



IRTAD CONFERENCE 2026

**Better Road Safety Data
for Better Safety Performance**



PRESS RELEASE



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Athens, Greece

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HELLENIC REPUBLIC
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The IRTAD 2026 Conference

The [International Traffic Safety Data and Analysis Group \(IRTAD\)](#) of the [International Transport Forum \(ITF/OECD\)](#), the [National Technical University of Athens \(NTUA\)](#) and the [Hellenic Institute of Transportation Engineers \(HITE\)](#) co-organized with great success the **8th IRTAD International Conference: Better Road Safety Data for Better Safety Performance** which took place in Athens, Greece, on 15-17 April 2026, with the support of [FERSI](#) and [ECTRI](#), under the auspices of the [Hellenic Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport](#).

The objective of the Conference was to **explore improvements in the quality of data systems and related analyses globally**, with particular emphasis on human factors, speeding behaviour, safety of vulnerable road users, automation, artificial intelligence, big data and advanced modelling to support evidence-based policies and measures for safer roads everywhere and for all.

The IRTAD International Conference was established in Helsinki in 1995 as a **major event for researchers and professionals** of different research backgrounds and expertise, to share individual experience and state-of-the-art research in the area of safety data collection and analysis and learn from initiatives of others in the use of data for shaping road safety policies and interventions. Since its foundation, the IRTAD Conference has been held in Vienna (2000), Brno (2006), Seoul (2009), Buenos Ayres (2013), Marrakech (2017), Lyon (2022) and this year (2026) in Athens.

IRTAD 2026 Conference in Numbers

Overall, **more than 330 road safety experts and scientists from 45 countries and 146 road safety Organisations** joined this global road safety major event and came together to discuss on current and future challenges of data analysis and road safety performance. In total, 336 authors contributed to the Conference with their innovative research work and 18 reviewers helped with the reviewing process in order to maintain the high scientific standards of the Conference.

The IRTAD 2026 Programme covered a wide range of modern road safety topics with emphasis on better road safety data and road safety performance. A total of **124 extended abstracts** (90 oral and 24 poster) were presented throughout **22 thematic oral and poster sessions**, including 18 thematic areas. All available at the [Conference Proceedings](#).



Among the 124 extended abstracts, **3 special awards** were granted to best papers for students, researchers and best road safety idea:

- Best Road Safety Idea Award: [The value of prevented road fatalities: A new value transfer approach](#), **Wijnen Wim**, Said Dahdah, Nino Pkhikidze (W2Economics, World Bank Group)
- Best Paper Award for Researchers: [When police and clinical severity diverge: Injury patterns and implications for Norway's transition to AIS-based serious-injury monitoring](#), **Ingeborg Hesjevoll**, Torkel Bjørnskau, Olav Røise (TOI)
- Best Paper Award for Students: [Development of a risk map analysis tool \(RiskGrid\) to support road safety impact assessment](#), **Valerio Michiorri**, Brayan Gonzalez-Hernandez, Davide Shingo Usami, Luca Persia (Unina, Uniroma)

In addition, several selected extended abstracts have been proposed for publication at the **Special Issue** of the open access journal "**European Transport Research Review** - [ETRR](#)".

Furthermore, **2 keynote speeches were delivered by road safety experts**. In particular, Fred Wegman (Delft University of Technology) presented on "Road Safety and Policy," addressing global road safety challenges, road safety policy in Europe and beyond, innovative approaches in safety research and development, and the role of Artificial Intelligence in modern road safety data analysis. Richard Owen (Agilysis) delivered a keynote on "Key Challenges in Road Safety Data and Analyses," focusing on road safety data issues at both international and national levels. Alongside the key note speeches, **3 plenary expert panel discussions** were organized, with 16 panelists, focusing on the key challenges in evidence-based road safety policies and the role of international road safety data in local best practice. Lastly, the new efficient traffic safety initiatives in Greece were also highlighted.

