

## AVZ Briefing - Urban rural divide: who's getting hurt where

19 Feb 2026

### Key points

- Almost all road safety strategies have Killed and Seriously Injured (KSI) casualty reduction targets, with no priority allocated to road deaths. This includes [DfT's new Road Safety Strategy](#) which aims to reduce KSIs in England and Wales by 65% by 2035.
- Urban areas account for most KSIs (57%) whilst road deaths occur more in rural areas (60%).
- This should affect the priorities and actions in a road safety strategy and lead to a focus on reducing urban serious injuries.

### Killed/seriously injured (KSIs) and urban focus (Table 1 and Figure 1 overleaf)

- Over 40% more KSIs occur in urban areas (57%) than rural areas (40%).
- This is due to the majority of vulnerable road user KSIs occurring in urban areas, including 86% of pedestrian KSIs and 78% of cyclist KSIs.
- A minority of motor vehicle occupant KSIs occur in urban areas, including 35% of car occupant KSIs and 25% of van occupant KSIs.
- Serious injuries dominate, especially in urban areas where there are 30 serious injuries (SIs) to every urban road death, compared to 12 SIs for every rural road death.

**Table 1: Reported fatal and serious road casualties, Britain (2024)**

	Urban	Rural	Motorway	Total
Pedestrian	5,364	830	38	6,232
Pedal Cyclist	3,046	857	1	3,904
Motorcyclist	3,007	2,705	97	5,809
Car Occupant	4,367	6,687	683	11,737
Van occupant	148	388	62	598
Bus Occupant	256	61	6	323
HGV occupant	17	95	34	146
Other vehicle occupant	558	150	11	719
<b>All road user modes</b>	<b>16,763</b>	<b>11,772</b>	<b>931</b>	<b>29,466</b>

### Fatalities and rural focus (Table 2)

- Almost twice as many people are killed in rural areas (60%) than urban areas (35%).
- Cyclist deaths are divided equally between rural areas (51%) and rural areas (49%)
- Fewer than one in three pedestrian deaths occur in rural areas (28%).

**Table 2: Reported road deaths, Britain (2024)**

	Urban	Rural	Motorway	Total
Pedestrian	278	115	16	409
Pedal Cyclist	40	42		82
Motor vehicle users	237	799	75	1,111
<b>All road user modes</b>	<b>555</b>	<b>956</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>1,602</b>

Figure 1: Reported KSI urban rural share, Britain (2024)

