones, that the Ministry has, this would provide solid criteria for a necessary strengthening of the deconcentrated function or Failing that, an eventual transfer of powers if that is justified.

But one must not a priori eliminate entities and concentrate functions in a Ministry that, in fact, due to its size and specialization, must be studied for an eventual division into infrastructure and transportation services, considering regulatory and urban aspects.

FINAL THOUGHTS AND RELEVANT ACTIONS

REGARDING THE COORDINATING AND DIRECTING DEPARTMENT

In order to achieve the consolidation of a coordinating department, emphasis must be placed on the coherence between the recommendations of the WHO and the Global Plan for the Decade 2011–2020 with the provisions of the Comptroller's Office in its reports DFOE-OP-36-2003. and DFOE-OP-27-2006. The figure of decentralization in principle does not show a concrete advantage over maximum deconcentration, note that as an autonomous COSEVI could have greater "independence", but ultimately its link to the MOPT, the governing department by law, is strategically desirable, through the concept of instrumental legal personality.

Therefore, the Road Administration Law must be reformed, promoting the transfer of the General Directorates of Traffic Engineering, Traffic Police and Road

Education to Cosevi, maintaining it as a department of maximum deconcentration with instrumental legal personality, dependent on the MOPT and taking advantage of to carry out an administrative reorganization, rethink aspects such as the integration of its Board of Directors and the definition, collection and use of the resources of the Road Safety Fund.

REGARDING THE FIRST DECADE AND PUBLIC POLICY IN THE SECOND DECADE

If we consider the notable increases in that period, both in the world population and in the rate of motorization, and therefore in exposure to risk, when it is verified that mortality rates per population have remained relatively stable and did not grow as was happening, it is logical to interpret that the awareness, effort and actions promoted for road safety over the decade have managed to mitigate the historical effects and avoid worse performance.

It must be noted here that the above is an average situation and there are various positive and negative results, both between countries and throughout the period by country. In that sense and as evidenced, Costa Rica must improve its performance.

Therefore, work must be done immediately and intensely so that, with the planning, articulation and design of ambitious road safety actions and goals from Cosevi, a true paradigm shift is achieved in accordance with the Second Decade of Action. 2021-2030, taking advantage of this period to - from its

beginning - consolidate road safety as a public policy, and as such supported and promoted from the highest level.

REGARDING THE SYSTEMIC APPROACH AND INSTITUTIONAL COORDINATION

To enable and enhance practically all of the above, coordinated and joint work between the various Councils of the Transport Sector must be an obligation: Road Safety, Public Transport, Concessions, Roads, contemplating this work in an articulated manner with the relevant entities of the Power. Executive: the Ministry of Public Works and Transport itself, and the Ministries of Health, Education and Planning. Coordination with municipalities completes this panorama, incorporating civil society.

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As already analyzed, there is no basis, either in the concept or in national and international practice, to propose that Cosevi be suppressed, not only because it is the specialized coordinating department in accordance with what has already been indicated in the Report and World Plan of the First Decade, as well as for its importance and consolidation over more than four decades as a leading institution in road safety in Costa Rica. On the contrary, it must be supported as a management department, following the reflection already developed in this text to promote the due reform of the Road Administration Law.

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