More than **5.000 email messages** have been exchanged, before, during and after, together with hundreds of [Conference Photos](#) available at the [Conference website](#).

IRTAD 2026 Opening Speeches



Olaf Merk (Head of ITF Transport Research Centre): *"The 8th IRTAD Conference 2026 demonstrates a continuous success of road safety scientists contributing since 1995, innovative ideas highly useful to the society. IRTAD is a unique opportunity for exchange of scientific knowledge, by experts from all continents, paving the way towards safer roads in the new digital and automation era."*



Ioannis K. Chatjigeorgiou (NTUA Rector): *“Road Safety is a key NTUA interdisciplinary priority, among 5 Departments and Laboratories of the NTUA Schools, dealing with critical subjects; from road infrastructure and road design to driver behaviour and intelligent transportation systems.”*



Konstantinos Kyranakis (Alt. Minister of Transport): *“Road Safety is a high priority of our Government and of the Prime Minister. At the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport, we developed a new strategy for the decade and with serious and steady efforts we made Greek roads safer for all. In our country, road fatalities have been decreased last year by an astonishing 22% and this is the best ever performance in Greece. This is a national success and the intensification of enforcement, especially on helmet wearing and drink-and-drive by the Traffic Police, the New Traffic Road Code and the 24-hour operation of public transport during weekends played a significant role.”*



Claire Depré (Head of Road Safety Unit, DG MOVE, European Commission): *“Road safety is a shared responsibility. The steady reduction in road fatalities across the EU demonstrates that our combined efforts are delivering results. We must further strengthen our cooperation with Member States, industry and road users to make our roads safer and ensure that Europe remains firmly on track to achieve the goal of zero road deaths by 2050.”*



Eleni Vlahogianni (Dean of School of Civil Engineering NTUA): *“Road Safety is omnipresent in most educational and scientific activities of the Dept. of Transportation Planning & Engineering. The NTUA Road Safety Observatory is a Centre of Research and Innovation Excellence on road safety with global recognition.”*



Petros Evgenikos (HITE Vice-President): *“Greek Transportation Engineers have always been frontrunners in supporting road safety development in Greece and globally. With high expertise and dedication we manage appropriate data, we carry out state-of-the-art analyses, we prioritise effective road safety solutions and we support and monitor efficient implementation of customized measures with high impact to society.”*



Benacer Boulaajoul (General Director of National Road Safety Agency in Morocco): *“We strongly support bringing together road safety scientists from around the world to advance discussions on technological and innovative road safety solutions. At the NRSA, we are intensifying our efforts to develop a sustainable road safety strategy in close collaboration with stakeholders from the public and private sectors, as well as NGOs.”*



Goran Temovski (Road Safety Desk Officer in Transport Community): *“At the Transport Community, we are closely aligned with the EU's and Western Balkan governments' road safety priorities, contributing to systemic improvements through policy oversight, performance monitoring and the structured implementation of the EU acquis and Safe System principles across the region.”*



IRTAD 2026 Conference Thematic Sessions Findings

The 22 Conference thematic oral and poster sessions allowed for vivid scientific discussions, not always converging, but certainly revealing the real dimensions of the road crashes phenomenon, of their causes and of the respective potential countermeasures. Key findings are summarized below:

Analysis of road safety data explores the quality, completeness and interpretation of crash and exposure data, providing the evidence base needed for targeted and effective road safety actions.

Data-driven road safety strategies within a Safe System Approach demonstrates how advanced analytics and integrated policies can support proactive interventions that reduce risks across the whole transport system.

Speed and speed management examines how speed remains a critical crash risk factor and how enforcement, infrastructure and policy measures can improve compliance and save lives.

Pedestrians, cyclists and elderly focuses on protecting vulnerable road users through safer infrastructure, inclusive design and better understanding of their specific mobility risks.

Road safety in climate crises and emergencies addresses the growing need to ensure resilient transport systems that remain safe during extreme weather events and emergency situations.

Artificial Intelligence and road safety presents how AI can transform road safety through predictive analytics, automated monitoring and smarter decision-making, while raising governance and ethical challenges.

Understanding serious road injuries emphasises the importance of better injury definitions, hospital data linkage and severity assessment to fully capture the burden of road trauma.

Road safety policy and assessment examines how national and local strategies can be designed, monitored and evaluated to maximise safety benefits and policy effectiveness.

Road safety and gender equality explores how mobility patterns, exposure and risk differ by gender, highlighting the need for more inclusive and equitable road safety policies.

Socioeconomic inequalities in road traffic injuries analyses how social and economic disparities influence crash risks and outcomes, requiring fair and targeted interventions.



Analyzing and collecting road safety data in cities demonstrates how urban data systems can help cities identify risks, prioritise actions and create safer streets for all users.

Safety of new mobility modes investigates the rapidly evolving risks linked to micromobility, electric vehicles and innovative transport services, calling for adaptive safety frameworks.

Crash causation and risk factors examines behavioural, vehicle, roadway and environmental contributors to crashes in order to better prevent collisions and their consequences.

Big data and road safety analytics showcases how large-scale and real-time data sources can enhance safety monitoring, forecasting and evidence-based interventions.

Measuring road safety performance focuses on robust methods and indicators to assess progress, compare results and support accountability in road safety management.

New methods in data collection presents innovative techniques and technologies that improve the availability, reliability and timeliness of road safety data for better decisions.

IRTAD 2026 Overall Findings

Road Safety is undoubtedly a **multidisciplinary scientific field** challenging researchers to work together in order to achieve the ultimate goal of reducing the number of crash fatalities and injuries occurring worldwide. Some **key conclusions arisen from the IRTAD 2026 Conference** comprise of the importance of solid crash and road safety data to set national and regional targets, build road safety plans, monitor progress and report on results. Data and targets are needed not only on road crash casualties but also on road safety performance indicators, vehicle fleet and mobility trends.

The digital era offers **new opportunities for fast safety advances** through wide use of big data, Artificial Intelligence and machine learning, traffic automation and connectivity, as well as new technological advancements.

Currently, recognizing the importance of the problem and the need to act, **new plans and targets have been set** in several countries worldwide but also at European and international level, with the explicit aim to reduce road deaths and injuries by at least 50% by 2030 in Greece, Europe and globally. In several cases, the safe system approach and the Vision Zero fatalities by 2050 are adopted. Among key actions and measures, several smart road safety solutions are implemented in more and more countries.



In Greece and in Athens, road safety is for the first time taken so seriously, through specific plans and an array of key and priority actions, exploiting also the newest technologies, with the ultimate target of eliminating road fatalities. In 2025, Greece achieved a remarkable reduction on road crash fatalities, which is the result of the intensification of enforcement of helmet wearing and drink-and-drive by the Police, the new Road Traffic Code in Greece (voted in June 2025 and in force since September 2025) along with clear improvements in driver behaviour and overall safety performance. Greece became the second country to implement city-wide 30 km/h speed limits, helping protect vulnerable road users, alongside stronger public transport and the responsible use of Artificial Intelligence through open, standardised and transparent data systems. The results so far are encouraging, demonstrating an overall progress but efforts intensification is needed.

Great Thanks

The 8th IRTAD International Conference 2026 would not have been a reality without the great support of:

- The [FERSI](#) and [ECTRI](#).
- The [Hellenic Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport](#).
- The **Sponsors of the Conference**:
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- The **Scientific Committee** for their thorough and timely reviews of extended abstracts.
- The **Organizing Committee** members who performed with dedication in handling all big and small Conference issues.
- The **Key Note and Panel Speakers** who contributed state-of-the-art ideas on current and future challenges of road safety data and policies.
- But most importantly **all the participants** who contributed scientific papers, presentations and vivid discussions during the three days of the Conference.

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